

Rural tourism development: a viable formula for poverty alleviation in Bergville

Mzikayifani Barney Johnson Mthembu¹
 Department of Education, KwaZulu Natal
 Barney.Mthembu@kzndoe.gov.ac.za

The case of rural tourism and community development has been made in general terms with less focus on poverty alleviation and more emphasis on economic modernisation. Recently, a link between rural tourism and poverty alleviation has been emphasised in the contemporary tourism and poverty alleviation literature. The aim of the study was to analyse the direct and indirect livelihood impacts of tourism development and their implications on poverty alleviation in Bergville. Since tourism is one of the largest sectors in the economy of South Africa, the researcher was keen to know more about its benefits to rural society like Bergville at large and in particular the rural poor in Bergville. This paper addresses the following three research questions. What is the level to which rural tourism development can contribute to economic development, which can result in poverty alleviation in the Bergville area? Can rural tourism development in Bergville bring a halt to the continuous rural-urban migration which is triggered by poverty in the area? What are the perceptions of the Bergville residents towards rural tourism development as a mechanism for poverty alleviation? This study was carried out on the basis of a combination of two types of research data. The first is secondary data which aimed at defining the terms related to the research and focus on literature review. From literature review we discuss the different viewpoints about rural tourism, poverty alleviation and community development. The second type of research data is primary data obtained through field research. Results show that while the people are pessimistic that the resourcefulness and accessibility of Bergville can support tourism development, they are also of the view that rural tourism is a very important, probably the most important, factor for economic development. The research also recommends that local tourism planners adopt both the advocacy paradigm and the cautionary paradigm by taking advantage of the benefits of rural tourism development and managing the negative impacts thereof.

Keywords: Tourism, rural tourism, poverty, poverty alleviation, Bergville KwaZulu-Natal,

I. Introduction

The United Nations Environmental Programme (2010: 5) observes that tourism generates jobs and business opportunities for host populations and can reduce and eliminate poverty. Notably, scholars like Ashley (2002), Chachage (2003), Luvanga & Shitundu (2003), Roe, Ashley, Page & Meyer (2004), Udovc & Perpar (2007) and Bowel & Weinz (2008) emphasise this contention in their writings with more precision. Since the beginning of the emphasis on the role of tourism development in alleviating poverty, new topics have emerged looking at tourism from a broader perspective. Some of the scholars began to look at tourism development from an economic perspective putting tourism demand as one of the determinants of the ability of poor communities to use it as a strategy for poverty reduction. Maloney, Gabriel & Rojas (2001:1) contend that anything that makes a destination more expensive relative to its competitors may lead to a substantial fall in total revenues, which can lead to failure to use tourism as a mechanism for poverty alleviation. Whilst many scholars focused on the importance of tourism development in alleviating poverty, scholars like Viljoen & Tlabela (2006:1) maintained that it is important that local communities note the factors that may militate against the potential of tourism development to benefit them. These are factors such as lack of support from other sectors, low capacity to meet the tourists' expectations, lack of qualifications and training as well as lack of social, financial, human and physical capital (Dimsoka 2008, Eruera 2008 George 2007, Rukuziene 2007, Davis 2003 and Spencely & Seif 2003). Besides focusing on the demand for tourism and barriers that can hamper tourism development, some scholars have made cautionary statements as a way of suggesting that we must not allow tourism development to carry the seeds of its own destruction by ignoring the need to make it a sustainable economic activity (Chanchani 2006, Giawoutzi & Nijkamp 2006 and Barker 2003).

This paper presents the findings of research conducted on tourism development as a viable formula for poverty alleviation in Bergville. The study was motivated by the observation by this author that poverty still remains the biggest problem facing rural communities today, with more than two-thirds of rural residents in South Africa living in poverty (Kepe & Ntsebeza 2001:2). This view is also shared by Nzama (2008:1) who argues that rural areas in South Africa face a problem of underdevelopment, unemployment, low literacy rates and a lack of basic infrastructure. The problem of rural poverty persists in spite of the fact that the countryside remains a valuable resource for tourist attractions because rural tourism uses indigenous resources which increase its importance and uniqueness in the industry (Ohe 2008:1). In fact, the

1. Mzikayifani Barney Johnson Mthembu PhD is Director of Education, KwaZulu Natal Provincial Government. He acquired his PhD from the University of Zululand in the Department of Recreation and Tourism in 2010.

countryside is a tourist paradise which offers a variety of attractions including scenic beauty, diverse wildlife, a kaleidoscope of traditions and cultures, and an array of opportunities to explore the outdoors through sporting and adventure activities.

As a result of this situation, concerned academics such as Bennet and George (2004:4) share the view that there is inadequate information about the contribution of rural tourism assets to the socio-economic conditions of the local people, especially the alleviation of poverty. Similarly, scholars like Brown (2008) and Meyer (2006) insist that tourism development planners must change their focus from the enclave development of resorts characterised by exclusion of linkages to the local poor rural areas. The danger of such approaches to tourism development is that they undermine the role of the tourism industry in poverty alleviation

A study was conducted in Bergville on the role that tourism development can play in alleviating poverty. This paper presents the findings of the research conducted on tourism development as a viable formula for poverty alleviation in Bergville.

2. Purpose of the study

The broad aim of the study is to analyse the direct and indirect livelihood impacts of tourism and its implications on poverty alleviation in Bergville. Since tourism is one of the largest sectors in the economy, we are keen to know more about its benefits to rural communities at large and in particular the poor. The main aim of the study was streamlined into the following research objectives:

1. To identify the resources that can be used for rural tourism development in Bergville.
2. To establish the extent to which rural tourism development can contribute positively to job opportunities, entrepreneurial skills development and increased income generation in Bergville.
3. To determine the perceptions of Bergville residents relating to rural tourism development as a mechanism for economic development in their area.
4. To identify the existing management practices or strategies that is perceived as contributing to the improvement of the quality of livelihoods in the study area.
5. To propose an integrated development model that would contribute to job creation and thus result in poverty alleviation in Bergville.

3. The theoretical framework

Employment opportunities are scarce in Bergville. This has led to the escalation of the unemployment rates for skilled and unskilled workers. In 1996 agriculture was the largest employer in the area. Bergville is a strong agricultural base, but areas of arable land are small and stocking levels are uncontrolled. The main product of the district is maize, and there is a large granary capable of storing 300 000 sacks. Peanuts and milk are also produced, and there has been an increase in soya bean and broiler production (Okhahlamba Local Municipality 2010:22).

Currently, the economy of Bergville is largely driven by household incomes where the main source of rural livelihood is derived from remittance incomes, pension and welfare grants and subsistence agriculture. Since Bergville has no industrial or commercial nodes, there are limited benefits of scale associated with small, medium and large investments in the area. There is some tourism activity in the Bergville Cathkin Park area and growing investment at Babangibone (Okhahlamba Local Municipality 2010:22).

Owing to its location relative to the developed area of Ladysmith, the local economy is prone to income leakage since many people make their purchases outside Bergville (Okhahlamba Local Municipality 2010:10). Tourism development can attract other economic activities in Bergville and solve the problem of scarcity of employment sources. Mbaiwa (2003:425) notes that the development of rural tourism can contribute to job creation by establishing new sources of employment.

At about 22%, the primary sector is the largest employer in Bergville. The total economically active population of Bergville (excluding children under the age of 15 and pensioners) is estimated to be 73 617, which is 54% of the total population. Only 12 533 people are occupied in formal employment, which is about 17% of the total population. The remaining 83% are unemployed. Approximately 73% of the total population in the municipality have no formal income and rely on other informal sources of income. About 95% of people who live in town are low income earners of between R1 and R1 600 per month. People who do not earn an income make up 18% of the population of Bergville (Okhahlamba Local Municipality 2010:18). Besides employment in the primary sector, Bergville people are involved in other types of industries such as construction, manufacturing, mining, clerical works, technical work and professional work.

There is evidence that tourism is a sector strong enough to help the poor in the developing world, especially the rural poor, to reduce the impact of poverty through the injection of foreign currency that it provides. In 2008, 924 million

tourists travelled to other countries. This is a very large number of people, amounting to over 50 000 people every half-hour. It is remarkable that about 40% of these journeys ended in developing country destinations. In 2007, tourists spent US\$ 295 billion in developing countries. It is for this reason that tourism has been described as the world's largest voluntary transfer of resources from the rich to the poor. In spite of the fact that up to 85% of the supposed benefits of tourism leak out of the developing countries because of the power of international tour operators, foreign ownership, and high import propensity, tourism still contributes to poverty alleviation (Mitchell & Ashley 2009:6). It already accounts for 9% of all exports on the African continent, which is more than all agricultural products. Furthermore, recent calculations have shown that every twentieth employee in the world has a job that is related to the tourism industry (Grossiertsch & Scheller 2005:3).

Tourism is a very complex and multidimensional phenomenon that produces numerous positive economic and non-economic effects in the respective tourist destinations. Its positive effects can be appropriately regarded as a means of alleviating poverty because they heighten positive social and economic forces within the society. Some scholars have even referred to tourism as a North/South industry in that tourists are predominantly rich northern hemisphere citizens visiting poor southern hemisphere countries in an unequal exchange (Peak 2008:2). This view can be extended to say that tourism is an urban/rural industry in which employed urban citizens visit the poor rural areas to escape the stressful city life and consume the tranquillity of the countryside. This makes tourism more beneficial for the economy of the rural areas. Tourist arrivals in rural areas can create a flow of outside currency into a rural economy, and therefore indirectly contribute to business development, household incomes and employment. There are also hidden benefits from tourists known as multiplier effects.

With most prime tourist attractions being located in the countryside, tourism has the potential to allow rural people to share the benefits of tourism development. It can provide rural people with an alternative to rural-urban migration, and enfranchise rural human resources by enabling people to maintain their rural households and families. In many countries with high levels of poverty, receipts from tourism are a considerable proportion of the GDP and export earnings. The significance of tourism receipts is that they maximise the potential of the industry to contribute to poverty alleviation through rural development programmes (Blake, Arbache, and Sinclair & Teles 2006:2).

A shift from one source of employment to multiple sources is necessary if rural people are to emerge from the poverty trap. In addition to the creation of jobs and revenue, rural tourism often increases occupational opportunities in the community, one of which is pluriactivity. Pluriactivity is a term used to mean that an individual or family does more than one type of job as a source of income (Organisation of Economic Co-operation & Development 1994:25). Tourism enables farmers to offer bed and breakfast accommodation, change some of the farm buildings into a wedding venue facility, start small craft businesses on the premises, or open a small shopping outlet for visitors and community members to buy perishables and daily needs such as bread and milk. All these activities can contribute to development of the rural area.

Sometimes the influx of tourists results in new recreational opportunities and improvements for rural communities. It can stimulate new development demands in the rural areas. Perhaps the most attractive thing about developing tourism in a rural community is that the leaders and residents of the community can foster pride and establish responsibility for the process of rural development (Lewis 1998:2). Since most of the rural tourists come from large cities and developed countries, their frequent visits to rural destinations can result in rural development and environmental improvements such as village paving, traffic regulation and sewage and litter disposal funded by tourism revenues. All these can assist in rural development and creation of ownership of place, retention of the existing rural population, and sustenance of the existing local economic activities. Rural tourism can create new jobs, slow down rural-urban migration, and help to maintain the local level of services (Komppula 2004:124).

There is a strong concern that some of the expenditure by tourists is spent on imports or is earned by foreign workers and businesses. Blake *et al.* (2006:2) estimate that between 55% and 75% of tourism spending leaks back to the developed world. Tourism can change this situation so that poor households derive a better economic benefit from participating in the industry. Tourism can have favourable economic effects in rural communities. This can include large-scale retention of revenue within the host community and inclusion of the local inhabitants and products. In this way the host community can gain more income which can be used for poverty alleviation. Sometimes it is difficult to totally avoid the transfer of funds because most of the tourist industry is highly dependent on goods from large cities and foreign countries. It is, however, possible to avoid a gross transfer of revenue from rural destinations to foreign countries by ensuring that most of the tourist industries in the country are dependent on goods from both local and outside sources in a balanced manner. It is possible for the rural poor to receive more direct economic benefits from tourism while bearing lower costs.

Since poverty alleviation is one of the main challenges for rural areas, tourism remains an advantageous activity for the development of rural economies. There are two critical areas of tourism which are directly linked to rural poverty. Firstly, tourism comes with labour-intensive and small-scale opportunities. In this way it can employ a higher proportion of people compared to other sectors. It also values natural resources and cultural heritage, which are assets that normally belong to the poor (Luvanga & Shitundu 2003:9). They represent assets for local communities in that they provide an intellectual springboard for development of goods and services, crafts, local foods, music, dance, storytelling and guiding services which are sought by holidaymakers. This wealth of resources can provide additional supplementary livelihoods and help the vulnerable poor populations to avoid dangers related to dependency (Goodwin 2008:60).

Luvanga and Shitundu (2003:12) argue that tourism offers higher employment than other sectors, and that tourism wages compare well with those in agriculture, especially when compared to subsistence farming. The ability of tourism to provide immediate employment and to diversify the rural business makes it a more effective solution to the problem of poverty. Tourism offers an important opportunity to diversify the rural economy. It is a tree that grows and flowers anywhere as long as there are unique natural or cultural attractions. Marshall (2005:1) holds that one way of fighting poverty is through the creation of micro-entrepreneurs because it allows individuals to learn to manage resources and acquaint themselves with the necessary skills to develop and explore other business opportunities. Tourism can develop in poor and marginalised localities with fewer or no options for export and diversification. Remote rural areas can attract visitors because of their originality, cultural uniqueness, flora and fauna as well as their extraordinary landscapes (Luvanga & Shitundu 2003:9). In this way tourism can introduce the rural poor to micro-business opportunities.

The benefits of tourism in a rural area begin when a foreign tourist steps off the bus in the countryside. The moment the tourist has a meal, the destination concerned is exporting because of the use of foreign exchange to purchase the local currency needed for payment. This means that exporting becomes possible everywhere in a country, including remote rural areas with few economic opportunities. In this way the growing significance of tourism in rural areas is closely related to the role of job creation in promoting the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty by 2015 (Honeck 2008:9).

Tourism is an important export for 83% of the developing countries, and it is the main export for one third of them. In 2000, developing countries recorded 292.6 million international arrivals, an increase of 95% compared to the figures of 1990. Furthermore, in the least developed countries there has been a 75% increase in international arrivals in the past decade. Tourism remains the main source of foreign exchange earnings in the 49 least developed countries (Forde 2003:2). It is not surprising that the arrival of the tourist at the destination is interpreted as the arrival of the consumer and spender. This provides opportunities for selling traditional goods, services and ideas produced by the local people. The resulting income generation may help to reduce poverty levels. The reduction of poverty can even be more effective if the poor can use the earnings to support their health and educational services – which are linked to poverty alleviation (Luvanga & Shitundu 2003: 9).

4. Methodology

A survey method was used in the study. Three questionnaires were designed: for the general public, the local business people and the local municipality employees. Triangulation of sources of data and methods blending the qualitative and quantitative methods enabled the study to have a broad understanding of the role that tourism development can play to alleviate poverty (Hales 2010: 16). Convenience sampling as a technique where the respondents, who happen to be available at prominent points such as farm stalls, shopping areas, and public gatherings, were targeted for the survey (Bhattacharyya 2003:91) was used for speeding the study. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents, taking into consideration the type of research instrument, methods of reaching the respondents, the response format and the language medium (Luck & Rubin 2004: 175). The questionnaires contained both structured and unstructured questions. The administration of the questionnaires took into consideration the objectives of the study, the sequence of questions, question structure and ethical considerations.

The analysis of the data provided insight into various issues that relate to the objectives of the study. A series of univariate data were presented in percentages, frequencies, tables and graphs to give an understanding of the data that is purely descriptive. The interpretation of the data concentrated on tourism resources, contribution to job opportunities, entrepreneurial skills development and generation of income, economic growth, perceptions of the respondents on tourism development, and management practices contributing to the improvement of the livelihoods of the people of Bergville.

This study, like many other studies was not without limitations. The main limitation of the study was the timing of the administration of the local municipality employees' questionnaires. These questionnaires were administered four months before the local government elections in South Africa. This affected the response rate in two ways. Firstly, 50% of the

employees did not return the completed questionnaires as expected. Secondly the local municipality employees who returned the questionnaires avoided the second part of the questionnaire which related to the role of the existing management practices in improving the livelihoods of local people. We concluded that local municipality employees suspected that the whole exercise was a political fact finding mission in spite of the fact that the researcher explained the purpose of the study in the preliminary letters.

5. Findings of the study

The findings of the study show that Bergville has a potential for tourism development as a viable formula for poverty alleviation. It was revealed that Bergville has resources that can make tourism development a success. Furthermore, it also indicated that local people have balanced perceptions about rural tourism as they demonstrated both advocacy and precautionary attitudes towards its development. In addition, it was established that the existing tourism management practices contribute, to a certain extent, towards the improvement of the quality of lives of local people.

In a nutshell, four critical things about tourism development in Bergville were revealed. Firstly, Bergville has both tangible and intangible tourism resources that can be used for tourism development. Secondly, rural tourism in Bergville can contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation, increased participation of the local people in economic activities, entrepreneurship as well as economic growth and diversification as indicated in Figure 1.

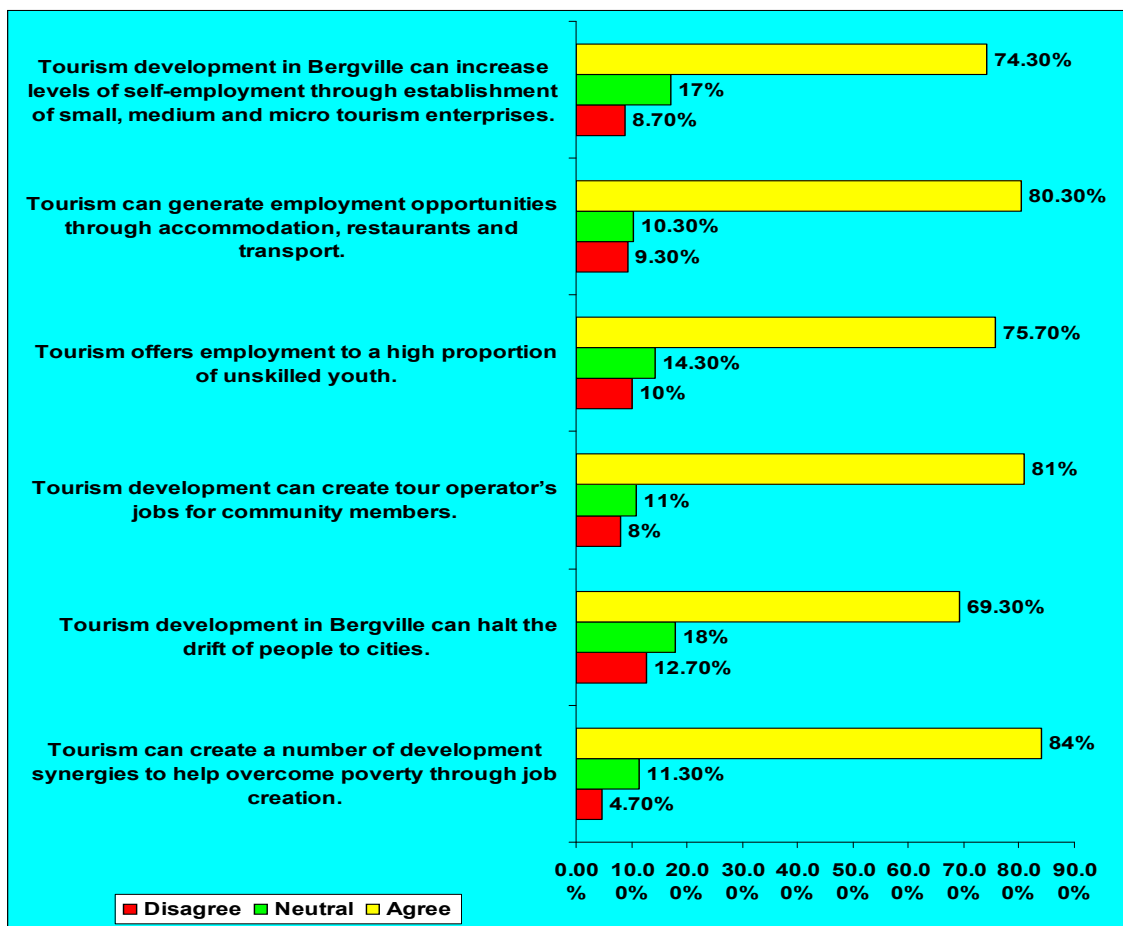
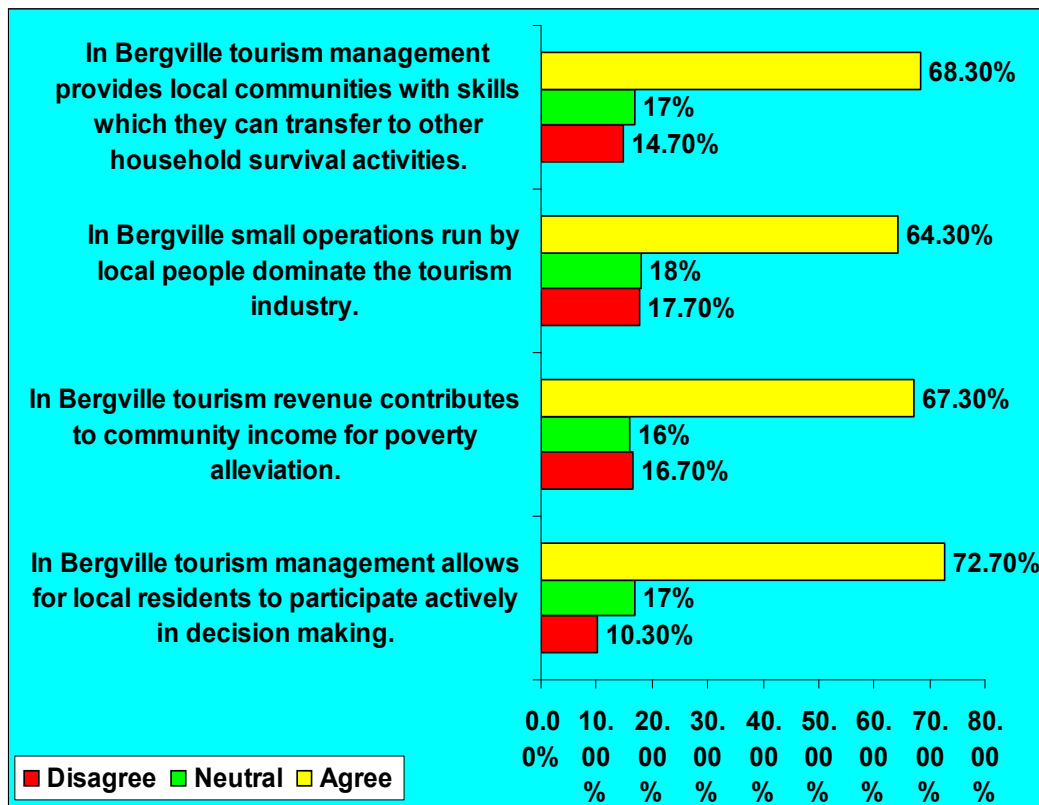


Figure 1 Job creation and poverty alleviation

Thirdly, it revealed that the respondents have positive and negative attitudes towards tourism development. This means that they view tourism development as an activity that needs some precautions in certain areas. Table 1 shows that the respondents view tourism development as an activity that can improve the quality of lives of local people and also shows that the respondents view tourism as an activity that carries the seeds of its own destruction, and should be restricted in the area. These negative attitudes represent the advocacy paradigm which promotes the development of tourism in order to benefit local communities. These positive attitudes represent the precautionary paradigm which identifies the costs of tourism development in order to ensure that it becomes a sustainable benefit to local communities.

Table 1 Perceptions on rural tourism

Positive Perceptions			
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The overall benefits of tourism outweigh its negative impacts.	14.0%	14.0%	72.0%
The quality of life in the community can improve because of tourism.	19.0%	13.3%	67.7%
Tourism development can bring about social integration and international understanding.	8.3%	15.7%	76.0%
Bergville has a good potential for tourism development.	11.0%	14.3%	74.7%
Tourism development can encourage the preservation of local skills, traditional ways of life and traditional belief systems.	13.3%	9.7%	77.0%
The environmental benefits of tourism outweigh its costs.	12.3%	19.7%	68.0%
Negative Perceptions			
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The community should take steps to restrict tourism development.	27.0%	15.3%	57.7%
Tourists are a burden to community services.	28.7%	20.3%	51.0%
Tourism increases the rate of crime in the community.	36.0%	13.7%	50.0%
Tourism causes a lot of damage to indigenous societies and culture.	39.7%	15.0%	45.3%
Tourists can add greatly to traffic problems in our area.	28.3%	16.3%	55.3%
Tourism can result in pollution and littering in our area, making it untidy.	34.3%	17.7%	48.0%
Promotion of tourism can bring about conflict between visitors and local people	30.3%	18.7%	51.0%
The private sector exploits local resources through tourism.	27.3%	22.0%	50.7%

**Figure 2** Existing management practices

Fourthly, the study showed that the participants have different perceptions about the contribution of existing management practices to the improvement of their livelihoods. This shows that Bergville does not only have a potential for tourism development, but also an opportunity of using tourism as a mechanism for poverty alleviation. Figure 2 shows that people have different views about the contribution of existing management practices to tourism development. There is an indication that the majority of the respondents believe that existing management practices cater for the local needs, allow for the development of small businesses, promote community participation in decision making, and contribute to poverty alleviation.

The four broad findings show that Bergville should use a combination of two approaches in order to develop into a sustainable rural tourism destination. These are the 'tourist centred' and 'community centred' approaches to tourism development. The former prioritises the immediate needs of the tourists such as transportation to reach the destination, and the latter prioritises the benefits that local communities must derive from the provisions and use of resources for tourism promotion. These are benefits such as employment opportunities in hotels, the transport industry, casinos, construction, petrol stations and tourism offices. All these benefits can contribute to poverty alleviation in Bergville.

The majority of the respondents in the study area perceive farming as an economic activity that can provide the best opportunities for the local people to participate in economic development as shown in Figure 3 below.

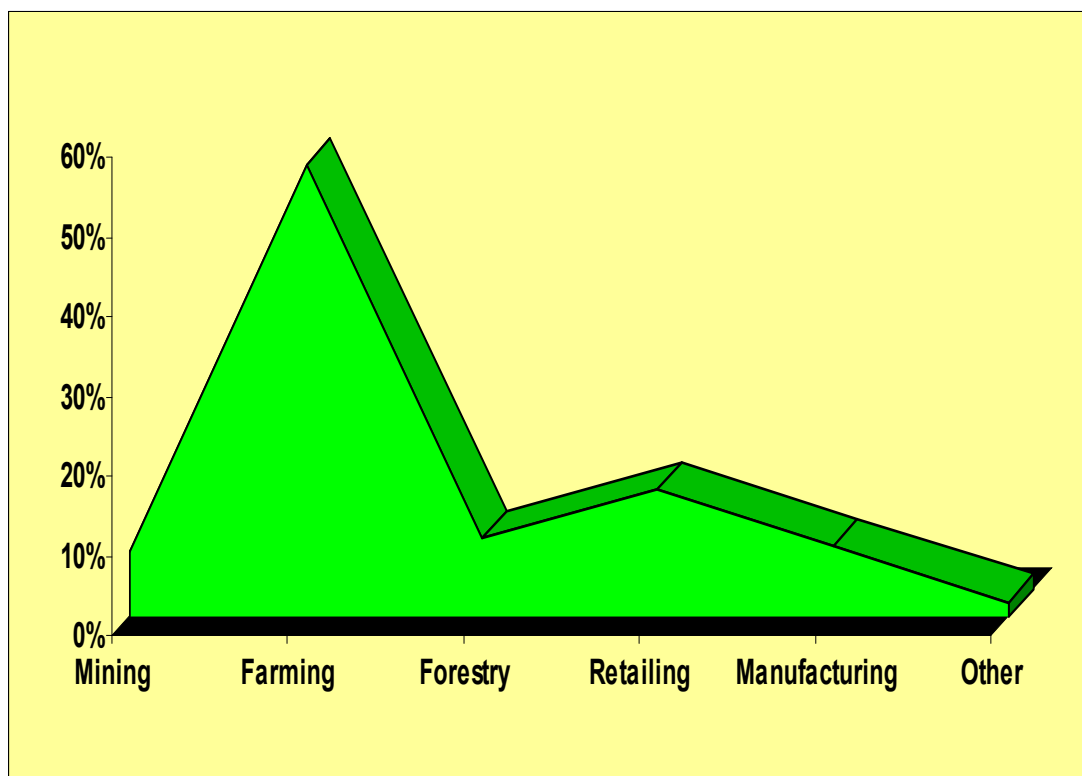


Figure 3 Preferred economic activity

As indicated, the participants believe that the main source of employment is farming. It is, however, necessary to create another source of livelihood in Bergville because areas of arable land are small and stocking levels are uncontrollable (Okhahlamba Local Municipality 2010:22). Robinson and Mazzoni (2004:1) argue that small land holdings and their low productivity are the main cause of rural poverty among rural families which depend on land-based activities for their livelihoods. Farming and tourism share the same environmental, cultural, and physical and natural resources. This relationship favours tourism development as an alternative economic activity in Bergville. Jolly (2005:1) agrees with this by stating that mostly tourism in rural areas is practised by farmers in their working agricultural operations for the entertainment and education of visitors. Agriculture and tourism can therefore make a major contribution in the struggle against rural poverty in Bergville because they present the potential to generate increased on-farm revenues.

More than two thirds of the respondents in Bergville believe that tourism development should be promoted. They believe that Bergville has a good potential for tourism development, and indicated that tourism has more benefits than costs (see Figure 4).

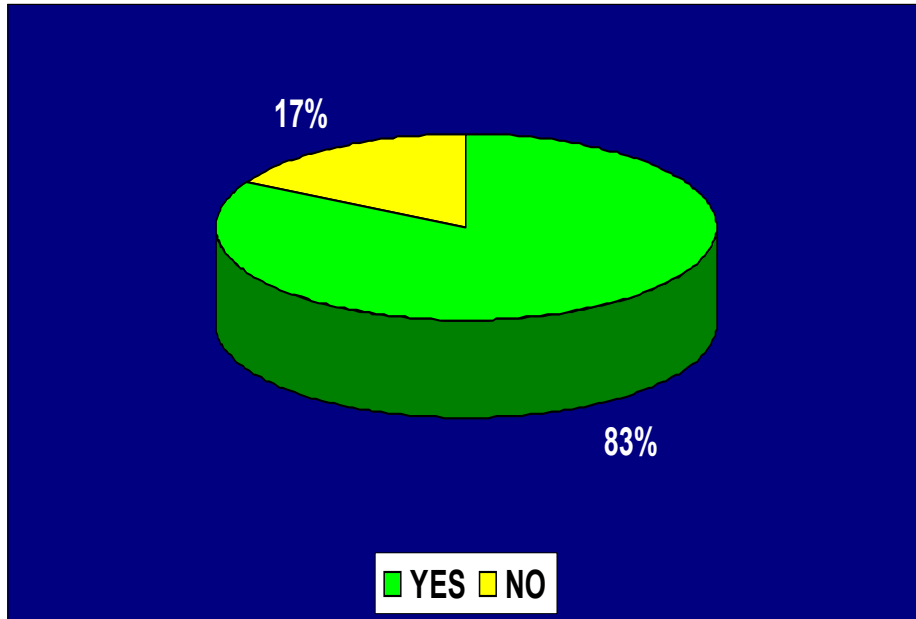


Figure 4 Promotion of tourism development

The majority of the respondents view tourism development as having the potential to improve the quality of life in Bergville. Another important benefit which the respondents identified is the fact that tourism development can bring about social cohesion and integration as well as international recognition. The preservation of the local culture and skills is very important. The respondents also perceive tourism development as an activity which can encourage the preservation of local skills and traditional belief systems. The preservation of the local skills and belief systems can promote the sustainability of the tourism industry because traditional skills and belief systems are connected to the environment. The support of tourism development by the majority of the participants indicates that local people perceive it as an activity that can alleviate poverty by creating employment, bringing about economic development, generating supplementary income, and creating new markets. These benefits can in turn improve the livelihoods of the people in Bergville.

Tourism development cannot take off without resources and attractions necessary to create a good image of a destination. The demand for a destination depends on available tourism resources and their relevance to the visitors' expectations. Coomber and Lim (2004:2) argue that expectations and perceptions are the most important factors that influence visitor satisfaction.

6. Discussions

The study showed that Bergville has most of the features and factors that can attract visitors. These are the features and factors which the potential tourism industry in Bergville can exploit, and by so doing derive social, economic and environmental benefits. This is similar to what the Okhahlamba Local Municipality (2010:22) noted that Bergville has natural resources such as the veld, flowers and animals. It has heritage sites, a National Park, good accessibility, an established tourism market as well as the positive attitude of the respondents towards tourism development. This implies that Bergville is ready for tourism development. These resources are assets for tourism development which Bergville can use to develop tourism and as a mechanism for poverty alleviation.

From the study, it is clear that Bergville has both tangible and intangible resources. Tangible resources are an important aspect for tourism development in Bergville. The area has the most critical tangible resources for tourism development. These are historical attractions, cultural attractions, natural attractions, historic sites and a unique landscape.

Such resources are responsible for the enhancement of the image of the destination and the attraction of visitors. They can attract visitors and create job opportunities for the local people, thus contributing to poverty alleviation.

The other critical tangible resource in Bergville is infrastructure in the form of accommodation, recreation facilities, linkages with highways and accessibility from urban centres. The availability of infrastructure has the potential for the creation of jobs in the tourism industry. It can boost the creation of employment opportunities in other business sectors. It can facilitate the creation of jobs in areas like management, cleaning, catering, maintenance, training and conferencing.

It can also create employment opportunities in other industries such as technology, telecommunications, accommodation, recreation and other related businesses. The findings of the study show that Bergville can take advantage of the availability of infrastructure in promoting tourism and therefore job creation and poverty alleviation.

Intangible resources are also important for the development of tourism, especially in rural areas, because they motivate visitors to come to the destinations. The majority of respondents believe that tourism development can bring about environmental awareness which can motivate the local residents to exercise environmental protection. This can contribute to the sustainability of the tourism industry in Bergville, which can make created jobs and economic growth more sustainable. It can also change the perceptions of the local people towards the components of the natural environment when unused natural and man-made environmental objects suddenly become useful income-generating resources.

Other intangible resources are tranquillity, environmental conservation, protection of the heritage and appreciation. All these are characteristics that improve the congruence between the rural destination image and the visitor. Power (2005:2) argues that the success of a strategy that uses tourism development to alleviate poverty is determined by its resourcefulness and the three categories of image: the image of the destination, the image of the service provider, and the self-image of the visitor.

The findings of the study showed that tourism development in Bergville can contribute to the creation of job opportunities, entrepreneurial skills development and increased income generation. Haldar (2007:1) argues that there is a large potential for rural tourism, especially for foreign tourists. In this way rural communities may benefit economically from the industry. From the analysis of the findings one can deduce that tourism development in Bergville can create jobs and alleviate poverty by being a centre of synergy for the creation of jobs and wealth.

Most rural people perceive rural-urban migration as a plan of action against poverty (Snel & Staring 2001). Tourism development can create an alternative space for fighting poverty. As tourism jobs are created, Bergville can achieve a certain degree of population stability by slowing down rural-urban migration. Tourism development can also facilitate industrial growth by attracting other businesses in Bergville which can create employment opportunities for the people and improve their livelihoods as they become employed and earn salaries. Tourism development as a new poverty-targeting economic activity can help the poor to focus on local opportunities for fighting poverty.

Tourism development in Bergville can create jobs which can help to alleviate poverty. The study showed that tourism development can create operators' jobs in the tourism industry, increase youth employment, and create more jobs in the service industry. This can encourage local people to open their own businesses and become self-employed. The creation of employment and self-employment through tourism development can go a long way in improving the livelihoods of people.

The results of the study indicate that tourism development in Bergville can maximise the participation of local people in economic activities. Tourism development, according to the findings, can attract other businesses to Bergville and thus create more economic participation. Economic participation would be further promoted by the emergence of small businesses because they are labour intensive and can create immediate employment for both skilled and unskilled people. This can improve the use of labour to the extent of increasing opportunities for women to participate in economic processes. As people begin to participate in economic activities, demand for local transport services increases as people move from home to places of work. When demand for local transport services increases, more job opportunities can be created, thus increasing the number of economically active people.

The study shows that tourism development can contribute to entrepreneurial development in two ways. Firstly, it can promote innovation in Bergville and thus create new business opportunities for local people. New business opportunities create new business operators which can create opportunities for training in business skills. Entrepreneurial development through tourism development has a high potential for empowering people to manage resources since resource management is critical to business success. The participants believe tourism development can stimulate the demand for local goods. This can increase the sale of traditional arts and crafts which can create a need for economies of scale, thus employing more and more people in the manufacturing of such goods as traditional arts and crafts.

The respondents believe that tourism development can change the unused farm buildings into business units. This can diversify the farming industry so that all the buildings which are underused on farms are made usable tourism assets. The study also revealed that tourism development can contribute towards entrepreneurship by way of providing local businesses with a market for selling their products. These are business operators such as street vendors and sellers of farm produce. The creation of selling opportunities can create a broad-based ownership of the tourism industry at the local level, and thus stimulate the development of new products, the emergence of new sources of supply, and encouragement of innovation in the local business.

The study shows that tourism development can contribute to economic growth in Bergville by expanding the economic base through linkages. In this way it can bring about economic expansion and encourage investments in the local area. One other advantage that tourism development can bring to Bergville is the diversification of the local economy, which creates new goods and markets for those goods. In this way local goods are made available to visitors, thus making tourism one of the main sources of foreign exchange earnings. The diversified economy demands raw materials from other sectors, thus becoming the driver of economic growth for Bergville.

The respondents did not have only positive perceptions about tourism development as the study revealed that they also believe that tourism development has both costs and benefits. The respondents believe tourism development creates problems such as conflict between locals and visitors, exploitation of resources, pollution and littering as well as traffic problems. The other concern raised by the respondents is that tourism development may cause damage to indigenous societies and culture. The respondents also believe that tourism development can cause social problems such as crime and put pressure on the local services. The conclusion is that the majority of the respondents believe tourism development must be restricted at the local community level.

As far as the respondents are concerned, Bergville has good potential for tourism development. The respondents also had positive perceptions about tourism development. The findings show that the percentage of the respondents who disagree with the positive statements is lower than that of the respondents who disagreed with negative statements. There is a general belief that tourism benefits outweigh its costs. The respondents view tourism development as an activity that can preserve the local practices and lifestyles.

In terms of existing management practices, the majority of the respondents believe that tourism management practices are participative because they allow local people a say in the running of the enterprise, which can contribute to the livelihoods of the local people. Regarding the contribution of tourism management to the achievement of local livelihoods, the majority of the respondents in the general public believed that there is a contribution, but the municipal employees disagreed with this. In the whole of this section the general public had positive views about the role of existing management practices and their contribution to local livelihoods. On the other hand, the local municipality employees generally did not agree that existing tourism management practices in Bergville allow community access to resources, and skills transfer. The same difference of opinion was clear when it came to the issue of the harmonious relationship between management practices and local culture.

The respondents in the business sector do not believe that tourism development can cause major problems. Less than 50% of them believe that it may result in price inflation of basic goods and services. They do not believe that it can create chaos and traffic problems, or that it is likely to create competition between them and outsiders. They do not view tourism development as an activity that can make it difficult for them to meet the demands and expectations of tourists, and do not agree that it can cause pollution and littering in Bergville. Generally, the respondents in the business sector do not view tourism development as a problem; instead they view it as an opportunity. Perceptions of such development show that these respondents do not believe that it can pose business challenges. On the contrary, they believe that it can add value to their business activities and bring in more economic gain for business in Bergville. Thus, it can be a way of bringing in foreign currency in the area. The respondents in the business sector view tourism development as an activity that will facilitate the development of infrastructure which can in turn make it easy for them to do business in the area.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The study concludes that people are pessimistic that the resourcefulness and accessibility of Bergville can support tourism development. Similarly, the study shows that rural tourism is seen as a very important, probably the most important, factor for economic development. The largest number of respondents sampled for this study agree that tourism development can contribute positively to the creation of job opportunities, development of entrepreneurial skills, and the generation of increased income. The study found that the people have both advocacy and cautionary perceptions about tourism development in Bergville. Furthermore, it was found that people have mixed feelings about the contribution of existing management practices in improving the livelihoods of local people.

Given the fact that generally the people of Bergville viewed rural tourism development as one of the viable formulae for poverty alleviation, we recommend that the local municipality strengthens the partnership with the local business sector, the local community sector and general stakeholders as well as the policy makers to ensure a faster integrated tourism development process. The research also recommends that local tourism planners adopt both the advocacy paradigm and the cautionary paradigm by taking advantage of the benefits of rural tourism development and managing its negative impacts.

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