

Tourism in Botswana in the Last 50 Years: A Review

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Abstract

Using the concepts of ecotourism and sustainable tourism, this paper reviews tourism development in Botswana since the country's independence in 1966. Findings from this review indicate that the tourism industry has facilitated a number of opportunities for local communities and has contributed to the country's economy. Tourism has stimulated the development of a variety of allied infrastructure and facilities, such as hotels, lodges and camps, airport and airstrips. Through its backward linkages, wholesale and retail businesses have also been established to offer various goods to the tourist industry. Tarred roads and other communication facilities have also been developed in Botswana. The tourism sector has also facilitated the creation of employment, local economic development and poverty alleviation, and contribution to biodiversity conservation efforts. These were facilitated by measures that have been put in place such as the adoption of policies and community participation models of development that created an enabling environment for tourism to develop and become one of the country's main economic drivers. On the other hand, the findings of this review reveal challenges that the industry continues to face such as the enclave nature of tourism, lack of tourism product diversification, community businesses misappropriation and mismanagement of funds, and lack of relevant community's marketing and promotional tools. Policy implications are also discussed.

Key words: Botswana, sustainable tourism, ecotourism, economic development

Introduction

Contributing 10% to global GDP, the Travel & Tourism sector contributes significantly to the global economy and employment (World Travel and Tourism Council 2015). The sector continues to grow faster than other major sectors such as manufacturing, transport, business services and financial services and is forecast to continue growing at 4% annually (World Economic Forum 2015). Globally, the tourism sector also contributes 9% of all jobs (South African Tourism 2015), approximately 266 million jobs in 2013 (World Travel and Tourism Council 2014). With continued global demand for travel, the sector continues to thrive and has proven to be important not only for economic development but also for creating jobs (World Travel and Tourism Council 2014).

While Europe (with a market share of 51.4%) continues to be the largest generator and receiver of international tourists, a number of emerging destinations in the Asia Pacific and least developed countries such as Tanzania and Cambodia have contributed to the continued growth in tourism (Sharp-ley & Telfer 2014; United Nations World Tourism Organisation 2015). In 2014 there were 1133 million international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) worldwide, with 619 million being from advanced economies (with 581.8 million from Europe) and 513 million from emerging economies (UNWTO 2015). Africa received 55.7 million international tourists in 2014, a global market share of 4.9% (UNWTO 2015). As a key foreign exchange earner for 46 out of 50 of the world's least developed countries (DeLacy 2009; Honey & Gilpin 2009), the sector is now the major export earner for a third of the

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world's poorest countries (Christ, Hillel, Matus & Sweeting 2003).

In Botswana, the tourism industry experienced an expansion in the 1990s after the adoption of the Tourism Policy of 1990. The tourism industry is Botswana's second largest foreign exchange earner, after diamond mining, contributing about 5.0% to Gross Domestic Product (Department of Tourism 2011). Botswana's tourism industry largely remains wildlife-based and is carried out in the northern parts of the country, especially in the Okavango and Chobe regions (Mbaiwa 2005). As this country has just celebrated fifty years of independence this paper endeavours to reveal the successes of and challenges to the tourism sector in Botswana to ensure the industry's continued progress and expansion. The objective of this paper is to use the concepts of ecotourism and sustainable tourism to review the development and growth of tourism in Botswana in the last fifty years. The paper is a review of the literature on tourism development in Botswana.

Overview of tourism in Botswana

Like many countries in the developing world, Botswana has embraced tourism to help diversify the economy and to promote environmentally sustainable development (Duffy & Moore 2010). As in most southern African countries, the industry heavily relies on wildlife resources and international leisure tourists (Department of Tourism 2012; Stone 2014). Botswana's tourism industry has been focused on consumptive and non-consumptive forms of tourism in its decades of development (Mbaiwa 2015). Tourism development in Botswana is linked with the country's first modern conservation policy, the Wildlife Conservation Policy that was introduced in 1966 (Campbell 2004; Child 1970). It was acknowledged then that wildlife has value, not only for its aesthetic value, but also for the economic returns it could earn and guidelines were designed. These included drastically (i) increasing financial returns from wildlife, initially through sport hunting, but later through more conventional forms of tourism, (ii) creating large areas of land to form wildlife reservoirs to provide an annual spill-over into surrounding areas for all forms of hunting, (iii) such areas needed to be protected from agricultural expansion, protecting a cross-section of all habitats and ecosystems and geological formations, (iv) protecting suitably large areas with necessary types of habitats for the preservation of all existing wildlife species, (v) developing areas listed above to take into account the need to conserve wildlife but also to provide facilities both for inviolate wilderness conservation and for all forms of tourism and (vi) to preserve areas of historic and cultural value (Campbell 1970).

The Botswana National Parks Act came into effect in 1967 and the 1970s marked a rapid growth in safari lodges that provided accommodation for incoming tourists (Child 1970, 1973; Moswete & Mavondo 2003). Much of this growth was facilitated by Botswana's perceived political stability and economic development (Moswete & Mavondo 2003). However it was only in the 1990s that the government of Botswana began to actively encourage tourism due to their realisation that there was an overdependence on a few key industries namely diamonds and beef (Kalikawe 2001; Moswete & Mavondo 2003) and the need to diversify the country's economy. The 1990 Tourism Policy describes tourism development as a means to diversify the country's economy away from reliance on mineral development (Government of Botswana (GoB) 1990).

Before the 1990s, the private sector controlled tourism development with little to no intervention from government (Pfothenauer 1991). Since then the sector has grown rapidly from 60 to 130 camps in 2010 (Botswana Tourism Organisation 2010). The rapid growth in tourism is reflected in the increase in the number of international day visitors from 619,582 in 1994 to 2,531,979 in 2010 (Department of Tourism 2012). Although tourism was almost non-existent at the country's independence, the sector is now the second largest economic sector in the country (after mining) contributing 8.5% to

the Gross Domestic product and 10.1% of the total employment numbers (Mbaiwa 2015; World Travel and Tourism Council 2015). Tourism is also promoted as benefitting both locals and visitors as well as generating foreign exchange earnings (Stone 2014).

The industry's existence could be attributed to the existence of game reserves and national parks. At present, 17% of the land is covered by national parks and game reserves and an additional 22% has been designated as wildlife management areas. Essentially 39% of the country's land is used for nature-based tourism; the focus of tourism activities is especially on the Chobe and the Okavango Delta areas (Department of Tourism 2010). A recent assessment of Botswana's tourism shows that the country's tourism industry is enclave in character, typically relies on foreign owned facilities, has high revenue leakages, weak links with the domestic economy and minimal domestic tourist and citizen participation, (Mbaiwa 2011; Stone 2014). Despite this, tourism is central to the Government of Botswana's economic development strategy of income generation and is promoted in order to stimulate sustainable economic development, especially in remote rural areas (Stevens and Jansen 2002).

To that end, a number of policy instruments have been adopted. These include the: Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986, Seven Year National Development Plans, Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Policy of 2007, the Botswana Tourism Master plan of 2000 and the National Ecotourism Strategy of 2002. The goals of these policy documents are to help diversify the economy, improve livelihoods and promote local participation in the tourism sector.

Furthermore, through the Tourism Policy of 1990 the government aims to stimulate the provision of various service industries, strengthen linkages to other economic sectors and improve the quality of life for the population through the provision of educational and recreational opportunities whilst projecting a favourable image to the outside world. The policy states that this is to be achieved in an ecologically sustainable manner. Increasing the participation of Botswana in the ownership and management of tourism enterprises remains one of the central tenets of the policy (GoB 1990).

The tourism sector has been identified as a new engine of growth in the country, with the potential to conserve natural resources, diversify the economy and improve local livelihoods. This paper is a review of the literature to determine the contributions of the tourism sector in promoting natural resource conservation and improving local livelihoods. We have used secondary data sources in the form of published and unpublished data on tourism in Botswana. These include government reports and policies, consultancy reports, books and journal articles (which provides the bulk of the information used in this paper). All the available data were analysed qualitatively, and are presented in themes.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry with a global annual growth rate of 5%, characterizing 11.4% of all consumer spending and 6% of the world gross domestic product (The Global Development Research Center 2007). It owes its roots to tourists' unhappiness with issues such as overcrowding and other unpleasant conditions at destinations, leading to the seeking of serene and pristine destinations by many nature lovers (Honey 2008). Concerns about the impacts of mass tourism on host communities also contributed to the adoption of alternative forms of tourism in an effort to ensure the sustainability of resources (Lenao & Basupi 2016). Due to the view that ecotourism is a less impactful alternative form of tourism (Lawrence *et al.* 1997) many destinations, including Botswana, have adopted ecotourism as part of their sustainable tourism approaches (Weaver 2006)

Ecotourism emphasises natural attractions, educational interactions and careful tourist

management practices that put emphasis on the achievement of sustainability in livelihood enhancements, biodiversity conservation and socio-culturally sustainable outlooks and outcomes. For many African countries, such as Botswana, ecotourism is promoted from the conservation and socio-economic development purpose (Butcher 2005). The argument advanced is that it provides a win-win situation between development and conservation, whereby communities can earn money from tourists and use the money to support their way of life while in the process conserving natural resources. Opportunities associated with engagements in ecotourism can include: revenue from ecotourism ventures, the opportunity to work in conservation, infrastructural developments such as medical facilities and schools and salaries earned from employment in ecotourism enterprises. There are prospects for communities to become stewards of the ecosystem, which may trigger changes in communities' social behaviour and changes in land use (Buckley 2016; Jamal, Borges & Stronza 2006).

Although critics of the ecotourism concept allude to its focus on 'northern' interests while overlooking local residents' relationships with the environment, world and experiences (Jamal *et al.* 2006), it has been beneficial in its contribution to the conservation of threatened species and supporting anti-poaching measures in protected areas (Buckley & Pabla 2012).

In Botswana, ecotourism is promoted to protect the country's cultural and natural heritage, as well as to enhance the active involvement of all Botswana and the host communities in all facets of the industry's development and management. Ecotourism in the country is guided by the following principles: (i) minimising negative social, cultural and environmental impacts, (ii) maximising the involvement in, and the equitable distribution of economic benefits to host communities, (iii) maximising revenues for re-investment in conservation, (iv) educating both visitors and local people as to the importance of conserving natural and cultural resources and (v) delivering a quality experience for tourists (Stevens & Jansen, 2002, ii). The Ecotourism policy and strategy of Botswana indicates that tourism planning and management is pitched toward the long-term vision. In this regard, the Government of Botswana aims to promote more tourism while at the same time abating uncontrolled and damaging growth for the benefit of present and future generations. Some of the government's planning initiatives aimed at achieving ecotourism include the Ecotourism certification of tourism facilities. Eco-certification is aimed at persuading tourism facilities' operators to improve their environmental management practices through a system of competitive benefits and rewards.

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism calls for the development of tourism policies that assure the safeguarding of social, cultural and natural resources and guarantee that these assets can meet the needs of present and future populations and tourists (Liu 2003). It comprises measures and management practices pertinent to all types of tourism and should therefore not be misunderstood to be a type of tourism (Weaver 2006; United Nations World Tourism Organisation 2008). Although defined in multiple ways in the literature, most authors agree that 'sustainability' in tourism refers to tourism which is in a form that can be developed, maintained and be viable over an unspecified period of time without degrading or changing the human and physical environment (Butler 1999; Tosun 2001).

Sustainable tourism aims to minimize conflicts caused by interactions between local communities, the tourism industry, visitors and the environment, calls for limits to growth and the long-term quality and viability of both natural and human resources and strives to safeguard long term sustainable tourism developments in host communities/ destinations and increase visitor satisfaction, thereby promoting repeat visitations (Hardy Beeton & Pearson 2002). The earliest distinguisher of mass and sustainable tourism is scale; sustainable tourism has often been regarded as being small in scale rela-

tive to mass tourism. Clarke (1997) argues that sustainable tourism grew from the notion that small is synonymous with sustainability.

Critics of sustainable tourism argue that it makes many false expectations and arguments (Mbaiwa 2011; Stone & Stone 2013). Sharpley (2000) argues sustainable tourism strategies tend to emphasise small-scale localized development projects with less attention being paid beyond local or regional boundaries. Globally, most strategic tourism planning documents actually refer to sustainable tourism goals (Hardy *et al.* 2002) and for many developing countries, such as Botswana, sustainable tourism is promoted for the “ideals of equality, natural resource conservation, and social development” (Botswana Tourism Development Programme 2000, 1) and is considered a means to reduce some of the dangers posed by unmanaged tourism (Lane 1994; Stone 2013). Many of Botswana’s frameworks, like the Botswana Tourism Master Plan, aim at achieving sustainable tourism development in Botswana.

Discussion

Here we discuss the state of tourism in Botswana since independence. Since the adoption of tourism as a form of livelihood and a significant economic driver, both success and challenges have been experienced. While numerous themes were identified from the literature reviewed, the following successes were most common: tourism and employment creation, tourism as a strategy for poverty alleviation and tourism as a means to promote conservation. In terms of challenges the following were identified: the undiversified nature of Botswana’s tourism products, the enclave nature of tourism in Botswana, lack of relevant marketing and promotional tools for communities involved in tourism and the misappropriation and mismanagement of funds.

Successes of tourism in Botswana

Tourism and employment creation

A number of authors (Lenao 2015; Mbaiwa 2004, 2005, 2015; Stone & Stone 2011, 2013; Stone 2015) have identified employment creation as one major success of tourism in Botswana. For instance, the World Travel and Tourism Council (2015) reports that in 2014, the travel and tourism sector in Botswana’s total contribution to employment was 69,500 jobs or 10.1% of total employment. This includes jobs indirectly supported by the industry. In the Okavango Delta, Mbaiwa (2015) indicates that 610 people were employed in 14 ecotourism establishments between the years 2011 and 2012. Here ecotourism is often practiced under the rubric of ‘community-based natural resources management’ (CBNRM) (Rozemeijer & van der Jagt 2000; Lenao & Basupi 2016), introduced to promote local involvement in tourism. This is especially important for rural area dwellers that have managed to get employment in the sector.

In the Chobe Enclave Community Trust (CECT) tourism has provided opportunities for self-employment through the creation of opportunities for small business enterprises such as those specializing in staged traditional dancing (5 groups) and handicraft production (6 groups) (Stone & Nyaupane 2016a). In the Tswapong area, the Goo-Moremi Mannonnye Conservation area has provided job opportunities for community members who work as security guards, in management positions, housekeeping and tour guides (Elijah 2014; Moswete & Thapa 2015). Sebele’s paper of 2010 found that community-based tourism at Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust (KRST) has been a good source of employment creation for community members. This is especially important for rural areas because they usually experience shortages in facilities, have the poorest inhabitants and have high unemployment levels (van der Jagt *et al.* 2000; Sebele 2010). Even in urban centres such as Gaborone and Maun, the

study of Moswete *et al.* (2008) found that about 1% of respondents in Gaborone, and 13% in Maun indicated that they were employed by tourism and related businesses. Although indications show that wages from tourism employment are low, they still enhance the livelihoods of many rural dwellers and the cash benefits are more widely spread (Ashley 2000; van der Jagt *et al.* 2000). For instance, the money from such employment is used to construct houses, buy food and clothing, pay school fees and support family members and parents (Sebele 2010; Mbaiwa & Stronza 2010). Tourism in Botswana has indeed contributed towards the government's strategy of using tourism to promote rural development and alleviate poverty. This is particularly true for of communities engaging in community-based tourism, especially in the Okavango Delta, where 80% of ecotourism projects in Botswana are located (Mbaiwa 2015).

Although tourism has contributed to employment creation in Botswana, the challenge is that the jobs of citizens in the tourism industry have been of poor quality and low payments. Studies (e.g. Britton 1982; Healy 1994; Ceballos-Lascurain 1996; Oppermann & Chon 1997; Mbaiwa 2015) have shown that citizens and local people held poorly paid and unskilled jobs while management and better paying positions are held by expatriates. In Botswana this is a challenge that needs addressing.

Tourism as a strategy for local economic development and poverty alleviation

The travel and tourism sector injected a sum of BWP6, 154.1million (or 3.3% of the country's total GDP into the economy in 2014 (World Travel and Tourism Council 2015). The money is used for various development purposes within the country. According to Mbaiwa (2013), in the Okavango Delta alone BWP16, 030,056 was made in 2010, BWP13, 743,688 in 2011, and BWP6, 360,981 in 2012. For rural communities engaging in tourism, CBNRM has facilitated the generation of money used for various poverty alleviation initiatives such as the provision of social services such as housing for orphans, destitutes and the elderly, water supply, scholarships, annual households dividends, old age pension, microcredit schemes, funeral assistance and game meat (Arntzen *et al.* 2007; Mbaiwa 2015; Mbaiwa & Stronza 2010; Sebele 2010). At the Chobe Enclave Conservation Trust further poverty alleviation strategies reported include the provision of tractors and ploughing equipment for farming to improve food self-sufficiency, the establishment of grinding mills, cement brick moulding facilities and the building of general dealer stores to provide services to the community and to curb long distance travel to obtain goods and services (Stone 2015).

In the Okavango Delta, income from tourism has facilitated the diversification of rural income generation strategies. Strategies that contribute to local economic development include the establishment of Santawani Lodge, Shandrika cultural tourism village and Kazikini campsite by the Sankoyo community (Mbaiwa 2004). Ecotourism management benefits have facilitated rural development through the employees' acquisition of modern facilities such as the Internet, television, modern housing and radios (Mbaiwa 2015; Stone & Nyaupane 2016a). Other local economic developments include the local sourcing of goods and services, thereby giving small scale, informal sector businesses the opportunity to engage indirectly with tourism and in turn sustain their livelihoods and eradicate poverty.

In places that are hard to access, community owned project vehicles have made the movement of people from one place to another possible (Schuster 2007). In the Chobe area, tourism has led to the expansion of subsistence arable farming due to investments in agriculture (Stone & Nyaupane 2016a). Stone and Nyaupane (2016a) argue this may exacerbate human-wildlife conflicts, however, communities believe that solely depending on tourism is too risky, hence revenue from ecotourism is used to improve agricultural production. Tourism has thus provided some communities in Botswana with socio-economic benefits that have improved livelihoods and reduced poverty as advocated by the country's tourism policies.

Tourism and the promotion of conservation

The adoption of ecotourism and sustainable tourism principles was facilitated by the need to control the numbers of visitors, promote conservation and reduce environmental degradation. Due to the unsustainable pressure on natural resources, CBNRM was adopted as an alternative approach to tourism development in Botswana (Fabricius & Koch 2004). CBNRM assumes that once local communities are participating and benefit from their natural resources they will use them sustainably (Mbaiwa 2007). Since its adoption in many rural communities in Botswana, a number of conservation successes have been achieved. For instance, in 2004, there were 56 rhinos in Botswana, 27 of them were located at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust (KRST) (Stone & Stone 2011), which is a community-based ecotourism enterprise. By 2009, the number of rhinos at the KRST had risen to 35 white and 3 black rhinos (Dow 2009; Stone & Stone 2011) indicating that communities are contributing to biodiversity conservation efforts through participation in tourism ventures. Police records of 2012 also indicate that in the CECT area, incidents of poaching were low in areas where tourism is promoted (see Table 1) due to the promotion of conservation and development as compared to offences in those areas not taking part in tourism activities. It should be noted that this was the period before the hunting ban of 2014, when safari hunting was one of the main revenue generation activities in Botswana.

Similar results were seen from the Okavango Delta where illegal hunting occurrences have declined from 23 incidents in 1998 to 5 incidents in 2006 (Mbaiwa *et al.* 2011). Mbaiwa (2015) attributed this decline to people’s changing attitudes towards wildlife resources. He reports that due to benefits derived from the tourism sector, people have developed positive attitudes towards wildlife conservation and tourism. Success is further enhanced by the use of community escort guides, an initiative of the communities themselves to ensure compliance to community regulations on environmental management (Mbaiwa 2016; Schuster 2007).

Table 1: Poaching offences from 2001 to 2012

Offence	Number of cases CECT area	Number of cases Non CECT area
Hunting during closed season	02	23
Hunting without license	17	34
Hunting protected animals	03	17
Hunting partial protected game	05	18
Hunting and capturing game	01	09
Unlawful possession of government trophy	10	21
Total	38	122

Source: Stone & Nyaupane 2016a (compiled from case registries at Kachikau and Kasane Police stations)

Challenges of tourism in Botswana

Undiversified nature of Botswana’s tourism products

As is characteristic of many African countries, the tourism industry of Botswana remains undiversified and heavily reliant on wildlife as the main attraction and as the biggest motivation for international tourist visits (Department of Tourism 2012; Department of Wildlife and National Parks 2014; Stone 2014). In 2010, a comparison of international and domestic tourists visitation flows reported that there

were 2, 145, 079 international tourists arrivals compared to 1, 166, 141 domestic overnight tourist trips (Department of Tourism 2012). Data from Botswana's national parks indicate travel to national parks and game reserves, the mainstay of the country's tourism industry, is very low amongst locals (Department of Wildlife and National Parks 2014).

The call for the diversification of tourism products has long been called for, but it has thus far not been given adequate attention by the industry. The Botswana Tourism Master Plan (BTMP) of 2000 identified product diversification as the only means through which the country's tourism industry could be developed in the long term. The plan also suggested the identification of additional tourism products and the inclusion of new geographical regions, especially in the southern part of the country. To complement the current wildlife product, cultural, historical, archaeological, and "theme" holidays were identified as potential products. To facilitate this, the BTMP of 2000 called for the government provision of marketing assistance, financial assistance, training, and infrastructure to facilitate the success of such initiatives. More than a decade later we can see that the continued focus on wildlife products indicates that the tourism sector remains undiversified and suggested recommendations remain untapped (Stone 2014).

In Botswana the domestic tourism market remains undeveloped. In most Third World countries millions of dollars are spent yearly attracting international tourists (Scheyvens 2007). This expenditure is driven by perceived economic benefits such as foreign exchange earnings, small business development, and employment opportunities as well as the view that domestic tourism cannot bring the same financial gains as international tourism (Richter 1989; Scheyvens 2007). Due to this, little or no attempts are made to encourage domestic tourism (Mazimhaka 2007; Scheyvens 2007) however domestic tourism constitutes over 80% of world tourism flows (Bigano *et al.* 2007) and a number of authors (e.g. Ghimire 2013; Rogerson & Lisa 2005; Stone 2014) have acknowledged the economic potential and sustainability related to domestic tourism.

Domestic tourism is able to counteract the seasonal nature of international tourism, develop sophisticated regional and national tourism systems, spread money more widely geographically, reduces economic leakages and develops the marginal regions where most attractions are located (Barkin 2001; Rogerson & Visser 2011; Skanavis & Sakellari 2011; Stone 2014). Furthermore, domestic tourism does not require extensive investment and it promotes economic and social sustainable regional development. It has been suggested that the current Tourism Policy is in need of review/updating and whose goal should be the promotion of budget tours at small-scale tourism facilities that cater to domestic tourists' needs (Mbaiwa 2005). The marketing of urban tourism coupled with the development of social activities and facilities has also been recommended as a means through which domestic tourism and economic development can be promoted in focal areas such as Gaborone and Maun (Mbaiwa *et al.* 2007). Further, research has shown that locals do not visit national parks due to cultural, social and historical factors (Stone 2014). Consequently, marketing strategies targeting locals should focus on cultural and other resources which may be more attractive to them, which would diversify the tourism sector which currently focuses more on wildlife and wilderness.

The enclave nature of tourism in Botswana

The country's tourism industry is one driven by dependency dynamics, Botswana depends on international tourists to drive its tourism sector, and international tourists depend on the country to provide its wilderness and wildlife resources (Stone 2014). The enclave nature of tourism in Botswana encourages this dependency through the reliance on internationally owned facilities and markets. In Botswana, enclave tourism is especially pronounced in the Okavango Delta, and is the reason for the weak links with

the domestic economy (Mbaiwa 2005). Britton as early as 1979 indicated that where enclave tourism exists, there is little interaction between host communities and tourist attractions; this is evident in Botswana's tourism sector. If domestic tourists were encouraged they would provide more economic input to local communities because they normally use locally owned facilities. This minimises economic leakages and promotes stronger backward and forward economic linkages (Canavan 2012).

The nurturing of the domestic market would benefit Botswana because currently the majority of the country's international tourist bookings are handled in South Africa, leading to economic leakages estimated at 70 to 90% of transactions (Baatweng 2014; Mbaiwa 2004). Since domestic tourists spend mostly in locally owned businesses and transport, they would counter the effects of those large economic leakages. International tourists spend less money at entry and departure points such as Gaborone and Maun, where domestic tourism can increase opportunities for spending money within the domestic economy (Mbaiwa *et al.* 2007).

Lack of relevant marketing and promotional tools by communities

In Botswana a number of authors have observed a lack of tourism marketing skills in the local communities; consequently many fail to market themselves to potential clients (Mbaiwa 2004; Sebele 2010; Lenao 2015). According to Mbaiwa (2004), this failure has resulted in private joint partners benefiting instead of the communities, this is due to the non-use of links and connections to market products. The same authors have reported the lack of marketing and promotion from several community projects around the country including Khama Rhino Sanctuary, Gaing'O Community Trust, Goo-Moremi and Khwai Development Trust. Lenao (2015) notes that even though some communities may claim to use websites to market their product, those websites can be inaccessible for months at a time, as was the case with the community managing the facilities at Lekhubu Island, their website was down for eight months (Lenao 2015). In another example, the Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust website was not updated for over two years Sebele (2010).

Stone and Stone (2013) noted that the Khwai Development Trust reported that no money was ever set aside for marketing and promotional purposes. Investigative results indicated a lack of understanding of the importance and purpose of marketing: respondents thought allocating funds for marketing and promotional purposes would be a waste of money claiming that marketing was the responsibility of the joint venture agreement partner. The result was that the project did not have a marketing plan and did not carry out any market research in relation to prices charged, customer service, customer needs and customer satisfaction. Poor marketing skills have also been identified as being responsible for the low levels of urban tourism in Botswana (Mbaiwa *et al.* 2007).

Joint venture partnerships that Community-Based Organisations have with safari companies have also been recognized as failing to promote managerial, entrepreneurship and marketing skills in community based tourism (Mbaiwa 2015). Extant literature indicates the urgent need for skills development in local communities so that they can fully participate in the tourism business (Mbaiwa 2015; Stone 2015).

Misappropriation and mismanagement of funds

Skilled manpower is a key challenge faced by many community-based tourism ventures in the country, a probably the cause of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds by many community trusts. Cases of the misappropriation of community funds have been reported at Mababe - Zokotsama Community Development Trust (Sekhobe 2010), the audit report revealed poor management skills led to the demise of the Trust. It was found that transactions had been made on loose-leaf paper, which made

it difficult to trace transactions such as payments and incomes. There were also problems of missing documents, improper filing of primary books of accounts and payments not sanctioned by the board having been made and without the Treasurer's knowledge (Sekhobe 2010; Stone & Stone 2013).

Similar reports have come from other tourism enterprises in the country, Mbaiwa (2015) reports that the cases of Okavango Kopano Mokoro Community Trust in the Okavango Delta where in the year 2000 BWP12, 500.00 was misappropriated and Khwai Development Trust where the Board of Trustees embezzled approximately BWP400, 000 between the years 2002 and 2003. Mbaiwa (2004; 2008) ascribes this mismanagement to the lack of mechanisms by which community benefits from tourism are distributed and the disconnect between Trust leaders and their general membership.

Climate change threats to tourism in Botswana

Botswana's economy relies heavily on natural resources (Stone & Nyaupane 2016b) and the challenges posed by climate change may be hard hitting. In a study in Kgalagadi South, Saarinen, Hambira, Athlapheng and Manwa (2012) found that tour operators have reported changes related to human induced local impacts, such as littering, deforestation and overgrazing and weather and vegetation. However, most indicated these changes did not affect their businesses (Saarinen *et al.* 2012). In Maun, some tour operators indicated that rises in temperatures attracted more customers, especially those interested in swimming. While some indicated that this had caused a decline in the number of visitors due to the heat (Hambira *et al.* 2013). Nature-based tourism activities are sensitive and vulnerable to climate change (Scott 2003 *et al.* 2007). In Botswana, for instance, Hambira *et al.* (2013) reported negative impacts on scenic flights and boat cruises due to high temperatures, and in response some operators had changed their working hours. Indications are that the accommodation sector has also been affected because a decline in nature-based activities leads to a decline in the number of visitors needing accommodation. In their Kgalagadi South and Maun studies, Hambira *et al.* (2013) and Saarinen *et al.* (2012) found that most tourism business operators do not have climate change adaptation strategies in place making them vulnerable to agents of climate change.

Tourism and gender

Although research on poverty reduction and gender issues in tourism has mainly concentrated on women's economic empowerment, Tucker and Boonabaana (2012) indicate there is still a deficiency in knowledge about what is entailed in facilitating the participation of women in tourism, especially for development and economic gains. Ferguson (2009), Tucker and Boonabaana (2012) indicate there is a clear division between male and female employment in the tourism sector, with women mostly being employed in part-time, seasonal, low paying jobs such as those involving cleaning, retail and hospitality, especially in larger-scale tourism enterprises. Despite this, family-run businesses and small and micro-enterprises tend to be more favourable towards women because they offer women a chance to advance their standing outside the household (Gibson 2001; Scheyvens 2000).

In Botswana little knowledge exists on gender and tourism. However, in this context, women's political and socio-economic status in society is no different from other women across the globe, hence the need for developmental policies in tourism that place women at the forefront, especially those in rural areas (Lenao & Basupi 2016; Munoz-Bullon 2009). In the patriarchal society of Botswana, the exclusion of women's empowerment issues in tourism policies places women at a disadvantage and does not show the government's commitment to addressing the issue. Policies are a sign of intent and a demonstration of political will on behalf of leadership. According to Lenao and Basupi (2016), a commitment by government through its policies will assure the affected group that

their issues have been heard and are important.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that tourism development in Botswana has contributed to the country's economic development and has enhanced community livelihoods' proving the important role tourism plays in development. Although the sector was almost non-existent at the country's independence in 1966, it is currently second in terms of contributing to the country's GDP, thereby indicating remarkable progressive development. Botswana's tourism sector has not developed without challenges. Results in this paper indicate that tourism development needs more supporting structures for many of the stakeholders in order to optimise the contribution to the country's economic and environmental development.

The development of policy documents to guide tourism developments provide the strong foundation on which tourism development can build confidently. Tourism policy makers should understand the importance of tourism planning and development and endeavour to ensure the sustainability of Botswana's tourism. Sustainable tourism does not happen by chance but needs great planning, committed effort and dedicated resources. More directive policy development and research focusing on the impact of tourism on climate change is needed urgently. This is of outmost importance because the type of tourism promoted in Botswana depends directly on the climate and weather, which will be affected, negatively or positively, by climate change (Saarinen *et al.* 2012). More research and policy initiatives are needed to determine and address how the tourism sector contributes to climate change, how climate change will affect Botswana's tourism, and to consider the adaptation and mitigation measures that should be put in place to address all of these. In addition, the Botswana government emphasizes empowerment as a means through which locals can participate in tourism, however, as a patriarchal society, Lenao and Basupi (2016) caution that if deliberate efforts are not made to empower women in the tourism sector, their participation and empowerment may be compromised. More research will determine the role of gender in tourism and describe what needs to be done to get more women involved in the tourism sector. The aim of such research would be to influence to policy encouraging the involvement of more citizens in the tourism sector, especially women. This study's findings indicate that tourism development in Botswana offers both opportunities and challenges. The results show a positive example of how the government's approach to natural resources management is evolving, with communities being recognized as relevant custodians in biodiversity conservation through their engagement in nature-based tourism enterprises. While communities gain economic benefits through participation in nature-based tourism, environmental awareness and conservation is promoted since communities can easily see the link between tourism development and biodiversity conservation.

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