



Ecotourism as a vehicle to reduce unemployment and poverty: The role of the community and employees

Fikile Xaba (PhD Candidate)
Department of Anthropology and Development Studies
University of Zululand
Kwa Dlangezwa, 3886
South Africa

Mosa Selepe*
Department of Research Administration and Development
University of Limpopo
Sovenga 0727, South Africa
E-mail: mosa.selepe@ul.ac.za

Joyce Mdiniso
Department of Anthropology and Development Studies
University of Zululand
Kwa Dlangezwa, 3886
South Africa

Corresponding author*

Abstract

Ecotourism has been positively linked to job creation, small business development and poverty alleviation. The article forms part of the larger study which seeks to assess the contribution of ecotourism to sustainable development in Umkhanyakude which is in KwaZulu Province in South Africa. Through a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling, 51 participants were selected from each of the four local municipalities, resulting in a combined total of 204 respondents overall. The study employed a parallel convergent design consisting of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from programme officials, project managers and owners of ecotourism ventures; while questionnaires were applied to elicit data from community members. The results revealed that Ecotourism initiatives contributed to the alleviation of poverty and unemployment in areas like Mtubatuba (40%), Hlabisa (30%) and Umhlabuyalingana (20%). Adversely, the study found that ecotourism in Jozini was largely underdeveloped and under-resourced, with relatively low community perceptions (10%) about its benefits. Drawing on these results, it was concluded that despite lack of financial resources, opportunities exist to improve implementation of ecotourism through capacitation of local communities and institutionalisation of community-based sourcing models.

Keywords: Community, ecotourism, poverty, sustainable development, unemployment

Introduction

In most developing countries, including South Africa, ecotourism is seen as key to achieving sustainable development through the alleviation of poverty and unemployment. Most governments now incorporate ecotourism into development, conservation policies and strategies that are implemented at local government level as part of local economic development (LED) initiatives (Javier, 2011). As an alternative to mainstream tourism, ecotourism entails visiting natural areas with a view to learn, to study, or undertaking activities that are environmentally friendly. The primary focus of ecotourism is the natural experience, which if harnessed well, can translate into economic and social development of local communities, thus helping to reduce poverty and unemployment (Song, 2016). The



distinguishing feature of ecotourism is that it focuses on experiencing and learning about nature, its landscape, flora, fauna and their habitats, as well as cultural artefacts from the locality. Its primary objective is to conserve resources, including biological diversity, which ensures sustainable use of resources that bring ecological experience to travellers (Kiper, 2013). An important contribution of ecotourism to development is that it provides products and services while at the same time accommodating the economic, social and environmental aspects of society.

Ecotourism supports sustainable development by ensuring a balance between human needs (i.e. natural experience) and preservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity (Eriksson and Lidstrom, 2013). Sustainable ecotourism is therefore central to creating independent and self-sustaining communities (Hill and Gale, 2009; Kiper, 2013). It is also directly linked to the concept of sustainable development through such initiatives as resource management in order to address the socio-economic challenges facing local communities while preserving cultural integrity, ecological processes, biological diversity and systems that support life (Irina-Ramona, 2016). Sustainable ecotourism is therefore central to creating independent and self-sustaining communities (Hill and Gale, 2009). Although many studies show how host regions benefit significantly from ecotourism, less has been shown on how poor rural communities in those regions benefit since there is limited involvement of local communities and previously neglected groups' ecotourism initiatives (Dondeyne, Kaarhus and Allison, 2012).

The ecotourism literature is focused on a wide range of thematic issues, such as ecological impact of wildlife viewing, dimensions of ecotourism, venture creation opportunities and community-based ecotourism, but there has been minimal attention to critical areas such as the link between ecotourism and sustainable development (Weaver and Lawton, 2008; Naidoo, 2012). Ecotourism has been variously defined as a developmental process that benefits both local people and the area in question; although, keeping a symbiotic balance between environmental protection and local community well-being is always a challenge given the conflicting stakeholder needs and priorities (Dologlou and Katsoni, 2016). Gartner (1996 in Matthews, 2002) claimed that ecotourism attempts to link economic and environmental impacts in a model which promotes community development activities while protecting and preserving local resources. Socially, ecotourism provides an opportunity for cross-cultural dialogue and allows people from both sides (i.e. ecotourists and local communities) to learn about one another (Kiss, 2004, in Abuamoud, Alrousan and Bader, 2015).

Hall and Boyd (2003) and Higham (2007) alluded that ecotourism offers the potential for economic transition, regional development, community empowerment and the creation of employment opportunities for peripheral and indigenous communities. On the contrary, it has been contended that ecotourism is controversial because community development objectives are not necessarily congruent with nature conservation goals in a given context (Berkes, 2007). While linking ecotourism with community conservation issues is widely recognised (Nkambule, 2016). Very little has been said about the practical performance of ecotourism in alleviating poverty and unemployment in rural areas (Nepal, 2007 in Naidoo 2012). As a result, local communities are increasingly taking a centre stage in biodiversity management efforts. In this approach, conservation starts from the ground up and involves networks and linkages across various levels of organisation i.e. government, environment non-governmental organisations (ENGOs), community based organisations and beneficiaries. Community conservation is based on the notion that if conservation and development could be simultaneously achieved, then the interests of both could be served. Indigenous knowledge and perspectives could be tapped to inform ecotourism projects. Local communities must be empowered to be able to participate in the management of protected ecotourism areas so that they can have a say in the distribution of benefits and sustainable use of their environment (Van der Merwe and Wocke, 2007).

Amid these contestations on the role of ecotourism in conservation and community development, the current study maintains that well implemented ecotourism initiatives are more likely to mitigate poverty and unemployment in rural areas, where income generating activities are relatively scarce.

Methodology

The study employed a parallel convergent design consisting of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Through a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling, 51 participants were selected from each of the four local municipalities, resulting in a combined total of 204 respondents overall. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from programme officials, project managers and owners of ecotourism ventures; while questionnaires were applied to elicit data from community members. The research findings are presented and discussed below.

Results

In this analysis, we use the empirical findings to show how implementation of ecotourism initiatives has contributed to gradual alleviation of poverty and unemployment in Umkhanyakude's four local municipalities i.e. Hlabisa, Jozini, Mtubatuba and Umhlabuyalinga. To do this, we used the data sets gleaned from employees of ecotourism enterprises and community members in each area.

Access to employment opportunities

Access to job opportunities was crucial to alleviating poverty and unemployment in the UDM. Participants were asked to indicate access to employment opportunities in terms of the quality of the jobs provided and income earned from these jobs, and opportunities for advancement. The results as reported by the participants were as follows (figure 1):

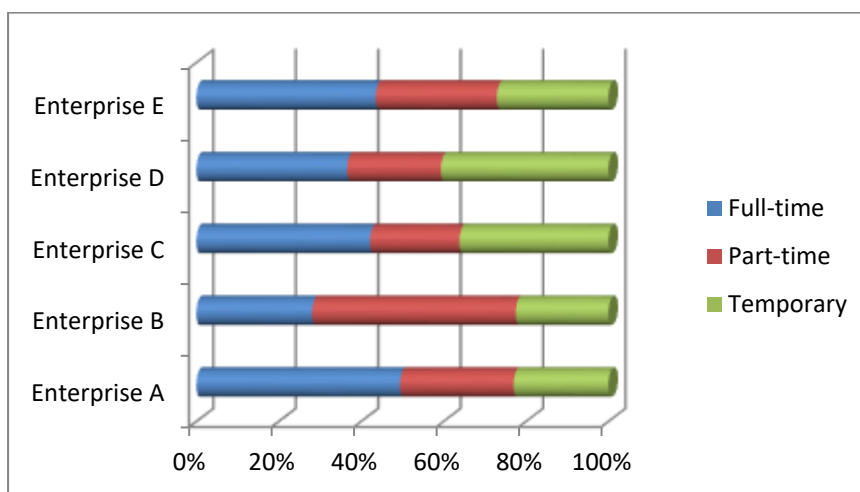


Figure 1. Quality of the jobs provided

Close to 50% of the employees surveyed (figure 1) reported that they were in fulltime jobs; followed by enterprise C and E with 40% respectively. This suggests that the quality of ecotourism jobs was better, thus ensuring sustainable income and job security for community members in the UKDM; which is crucial for poverty alleviation in the long-term.

Between 20% and 80% of employees in enterprise B were in temporary jobs. About (29%) of employees served in temporary jobs; a promising trend indeed as the UKDM is generally thought to have one of the highest unemployment rates in the KZN province (UKDM, IDP, 2016). The relatively high number (30%) of people in temporary jobs was correlated to peak times in the ecotourism industry when thousands of tourists' flock to the UKDM region, especially during summer. These results are corroborated by ILO-UNWTO research (2018) which confirmed that tourism industries are largely labour intensive and provide jobs and income for many local people. Results on earnings were as follows (figure 2):

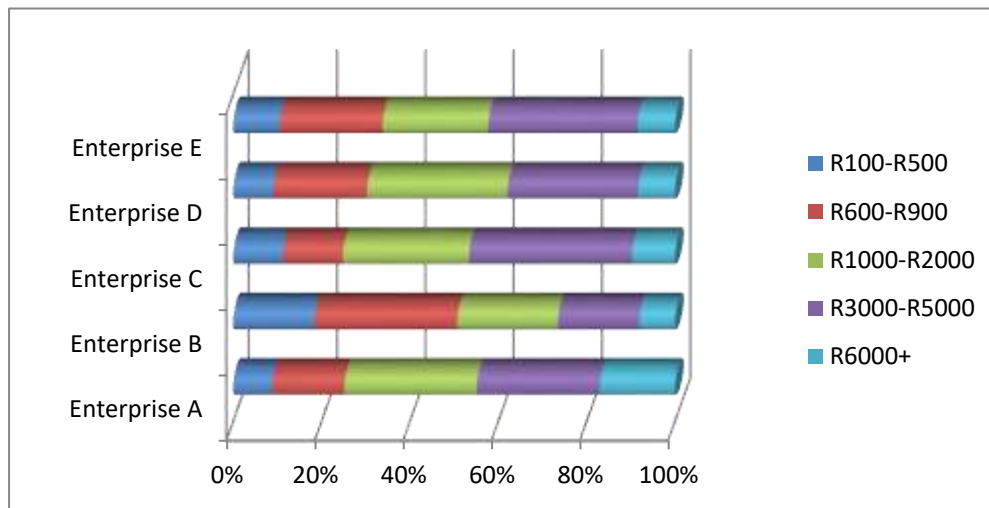


Figure 2. Earnings/ salary per month

Overall these results (figure 2) show that ecotourism jobs did help to mitigate poverty in the UKDM. For instance, most employees in enterprises A, C, D and E earned better salaries ranging from R3000 to R5000 per month. The high earnings ratio for enterprise C and E was attributed to the highly priced tourist resorts in Sodwana Bay (Umhlabuyalingana) and St. Lucia (Mtubatuba). However, a significant number (45%) of employees in Enterprise B and enterprise E still earned between R900 and R1000 per month; suggesting prevalence of income differentials between the ecotourism enterprises.

On average, the number of employees in the lower income bracket (R100-R500 per month) in all the five enterprises was less than 20%. Only a few (3%) employees in enterprises A and B earned more than R6000 per month and these were mainly professional employees in either managerial, professional or technical jobs, such as general managers, drivers, game rangers, or drivers. Approximately 10% of the employees surveyed had a monthly salary exceeding R6000. Thus, when compared with other sources of income, the additional income from ecotourism can make a substantial difference to people living in poverty and surviving on a subsistence basis (Van Wijk *et al.*, 2015 in Bob 2016). Below is data on benefits (figure 3):

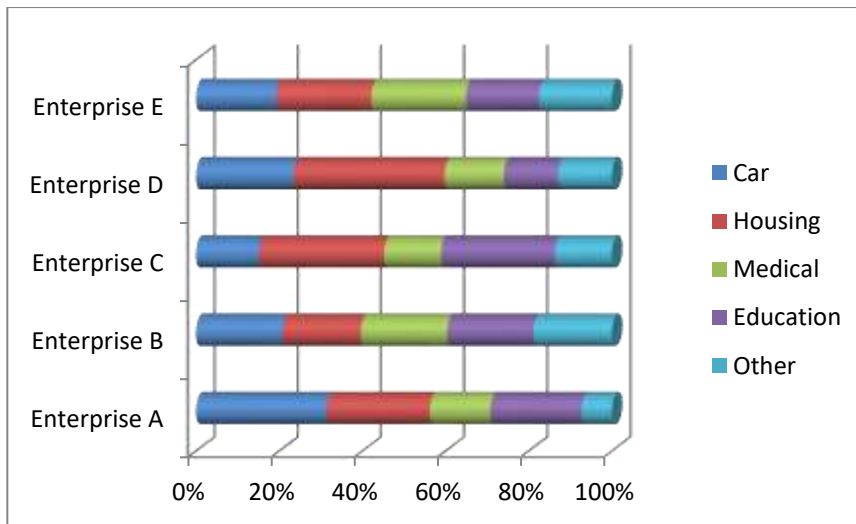


Figure 3. Employment benefits

Figure 3 reports that 40% of employees in enterprise A had access to car allowance; which was largely attributed to the fact that some senior employees could use company cars to and from work. Approximately 20% of employees in enterprises B, C, D and E had access to car benefits. Between 20% and 50% of employees in enterprise D had access to housing benefits, which were described as “sleep in” by some of the respondents, rather than normal housing allowance where an employee would be able to secure a mortgage bond. Meanwhile, positive signs were generally reported for education in enterprises A and C; where some employees reported that their employer had offered to assist their children with tuition fees for university education.

Education benefits in the other three enterprises were generally low at 1%. In addition, only a few (10%) of the employees across the five enterprises had alternative benefits to supplement their monthly earnings; such as clothing and food allowance. These findings are corroborated by the literature which states that employment in ecotourism is one of the most reliable sources of income for local people and can allow residents to earn more than other livelihood methods (Miller, 2017). The next paragraph covers findings on induction (figure 4) as perceived by employees of ecotourism enterprises in Hlabisa, Jozini, Mtubatuba and Umhlabuyalingana.

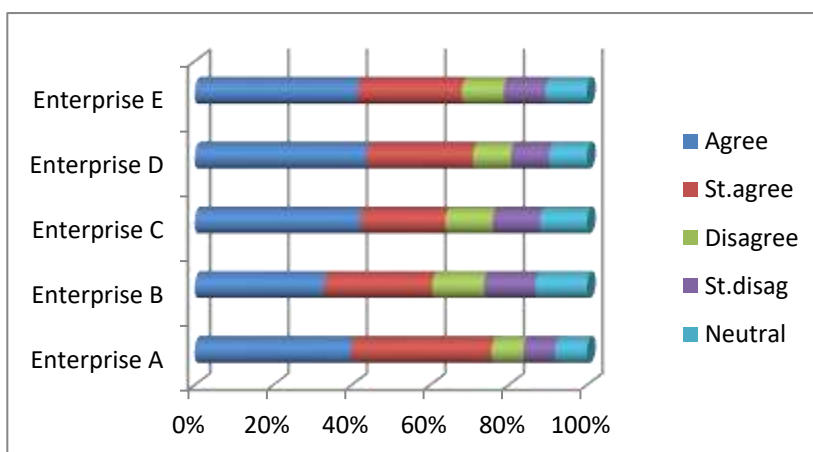


Figure 4. Received induction on the current job

The data in figure 4 shows that the majority of employees across the five ecotourism enterprises had been inducted before starting their jobs. Only a small number (10%) of the surveyed employees in each of the ecotourism companies had a negative experience of induction in their organisation; meaning that they had not been inducted on ecotourism practices when they assumed duties on day one. Employment activities must lead to a fair and equitable distribution of economic benefits among the recipient community to alleviate poverty and improve opportunities, services and income (Valtonen, 2013:13). Below is findings on advice and information on training (figure 5).

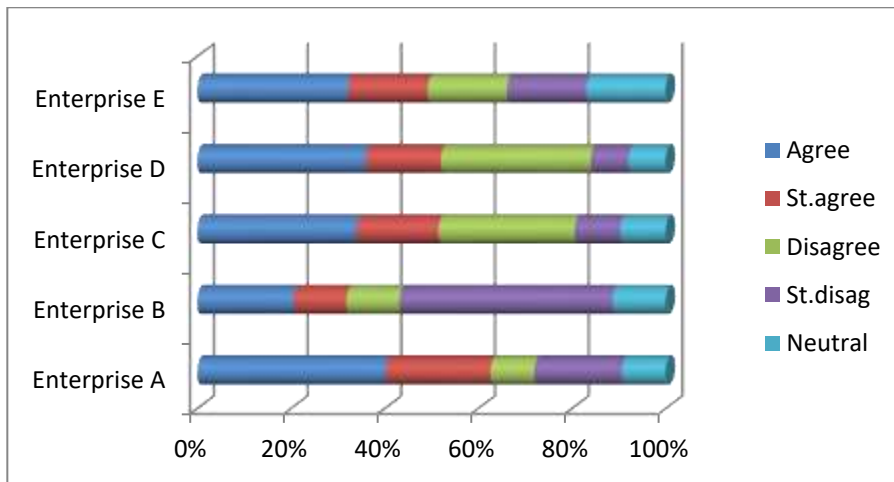


Figure 5. Information and advice on training

According to these results (figure 5), 60% of employees in enterprise C had been informed about training opportunities; followed by enterprise A and D with 40%. This information had been obtained from supervisors and/or owners of the ecotourism enterprises; as employees had to be trained before assuming their duties officially. Meanwhile, enterprise B had the highest number (80%) of employees who had not received information and advice on training. This could be an indication that skills development opportunities have not been fully extended to all employees in this enterprise. In some way, this deprives employees of the opportunity to learn and improve their knowledge and competencies on the job. Acquisition of skills is central to increasing both the skills levels and earning potential of community members; thus helping to reduce their vulnerability to poverty in the long term. The results on training opportunities are presented below (figure 6):

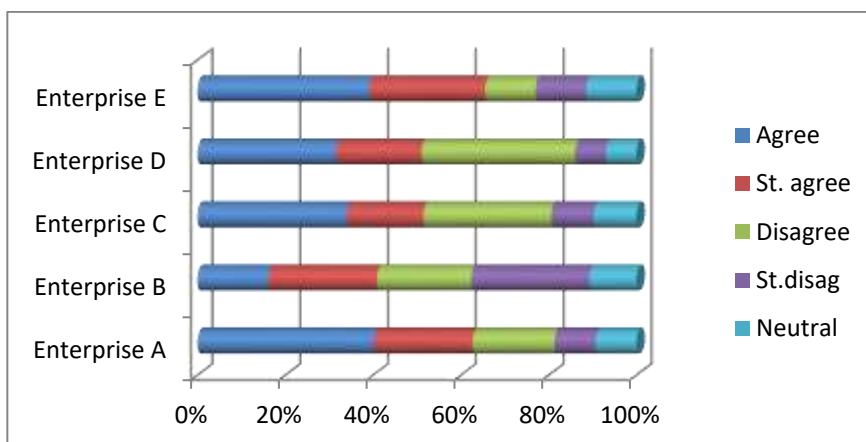


Figure 6. Training on ecotourism and related activities

According to figure 6, more than 80% of employees in enterprises A had received relevant training in ecotourism; followed by enterprise C and E with 60% respectively. In contrast, enterprise B had a significantly low number (10%) of employees who had received such training; suggesting gaps in the provision of ecotourism training in this enterprise particularly. Similarly, the majority (90%) of employees in enterprise D had not received training on ecotourism services. This situation is not unique to the UKDM. For example, in another study by Otarra (2018), it was found that most developing countries find it difficult to build ecotourism skills and as a result, ecotourism enterprises continue to suffer due to lack of proper staff training to ensure high quality services in the industry.

The literature highlights that skills development has a central role to play in ensuring the effective and sustainable transformation and development of ecotourism in developing countries. In the case of South Africa, ecotourism development ensures that poor communities benefit from these activities (Kaplan, 2004 and Nunez-Cachos, 2013). Below are results on promotion (figure 7).

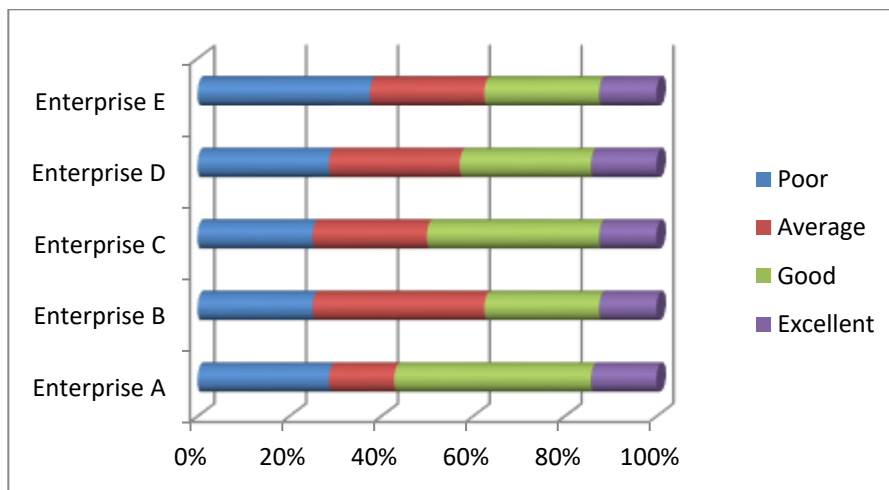


Figure 7. Promotion opportunities

Figure 7 reveals that more than half (58%) of the employees in enterprise B were generally positive about promotion opportunities in their organisation. By contrast, most (65%) employees in enterprise E felt that promotion opportunities were very poor in their organisation. Less than 20% of the employees across the five enterprises thought that promotional opportunities were excellent in their workplaces. Despite the variations in the number of promotional opportunities available in each ecotourism enterprise; these results do confirm that there were chances for career advancement in some of the ecotourism ventures in the four local municipalities of Umkhanyakude. This in turn increased community members' prospects to earn better salaries in future, which they could use to reduce poverty in their households.

Similarly, Aynalem, Bierhanu and Tesefay (2016) discovered that ecotourism created diversified employment opportunities in accommodation, food and beverage establishments, transportation services, travel agencies, tour operation companies, natural and cultural attractions sites. Below are community members' views and experiences on whether ecotourism helped reduced poverty and unemployment in their respective areas.

Community perspective

Assessing the role of ecotourism in alleviating poverty and unemployment would not be complete without considering the people directly affected by poverty i.e. community members. The experiences of community members on ecotourism projects were as follows (figure 8):

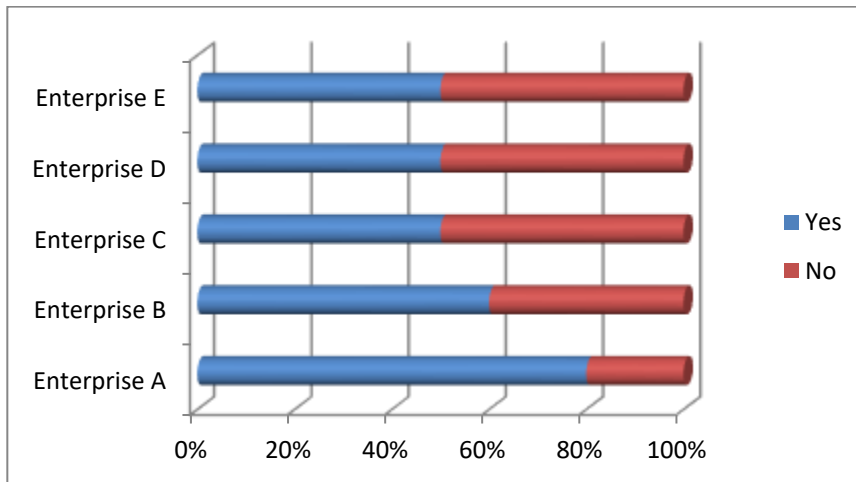


Figure 8. Access to information on available ecotourism services/opportunities

From these data (figure 8), it is evident that the majority (60% to 80%) of community members Hlabisa, Jozini and Mtubatuba had been informed about available employment and/or business opportunities in ecotourism projects in their respective areas. Very few (25%) community members in these three areas had not been properly informed about these opportunities; an indication that ecotourism communications were generally better in these areas. By contrast, a significant number of community members in Mtubatuba (40%) and Umhlabuyalingana (35%) had not been informed about available opportunities in ecotourism projects. On the whole, these results suggest that ecotourism communications were generally inadequate in some of these local municipalities. This finding on insufficient consultation of local communities is corroborated by Aseres (2015) who found that although ecotourism is introduced with great emphasis on the participation of residents, this often does not translate into visible and meaningful participation in the lucrative ecotourism trade. The results on job creation in ecotourism projects are presented below (figure 9).

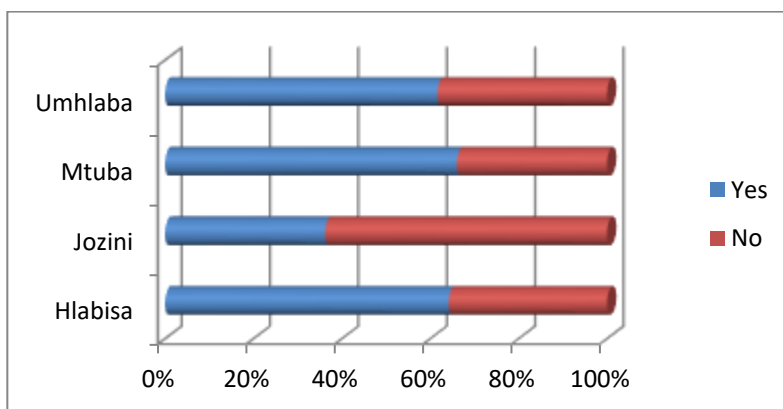


Figure 9. Job creation in ecotourism projects.

According to the data figure 9, most community members in Hlabisa (60%), Mtubatuba (65%) and Umhlabuyalingana (59%) agreed that ecotourism initiatives did create jobs for local people in their areas; although these were said to be limited and intermittent at times. Very few (30% of community members in these three local municipalities disputed or denied the role played by ecotourism enterprises in job creation. By contrast, 80% of community members in Jozini felt that ecotourism initiatives had not created enough employment opportunities local people in their areas. A similar sentiment was expressed by 40% of the participants in Hlabisa, Mtubatuba and Umhlabuyalingana respectively. As will be seen later, these findings (figure 9) are consistent with the admission by some officials and project managers during semi-structure interviews that ecotourism in Jozini had been largely neglected and underdeveloped. Consequently, this rendered the industry unable to absorb the thousands of unemployed persons in this community. This finding on underdevelopment of ecotourism is corroborated by the literature which shows that ecotourism has suffered partly due to lack of financial resources and suitable infrastructure (Zolfani, 2014).

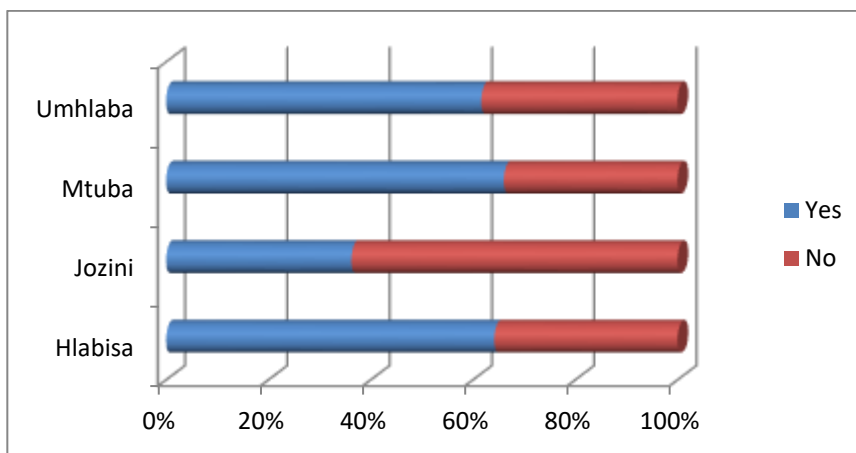


Figure 10. Community participation in ecotourism activities

These data sets (figure 10) suggest that Hlabisa, Mtubatuba and Umhlabuyalingana were probably more active (60%) in encouraging community participation in ecotourism activities than Jozini. Around 39% of participants in Jozini also confirmed that they had been encouraged to participate in such activities. Collectively, these findings indicate that attempts have been made by the four local municipalities to motivate community members to partake in ecotourism activities. These findings corroborated by Aseres, (2015) who also found that along with participating in accommodation and transportation facilities, local communities in Choke Mountain had great roles in providing different tour services such guiding and e-scout services, renting of horses for riding, and providing guardianship services for tourists and tourists' property during their stay.

On the contrary, some participants (60%) in Jozini said they had not been motivated to take part in these activities. Similarly, 30% of participants in Umhlabuyalingana denied knowledge of encouragement by their municipality, implying that this had never happened in their village. These results are consistent with Stone's (2014) study, which found that community participation in biodiversity conservation and community livelihoods was limited due the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the design, planning and implementation of such projects. Below are results on skills transfer (figure 11).

Skills transfer to community members

Contribution of ecotourism to poverty alleviation was also considered in terms of its ability to create income generating opportunities for local communities through venture creation. The data sets from the four participating local municipalities revealed the following (figure 11).

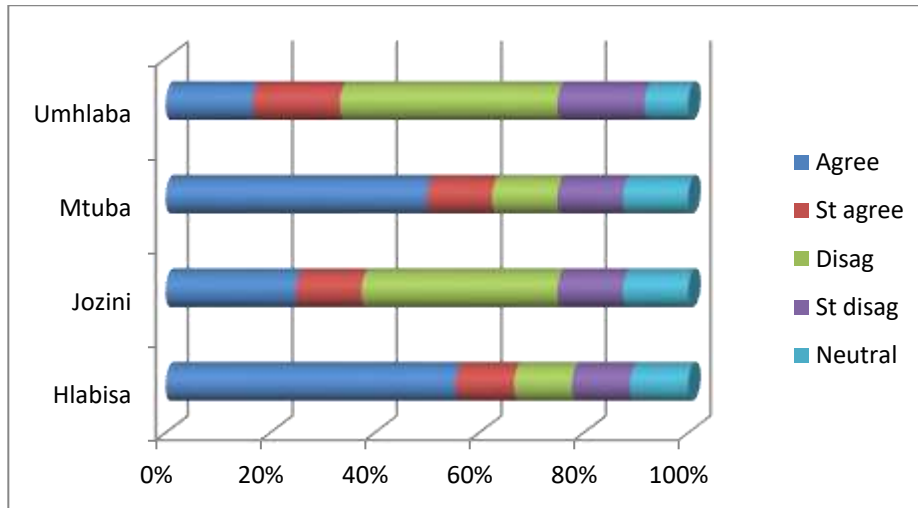


Figure 11. Small business development opportunities

Figure 11 shows that with the exception of enterprise A (80%) and enterprise B (65%), not much SMME development opportunities had been given to owners of small, community based ecotourism ventures in the other local municipalities. Only 10% of participants (i.e. community members) in these local municipalities could not figure out whether SMME services had been provided in their areas. Umhlabuyalingana and Jozini had the lowest number (20%) of SMME development services. Many (60%) participants here denied these opportunities. These findings on limited SMMEs support are corroborated by McLaughlin (2011) who established that paddle-based recreation ventures in Canada were partly hampered by lack of support and collaboration among local tourism businesses, as well as lack of property rights. Clearly, this situation goes against one of the most fundamental principles of ecotourism, which is to promote local economic development for the benefit of rural communities. Ecotourism, Akin (2015) argues, offers an opportunity to develop small business and home-based business development skills locally.

Income-generating opportunities

As part of the survey, community members were also requested to indicate whether they had been encouraged to (a) apply for jobs in ecotourism companies; (b) start tourism businesses e.g. cooperatives (c) partner with big ecotourism companies locally; (d) informed about black economic empowerment opportunities in the ecotourism tourism sector and (e) advised on how to access finance for business start-up. The results were as follows (figure 12):

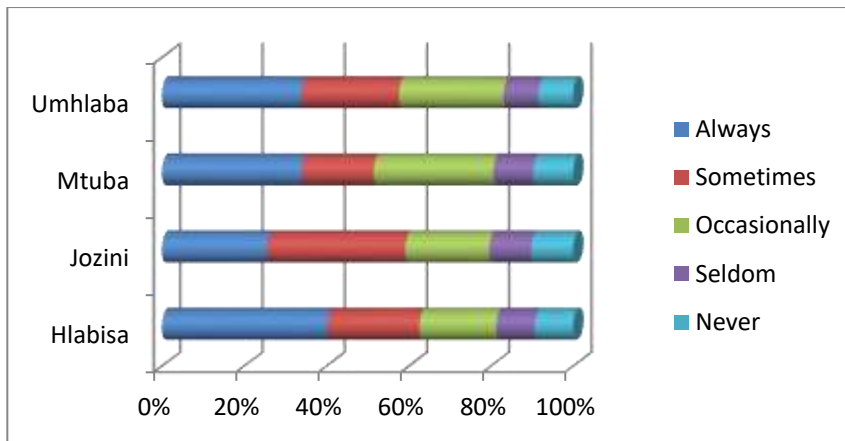


Figure 12. Encouraged to apply for jobs in ecotourism companies

Figure 12 reports that community members in Hlabisa and Umhlabuyalingana had always been encouraged to apply for jobs in the ecotourism industry. Similar results were reported in Mtubatuba, where approximately 65% of locals confirmed that they had been encouraged to look for jobs in ecotourism. Meanwhile, Jozini had a significantly high number (60%) of locals who were sometimes encouraged to find employment opportunities in this sector. This means that there was no consistency in communicating available job opportunities to community members in this area. Furthermore, very few (10%) of locals across the four local municipalities (Hlabisa, Jozini, Mtubatuba and Umhlabuyalingana) had never been encouraged to find jobs in ecotourism services in their areas. These results (Figure 25) show that local municipalities in the UKDM were generally aware of the need to reduce unemployment and poverty in their communities. As a market-based conservation strategy, ecotourism strengthens household economies and improves attitudes of local people towards conservation efforts (Das and Huissen, 2015). The following results indicate whether local people had been encouraged to fight poverty through venture creation (figure 13).

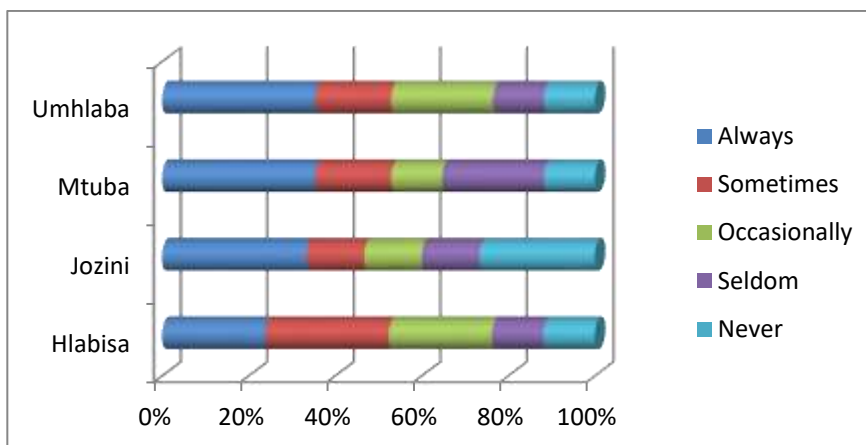


Figure 13. Encouraged to start tourism businesses

These data sets (figure 13) show that the majority of community members in Mtubatuba (65%), Umhlabuyalingana (60%) and Jozini (60%) had always been encouraged to start their own ecotourism ventures. By contrast, Hlabisa had the lowest number (20%) of community members who had been encouraged to start such businesses. At the same time,

the number of locals who had never been encouraged to start their own businesses was relatively high (20%) in Jozini, compared to the other three local municipalities (10%) respectively.

Meanwhile, the number of locals who were sometimes encouraged to start their own ecotourism ventures was relatively high (50%) in Hlabisa compared to the other local municipalities, where only 10% had been encouraged to do this. Encouraging locals to find jobs is crucial because, as Neleman and de Castro's (2015) discovered in Brazil, young people in the community face distinct daily struggles and have aspirations in life that differ from those of the order generation. Ecotourism provides opportunities for them to cope with these challenges. The results below (figure 14) indicate whether local communities had been encouraged to partner with big business for venture creation.

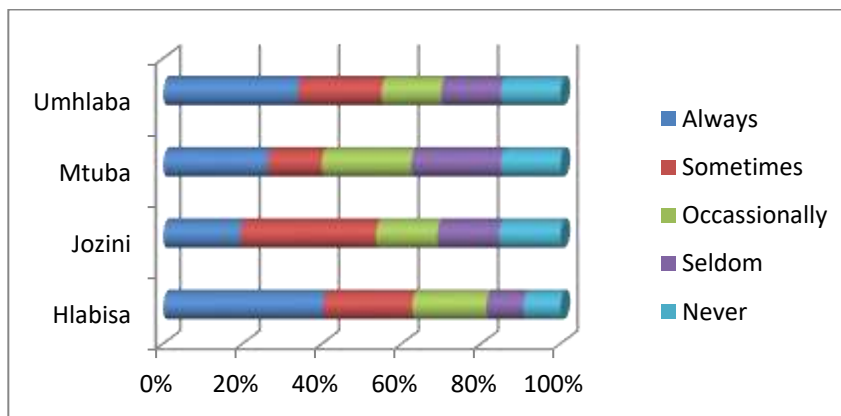


Figure 14. Encouraged to partner with big ecotourism companies

Interestingly, the results (Figure 14) show that most (80%) community members in Hlabisa and Umhlabuyalingana had always been encouraged to work with big ecotourism companies in their areas; followed by Mtubatuba with 60%. This is understandable, as these areas are often described as one of the most attractive tourist destinations in KwaZulu Natal due to their spectacular natural endowments (Sodwana Bay in Umhlabuyalingana) and the "Big Five" (Hlabisa). In Jozini, the number of community members who were sometimes encouraged to work with big tourism companies was significantly high at 80%. Only 20% of community members across the four local municipalities had never been encouraged to work with big ecotourism businesses in their areas.

In Umhlabuyalingana, project managers reported that partnership between small local enterprises and established ecotourism occurred in the Isimangaliso World Heritage Site in Sodwana Bay. Here, small ventures collaborated with big businesses to maintain and service boats; support nature conservation literacy projects for young children and train youth on surfing to keep them away from crime and other social ills. This finding resonates with Odede's (2015) study, which revealed that in Kenya's Kisumu County, communities that once had very little industry experience and misguided management systems now flourish with the employment of local people. The results on BBBEE opportunities for local communities were as follows (figure 15):

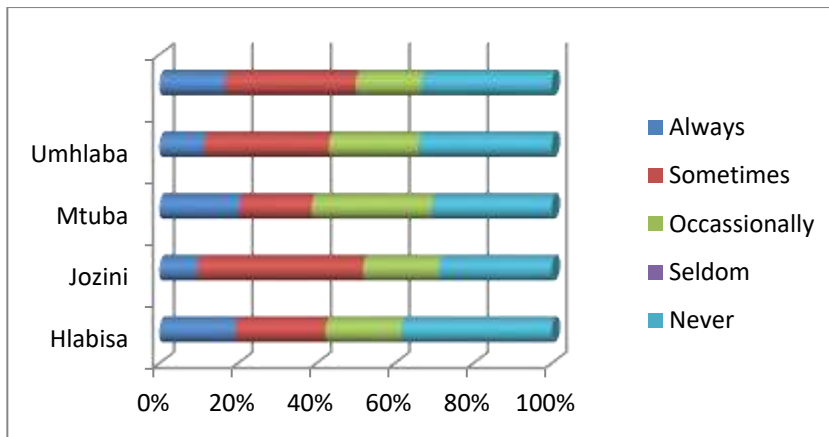


Figure 15. Informed about BBEE opportunities in ecotourism

Figure 15 reveals that less than 20% of community members across the four local municipalities of UKDM had always been informed about broad based black economic opportunities in the ecotourism sector. A significant number (40%) of these respondents had only been occasionally informed about BBEE opportunities in their areas.

These results are consistent with the literature which maintains ecotourism brings financial resources to poverty stricken areas around the world. With the right efforts and the adequate planning, ecotourism may decrease the world's poverty levels, increase education levels and create jobs (Pinsof and Sanhaji, 2009). In Kenya, empowerment initiatives were diversified to ensure that women are empowered in all aspects of ecotourism; such as business management, leadership, customer care, driving skills, structured skills identification and fling programme for women entrepreneurs and providing temporary jobs to young girls to facilitate their entry into the ecotourism industry (Odede, 2015). On the contrary, Mofokeng's (2018) study found that community beneficiation in BBEE initiatives were hampered by negative attitude of black people towards the tourism sector lack of entrepreneurial skills, high entry costs e.g. the material resources required to acquire ownership are expensive; low literacy levels among rural communities; corruption and unfair beneficiation of the black elite.

Conclusion

Overall, these results show that ecotourism contributed partially to the eradication of poverty and unemployment in the UKDM. This conclusion is corroborated by Abdullah's (2015) study in Malaysia's Kuala Tahan National park; which found that 47% of the average monthly income of villagers was generated from ecotourism-related activities. Income from this sources accounted for 13% of total household income. On this basis, it can be inferred that ecotourism provides an essential vehicle for building sustainable livelihoods in rural areas. The scientific contribution of the study is a community based sourcing model that entails capacitation of local communities through skills development, technical assistance and resource sharing so that they can produce and supply high quality goods and services to the local ecotourism market in return for profit.

Recommendations

Based on the challenges highlighted in the foregoing, the study identified several initiatives that may be considered to ensure that ecotourism reduces poverty in the UKDM. These initiatives include, exploring opportunities to develop a community-based sourcing model that links community based suppliers with the local ecotourism market. As part of the UKDM's LED strategy, strengthening collaboration efforts between small and established ecotourism enterprises is vital. Reviewing and aligning ecotourism communication strategy



to ensure that information on available ecotourism opportunities reaches community members in remote areas is essential. Also needed is a consideration of reviewing and relaxing municipal bylaws to create enough space for small and micro ecotourism ventures to ply their trade in ecotourism sites. Lastly but not least, there should be benchmarking of ecotourism activities to identify best practices necessary to enhance implementation of ecotourism projects for the benefit of local communities

References

- Abdullah, M. (2015). Ecotourism, Income generation and poverty reduction: A case of Kuala Tahan National Park, Pahang, Malaysia. *Journal of Tropical Resources and Sustainable Science*, 3, 40-45.
- Akin, H. (2015). Promoting Economic Development with tourism in rural communities: Destination Image and Motivation to Return or Recommend. *Journal of Extension*, 53 (2), 1-8.
- Aynalem, S., Birhanu, K. & Tesefay, S. (2016). Employment Opportunities and Challenges in Tourism and Hospitality Sectors. *Journal of Tourism Hospitality*, 5,257. doi: 10.4172/2167-0269.1000257
- Aseres, S.A. (2015). Potentialities of Community Participation in Community-Based Ecotourism Development: Perspective of Sustainable Local Development a Case of Choke Mountain, Northern Ethiopia. *Journal of Hotel Business Management* 4,114. doi:10.4172/2169-0286.1000114
- Berkes, F. (2007). Community-based conservation in a globalised world, *PNAS*, 104 (39), 15188-15193. Available at: <http://www.pnas.org> [Accessed 17 September 2018].
- Das, D. & Huissen, I. (2016). Does ecotourism affect economic welfare? Evidence from Kaziranga National Park, *India Journal of Ecotourism*, 15, (3), 241-260.
- Dondeyne, S., Kaarhus, R. & Allison, G. (2012). Nature conservation, rural development and ecotourism in central Mozambique: Which space do local communities get? In Nsukwini, S. and Bob, U. 2016. The socio-economic impacts of ecotourism in rural areas: a case study of Nompondo and the Hluhluwe uMfolozi Park. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Special Edition*, 5 (3) - (2016).
- Dologlou, N. & V. Katsoni, V. (2016). Ecotourism in Protected Areas: A Literature Review, ECOCLUB.com, *Ecotourism Paper Series*, Nr. 38, March 2016.
- Eriksson, F. & Lidström, M. (2013). Sustainable development in ecotourism Tour operators managing the economic, social and environmental concerns of sustainable development in Costa Rica. Available at www.diva-portal.org [Accessed 11 June 2017]
- Higham, J. (2007). Ecotourism: Competing and conflicting schools of thought. Available at: <https://booksite.elsevier.com> [Accessed 19 October 2018].
- Hall, C.M. & Boyd, S. (2003). *Ecotourism in Peripheral Areas*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, UK.



Hill, J. & Gale, T. (2009). Ecotourism and environmental sustainability: Principles and practice. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd. ISBN 9780754672623 Available from: <http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/8499> [Accessed 1 November 2018].

Javier, A.B. (2011). Opportunities and Challenges in Tourism Development Roles of Local Government Units in the Philippines. Available at: <https://www2.gsid.nagoya-u.ac.jp> [Assessed 29 December 2017].

ILO-UNWTO (2018). Employment and decent work in tourism: ILO-UNWTO Joint Project. Available at: <http://statistics.unwto.org> [Accessed 19 October 2018].

Irina-Ramona, P.I. (2016). Ecotourism and sustainable development. Annals of the „Constantin Brancusi” University of Targu Jiu, Engineering Series, No. 3/2016 Available at: <http://www.utgjiu.ro> [Accessed 1 November 2018].

Kaplan, L. (2004). Skills development in tourism: South Africa's tourism-led development strategy *GeoJournal*, 60(3), 217-227.

Kiper, T. (2013). Role of Ecotourism in Sustainable Development - Chapter 31. <https://www.intechopen.com/books/advances-in-landscape-architecture/role-of-ecotourism-in-sustainable-development> Accessed 14 June 2017

Kiss, A. (2004). Is community-based ecotourism a good use of biodiversity conservation funds? In Abuamoud, I., Alrousan, R.M. and Bader, M.A. 2012. Impacts of ecotourism in Jordan: Wadi Rum. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 50 (1), 119-130.

McLaughlin, J.M. (2011). Ecotourism Assessment: Applying the principles of ecotourism to Paddle-Based Recreation in St. Lawrence Islands National park and Environs. Queen's University, Canada. Available at: <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

Malik, S. (2018). Importance of Training and Development in Tourism Industry. *International Refereed Journal of Reviews and Research*, 6(1).

Miller, C. (2017). Challenges and Potentials of Ecotourism as a form of conservation and sustainable development on Zapatera Island, Nicaragua

Mofokeng, N.E.M. (2018). Black Economic Empowerment led transformation within the South African accommodation industry: The case of Clarens, *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 7(1), 1-16.

Neleman, S. & de Castro, F. (2015). Between nature and the city: youth and ecotourism in an Amazonian 'forest town' on the Brazilian Atlantic Coast. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 25 (3).

Naidoo, K.M. (2012). Tourist service quality management in the ecotourism accommodation sector of Kwazulu-Natal. Doctoral Thesis submitted to Durban University of Technology. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, Special Edition*, 5 (3).

Nkambule, S. (2016). Conceptualisation and use of green spaces in peri-urban communities: Experiences from Inanda, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *African Journal for Physical Health Education, Recreation and Dance, Supplement*, 155-167.

Nsukwini, S. & Bob, U. (2016). The socio-economic impacts of ecotourism in rural areas: a case study of Nompondo and the HluhluweMfolozi Park. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Special Edition*, 5 (3).



Odede, F.Z.A. (2015). Ecotourism for Community Empowerment and Social Inclusion: The Case of Abindu Sacred site in Kisumu County, *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 7(15).

Otarra, C. (2018). Tourism Services Training for Sustainable Tourism Development. Solimar International. Available: <http://www.solimarinternational.com> [Accessed 10 September 2018].

Pinsof, J. & Sanhaji, Z. (2009). Ecotourism South Africa. Available at: <https://courses.cit.cornell.edu> [Accessed 20 August 2018].

Song, D. (2016). Ecotourism and World Natural Heritage: Its influence on islands in Japan. *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures*, 5(1), 36-46. Available at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com> [Assessed 29 December 2017]

Stone, M.T. (2014). Community based ecotourism: A collaborative partnerships perspective, *Journal of Ecotourism*, 14, (2-3), 166-184.

Umkhayanyakude District Municipality (2016). Integrated Development Plan. Mkhuze: KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government.

Valtonen, M. (2013). Ecotourism and sustainability: Social impacts on rural communities' case: San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Available at: <https://www.theseus.fi> [Accessed 17 September 2018].

Weaver, D.B. & Lawton, L.J. (2008). Twenty Years on: The state of contemporary ecotourism research. *Tourism Management*, 28, 1168-1179.

Zolfani, S.H. (2014). Sustainable tourism: A comprehensive literature review on frameworks and applications. *Journal Economic Research-EkonoskaIstrazivanja*, 28, 2015

