Strategic Management of Tourism Stakeholders: Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela, South Africa

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Abstract

Strategically developed tourism undoubtedly not only stimulates the economic prosperity of only regions or areas, but also adds to the prosperity of a local populace and the attractiveness of a region or area in its entirety. Sustainable tourism development, in particular in a rural region, can be a viable vehicle for regional development in a developing country as it contributes towards eliminating regional disparities, in particular between metropolitan centres and remote areas. Rural tourism forms an integral part of a range of economic activities and can be used as a linkage between economic sectors, for example agriculture and mining). Ecotourism further conserves the natural resources and culture of a rural community. Rural tourism, if thus strategically developed and managed, will make a substantial contribution towards the prosperity of rural communities. An important task management needs to deal with when formulating strategies are the demands and expectations of the varied stakeholders in terms of the anticipated outcomes of the goals decided upon. The focus of this paper is on the strategic management of tourism stakeholders in a rural setting and how it ought to be integrated into the economic, social, cultural, and local structures of a local community, that of the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela (BBK) located in the North West province of South Africa. Sustainable tourism is a tool that can, besides stimulating the rural economy of the region, also reduce the urban-rural gap and contribute towards establishing an interconnected and prosperous community. The results obtained revealed that there is discrepancy between how tourism experts view tourism compared to how the local community regard tourism as a rural developmental aid. The Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela Traditional Authority (BBKTA) is accountable for the sustainable development of tourism for the BBK rural area and all its stakeholders and should manage tourism and its stakeholders strategically.

Keywords: Strategic management, stakeholders, rural tourism, relationship management, sustainable tourism development

Introduction

Tourism, as reported by Haven-Tang and Jones (2012), emerged as a popular economic development strategy to offset the declines in agriculture and other economic sectors in many parts of the world as a result of severe climate change, political turmoil and continual urbanisation, particularly in sub-Sahara Africa. The strategic development and management of tourism as a developmental sector can assist the BBKTA to capitalise on the benefits obtainable through tourism seeing that tourism is an acknowledged contributor towards the entire socio-economic spectrum of a geographical area.

Tourism as an economic sector does not only directly and indirectly make a substantial contribution towards almost all other economic sectors, as avowed by Garcia-Buades and Diedrich (2008), but is also regarded as being pivotal in influencing the development and prosperity of destinations in their entirety. Tourism is based on the pillars of public utilities and infrastructure seeing that tourism would otherwise not have been possible and this includes electricity, water, retailing, attractions, accommodation and many more, as listed by Harrill (2004),

Percoco (2010) and Benur and Bramwell (2015). Tourism, as it is known today, undoubtedly became an important developmental priority as seen from the point of view of a specifically a Traditional Authority in a rural setting in South Africa.

The BBKTA needs to be cognisant of all the potential groups of stakeholders, since all can contribute in some way or another to the success of the BBK as a rural community, and this includes tourism (Morrison, 2013). The strategic management of stakeholder in terms of rural tourism development, as explained by Bagautdinova, Gafutov, Kalenskaya and Novenkova (2012), shapes the internal advantages, investment and economic developmental factors and increase the attractiveness of an area in its entirety, and this also applies to the Pilanesberg region where the BBK community is located.

For tourism development to be successful, it must be planned and strategically managed in a sustainable manner. One main key to the success and implementation of sustainable tourism development in the community of the BBK is the support of stakeholders, particularly stakeholders within the community-group consisting of local residents, business associations, local entrepreneurs, educational institutions, and significant others. The strategic management of stakeholder interaction and participation will enable the BBKTA to incorporate not only the community's needs and opinions but also that of significant stakeholders when planning and implementing strategies to attain sustainable rural tourism development that will meet the needs of tourists and the host region, while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future.

The focus of this paper is thus on the strategic management of tourism stakeholders in a rural setting and how this ought to be integrated into the economic, social, cultural, and local structure of a local community, specifically that of the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela (BBK) in the North West province of South Africa.

The strategic management of stakeholders, in particular within a community, is of paramount importance in contributing towards sustainable tourism development in a rural setting. The aim of this study was to obtain an understanding of the community-group's perspective on tourism and the development thereof, and the specific objectives as such, are:

- To obtain a demographic description of the research population.
- To identify the community-group's level of awareness concerning rural tourism development.
- To describe the community-group's attitude towards rural tourism development.
- To ascertain the community-group's perceived benefits of rural tourism development.
- To establish the community-group's level of involvement in rural tourism development programmes.
- To indicate the community-group's level of participation in rural tourism development.
- To establish the community-group's level of trust towards the BBKTA.
- To analyse the community-group's level of commitment towards the BBKTA.

Presented here are the objectives of the study based on the strategic management of tourism stakeholders, a case study of the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela, and the ensuing section will discuss the paper's theoretical background.

Literature Review

Tourism can contribute immensely to poverty alleviation, job creation, the preservation of arts and culture, and sustainable environmental management in the development of rural regions (National

Department of Tourism, 2012). Tourism and agriculture were initially identified as the economic potential pillars for rural development in South Africa but in its endeavour and response to rural development prepared the Rural Tourism Strategy (NDT, 2012). Sustainability and strategy, as asserted by Louw and Venter (2013), are considered to be inseparable. Therefore, sustainable tourism can be accomplished through an integrated system incorporating other economic sectors such as agriculture, mining, retailing and manufacturing (Fons, Fierro & Patino, 2011). Sustainable tourism, as resolve by Dimitrovski, Todorovic and Valjarevic (2012), is thus acknowledged as a key component of rural development.

Tourism development has the potential to permeate every aspect of, and in, a community, both positively and negatively. Organisations, governments, professionals, and scholars involved in tourism development recognise the need and the necessity for stakeholders to be included and involved in the tourism development process. One of the most important tasks during strategy formulation is the management of the interface between the many and often competing demands of an organisation's different stakeholders, in relation to its strategic goals. The strategic management of stakeholders will enable the BBKTA as tourism destination management and marketing organisation (DMMO) to incorporate the community-group as stakeholders when planning and implementing strategies to attain sustainable rural tourism development (Byrd, 2007; Perch-Nielsen, Sesartic & Stucki, 2010; Louw & Venter, 2013; Waligo, Clark & Hawkins, 2013; Konu, 2014). The perception and attitude of a community towards the impact of tourism are important planning and policy considerations for the development of sustainable rural tourism (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

Strategic Management
A strategic planning and management approach, as mentioned by Morrison (2013), is a valuable step-by-step systematic framework to assist management to manage the resources and better inform stakeholders of the benefits that can be derived from the development of a region or destination (Beeton, 2006; Morrison, 2013; Berndt & Tait, 2014).

The strategic management of stakeholders, as construed by Byrd (2007) and Morrison (2013), is essential for the attainment of sustainable rural tourism of a destination, and moreover, an organisation (such as the BKKTA) must take a leadership role and coordinative position to ensure that the strategic management process accomplishes its set deliverables. Furthermore, some time ago Berman, Wicks, Kotha, and Jones (1999) said that treating stakeholders in a positive way is ultimately seen as shaping the organisation strategy and impacting positively on the financial performance, and this is still valid today.

Strategic management is both a short- and a long-term process, involving plans and actions reflecting the immediate realities of the business environment whilst providing a needed stimulus for innovation, adaptation, and change over a longer period of time. The strategic management of stakeholders for sustainable tourism within a destination is essential. Hitt , Ireland and Hoskisson (2009) accentuate that organisations who effectively manage stakeholders do indeed outperform those who do not. Stakeholders can, therefore, be managed to be a source of strategic competitive advantage. The strategic management of stakeholders will lead to the development of sustainable rural tourism that has the potential to direct the fair distribution of tourism benefits among all stakeholders and particularly to a higher share of tourism revenues for the community-group.

Stakeholder Management
Stakeholder management presents the necessity for management to actively manage relationships with its specific stakeholders and stakeholder groups (Carmin, Daunall & Mill-

Homes, 2003; Nicodemus, 2004; Aas, Ladkin & Fletcher, 2005; Kruja & Hasaj, 2010; Ramachandra & Mansor, 2014; Waligo *et al.,* 2014). Managerial decisions and actions are the key factors that influence organisational-stakeholder relations (Phillip, Hunter & Blackstock, 2010) and coordination of the multiple relations involved creates better business opportunities through the establishment of trust (Freeman, Harrison, Wickes, Parmar & Colle, 2010). Hence, leadership that incorporates the collective interest of organisational stakeholders is a positive influence on business performance (Garcia-Morales, Jimenez-Barrionuevo & Gutierrez-Gutierrez, 2012).

Stakeholder management is an important discipline a successful organisation utilises to gather support from others. If correctly applied, stakeholder management involves individuals and groups or organisations and this also applies to tourism in South Africa (National Department of Tourism (NDT), 2011). Stakeholder management could be used effectively as an aid towards project success where many others without relationship management failed in the past. The benefits of using a stakeholder-based approach, as presented by Ditlev-Simonsen and Wenstop (2013), are:

- By communicating with stakeholders early and often, management can ensure that there is transparency and that stakeholders fully comprehend the benefits associated with a specific project and/or organisation.
- Management can anticipate what other stakeholders' reactions to projects might be, and incorporate it into the organisation's plans to gather stakeholder support.
- Gaining support from powerful stakeholders can assist management to gather more resources, as this will aid projects and enable an organisation to be successful.

The point of departure for stakeholder management involves identifying and classifying stakeholders, and facilitating both initial and subsequent engagement with them in a timely, planned and coordinated manner. This engagement involves identifying different categories of stakeholders; gathering intelligence about them; predicting their behaviour; and developing and implementing a strategy for managing these stakeholders (Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005; Chinyio & Olomolaiye, 2010; Ackerman & Eden, 2011; Ramachandra & Mansor, 2014).

Stakeholders of an organisation can be grouped into those that are internal (such as employees and shareholders) and external (such as government and suppliers) (Aas *et al.,* 2005; Bourne, 2010; Louw & Venter, 2013). The BBKTA, when in the process of developing a strategy, should involve both. The difference between these two sets of stakeholders, as contended by Reed, Graves, Dandy, Posthumus, Hubacek, Morris, Prell, Quinn and Stringer (2009) and Ditlev-Simonsen and Wenstop (2013), is that internal stakeholders are groups/individuals that are part of the organisation and that external stakeholders are groups/individuals that are not part of an organisation. Doh and Guay (2006) and Enquist, Johnson and Skalen (2006) point out that internal stakeholders are fundamentally primary stakeholders and generally have a significant influence on the operations of an organisation, and furthermore, they reveal that internal stakeholders are definitive stakeholders possessing all three attributes (power, legitimacy and urgency).

Within the broader theoretical context, Mainardes, Alves and Raposo (2012) further explain that stakeholders should be grouped into two groups, and these groups are:

-     Primary stakeholders

Such stakeholders, as expressed by Chinyio and Olomlaiye (2010), are stakeholders who are internal or external and who bear some form of risk as a result of having invested something of value in an organisation in the form of capital, human, or financial in nature. Clarkson (1995) and

Anarboldi and Spiller (2011) said that primary stakeholder groups typically are comprised of shareholders and investors, employees, customers, and suppliers, together with what is defined as the public stakeholder groups: government and communities that provide infrastructure and markets, whose laws and regulations must be obeyed, and to whom taxes and other obligations may be due. Primary stakeholders typically have a formal, official, or contractual relationship with an organisation, as clarified by Mainardes *et al.* (2012) and Matilainen and Lahdesmaki (2014).

- Secondary stakeholders

These stakeholders are individuals or groups, internal or external, who influence or are influenced by an organisation, but who are not essential for an organisation's survival, as explained by Chinyio and Olomolaiye (2010). They are indirectly affected, either positively or negatively, by the efforts and actions of an organisation (for example, the media), as mentioned by McCabe, Sharples and Foster (2012). Matilaine and Lahdesmaki (2014) specify that secondary stakeholders are those groups or individuals that represent other interest groups within the business environment.

Primary and secondary stakeholders can also vary in terms of different projects and parties involved. Stakeholder types can thus vary depending on the nature and scope of a project – thus, the importance of the strategic management of stakeholders and the classification of stakeholders. Primarily for the purpose of this study, the BBKTA as an organisation manages resources on behalf of the community-group which is amongst a Traditional Authority's primary stakeholders.

Tourism Stakeholders

The role of government is to monitor and evaluate the socio-economic impacts of the development of tourism, in particular local government, as indicated by Morrison (2013). Tourists also do have a major stake in the outcome, as they are the consumers of tourism products and services. However, there will be many other stakeholders that can be incorporated into the category of tourism stakeholders of an organisation, in this case the BBKTA. Stakeholders all have their specific functions and roles in tourism development and the main stakeholders are:

- National government (National Department of Tourism) – responsible for policy formulation.
- Provincial government (Department of Tourism, in this case the North West province) – custodians of the implementation of objectives and strategies from national government.
- Destination Marketing Organisations (North West Tourism Board) – responsible for marketing the North West province as a destination, or the BBKTA is an institution responsible for managing and marketing tourism development in the BBK community.
- Non-profit organisations (Tourism Associations) – these may source initial funding, conduct research and foster capacity building.
- Tour operators – responsible for sourcing tourists, through combining tourism and travel components to create tourism experiences and packages.

The above are only a few examples of many legitimate stakeholders in sustainable tourism development, each with diverse demands and responsibilities. The core part of the strategic management process should focus on continuous communication with identified tourism stakeholder groups, in particular the community-group, seeing that they have a direct interest, as mentioned by Morrison (2013). As in this case, it is the operation of the BBKTA as a community organisation that should and could function as the destination management and marketing organisation. The stakeholder groups in tourism for strategic management purposes consists of five groups, as illustrated in Figure 1. The focus of this study is on the community-group.

Consultation, involvement and participation are also needed, especially when strategic decisions are being made about tourism development in a specific region.

The strategic management of stakeholders is a process and even if an organisation cannot resolve a particular issue the process should be able to aid organisations to understand the goals and perspectives of others by fostering communication, collaboration and relationship building (Beierle & Konisky, 2000).

Relationship Management

Relationship building and managing relations with a community-group is an integral part of the development of sustainable rural tourism – because the process of empowering the community-group is just as important as the actual outcome, as outlined by Beeton (2006).

Figure 1: Strategic management: tourism stakeholder approach
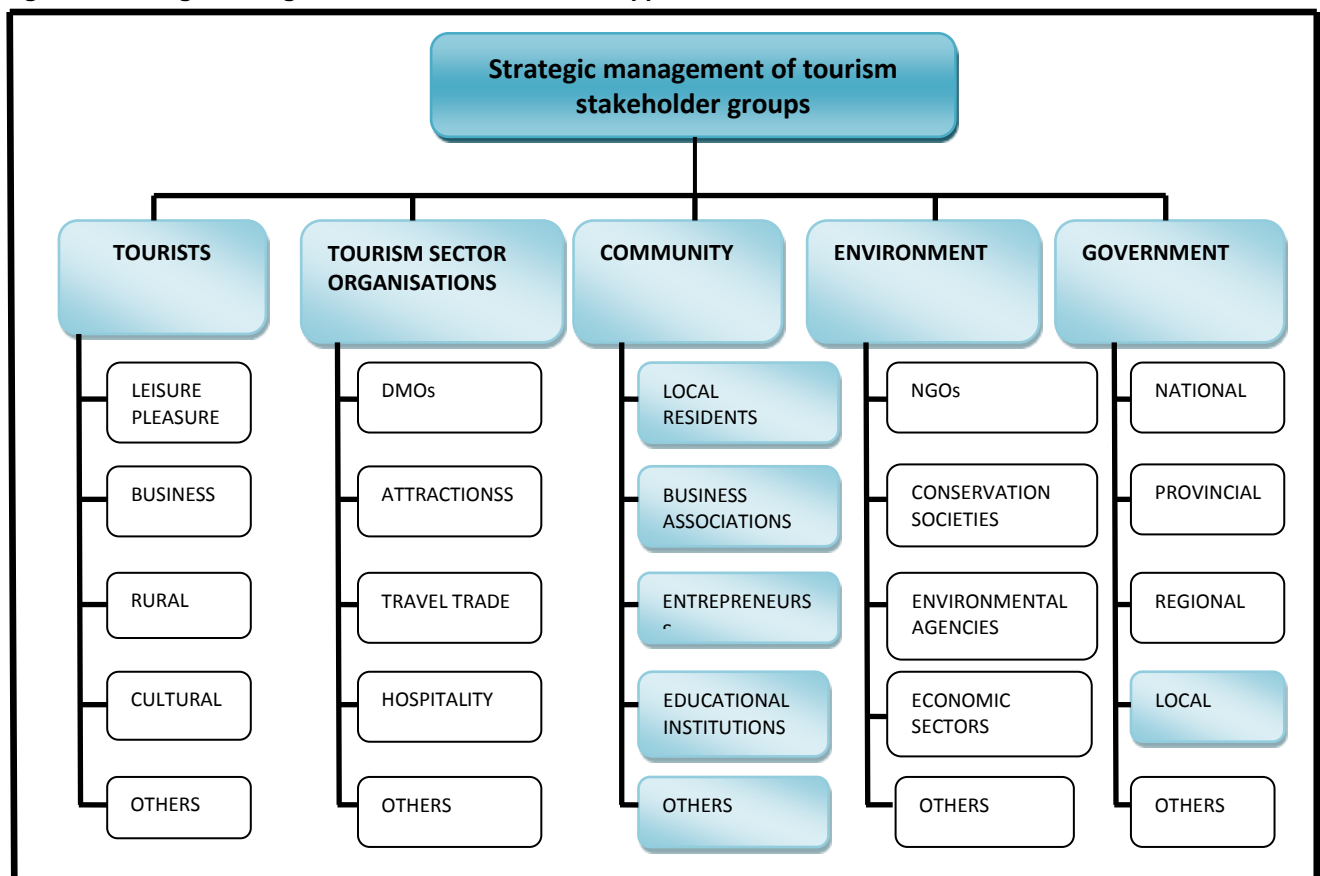
Source: adapted from Kruja & Hasaj (2010); Morrison (2013); Ramachandra & Mansor (2014)

An evergreen statement made by Murphy (1985) is to achieve successful sustainable tourism development, community leaders and developers need to view tourism as a "community industry", enabling residents to be actively involved in determining and planning the development and future of tourism in a rural setting.

One of the most important audiences an organisation has is its community, the home of its offices and operations, as stated by Beeton (2006). Maintaining good relations with the community usually entails management and employees becoming involved in and contributing towards local

organisations and activities. In addition, an organisation may communicate with the community in other ways, such as the distribution of memorandums and/or written letters as a form of communication or meeting with community leaders. Often, community relations activities involve face-to-face interaction between an organisation and its publics, and this is in most cases one of the most powerful forms of influencing attitudes (Beeton, 2006; Hendrix & Hayes, 2007).

The success of business relations, as noted by Berndt and Tait (2016), lies in the gradual development and growth of trust and commitment among stakeholders. Specifically applicable to this study is establishing trust and commitment between the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela Traditional Authority and the community-group it serves, as well as with local government. In addition to trust and commitment, stakeholders also need to have shared goals and mutual benefits to be able to build successful relationships.

Relations with all stakeholders should be planned and managed strategically. If the management of organisations begins to understand the components (trust and commitment) and the importance of involvement of the community-group through this planning process, it will start to place relations at the centre of the organisation and link organisational strategies and capabilities to improving its relations with other tourism stakeholders such as tourists, destination management organisations, private tourism establishments, and many more.

Rural Tourism
Rural tourism development holds the promise of contributing towards the resurgence of social and economic benefits in a region, and at the same time improving the livelihood of a local community. Rural tourism can be an enabler towards the prosperity of rural communities by creating jobs, minimising both the poverty level and inequality that exist within South Africa.

Rural tourism, as ascertained by Haven-Tang and Jones (2012), can make a significant contribution to the rural economy and to the wider tourism industry. Therefore, rural tourism has a major role to play in the rural environment, such as job creation, farm diversification (tourism activities on a farm), the promotion of local crafts, food and drinks, destination stewardship, and also community cohesion. Indeed, rural tourism complements a diverse economy and links other sectors (such as agriculture and mining) and preserving the natural resources and culture of a community. Rural tourism, if strategically developed and managed, can undoubtedly make a substantial positive contribution towards the prosperity of rural communities (Hwang, Stewart & Ko, 2011; Sanagustin-Fons, Fierro & Patino, 2011; Haven-Tong & Jones, 2012; Phillips, Wolfe, Hodur & Leistritz, 2013).

Lane (1994) advocated some time ago that rural tourism should integrate the families living in rural areas together with attractions. Added to this is the fact that the community-group largely determines a tourist's experience through tourist-host interaction (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Apart from the physical resources of a destination, the attitudes, behaviours and skills of local residents and business entrepreneurs are also very important, especially for creating competitive tourism supplies and experiences (Hogstrom, Rosner & Gustafsson, 2010) because, if not nurtured, it could result in the community and stakeholders loosing 'heart' and commitment.

The social dimension of a tourist's experience is particularly relevant in rural tourism, where interest in regional culture, the way of life of local communities and interaction with hosts are most important (Kastenholtz & Sparrer, 2009). Encounters between visitors and a host community are identified as a crucial element of a tourist's experience in Carmichael's study (2005) of wine tourism, and as the most memorable aspects of tourism experiences in Morgan and Xu's (2009) research. This is confirmed by previous research results that suggested that international

travellers are by nature high in novelty seeking (Chang, Wall & Chu, 2006) and are keenly interested in culturally authentic experiences with a host community (Wang, 1999).

Rural tourism encompasses a range of different activities including inter alia farm/agritourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism, wine tourism, adventure tourism (Sharpley & Craven, 2001; Woods, 2007; Lane, 2009; Haven-Tang & Jones, 2012, Viljoen & Henama, 2017), as illustrated in Figure 2 and some selected components of rural tourism are briefly discussed. There are numerous other components of tourism that are directly linked to rural tourism, but only the six illustrated in Figure 2 are included for the purpose of this study.

A synopses of each one of the components are presented after the figure.

Figure 2: Rural tourism activities
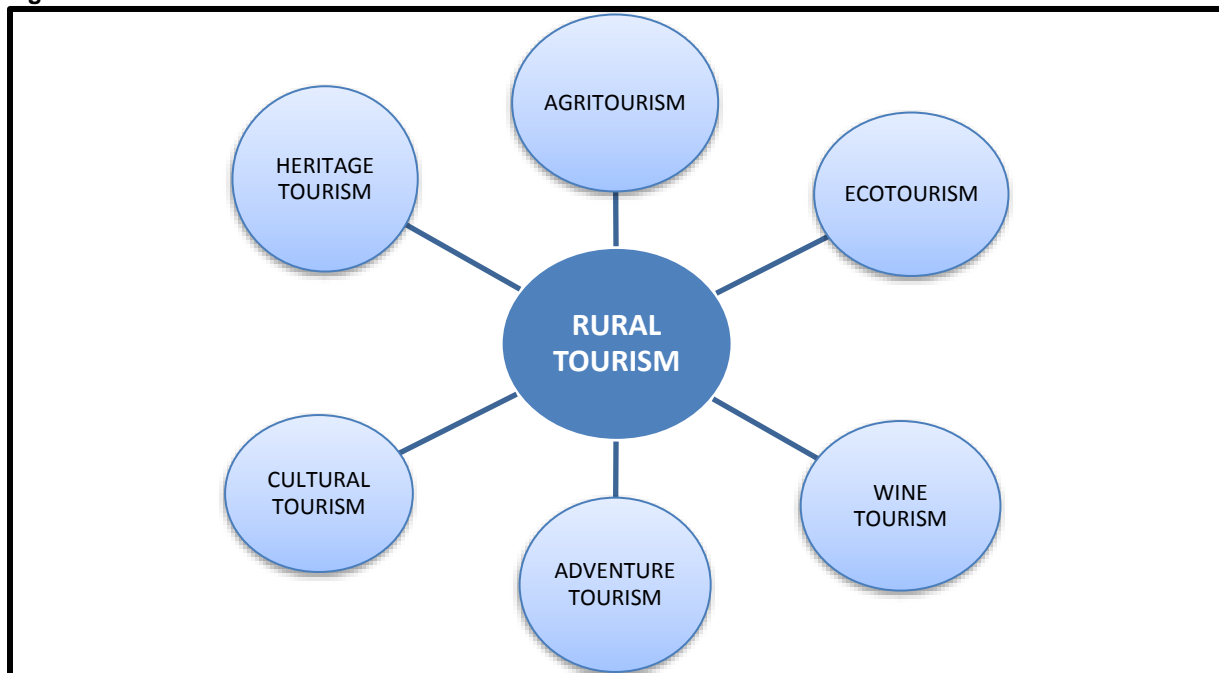
Source: compiled from Sharpley & Craven (2001); Woods (2007); Lane (2009); Haven-Tang & Jones (2012)

- Agritourism

The general conception is that a working farm is the key defining characteristic of agritourism and that tourism in this case is a complementary income stream for farm households, as highlighted by Iakovidou (1997), Gladstone and Morris (2000), Sonnino (2004) and Kizos and Losifides, (2007). Phillip *et al.* (2010) contend that by definition 'Non-Working Farm' (NWF) agritourism could actually be identified as generic rural tourism. In the majority of cases, NWF agritourism is realised through agricultural heritage or imagery (for example: accommodation in a converted farm house) or where agricultural practices, past or present, form part of the tourism product (such as sheep shearing demonstrations). Other examples of NWF agritourism include farm heritage attractions and tourism activities based on converted farms (such as horse riding) (Phillips *et al.,* 2013).

- Ecotourism

Ecotourism has become a doorway to the global economy for many rural and indigenous communities, as indicated by Ketema (2015). This statement is supported by Fennel (2015) who mentioned that local residents, lodges, hiking trails and interpretive activities for visitors are

gaining a foothold in capitalist markets and bringing returns directly to local and rural communities. For better or for worse, these returns have profound effects on the environment, wildlife, cultural traditions and the common pool of resources (Noela & Lisa, 2007; Lane, 2009; Fennel, 2015; Ketema, 2015). Drumm, Moore, Soles, Patterson and Terborgh (2004) also avowed that ecotourism has the potential to reduce the threats posed by conventional tourism to natural areas and to the people who live in and around such areas via income generation for conservation, local enterprise development and creating employment opportunities, an enabling cultural exchange, environmental education, protected area justification and visitor appreciation.

- Wine tourism

The tasting and purchasing of wine have been identified as motivation for visiting a particular region (Alant & Bruwer, 2004; Dawson, Holmes, Jacobs & Wade, 2011). It is the difference of place (Bruwer, 2003) that draws tourists to wine regions and signifies the escapist realm in which visitors are engrossed in a different time or place. While tourists may gaze at the wine tourism landscape (esthetical experience), they may also actively engage in wine country recreation (escapist experience), abundant in the natural and rural setting of wine regions, as mentioned by Marza-Navarro and Pedraja-Iglesias (2012). Wine tourism can assist in the stimulation of a region's economy through the creation of employment opportunities for the local community, particularly in rural areas.

- Adventure tourism

South Africa is fast becoming recognised as an adventure tourism destination. The 3 000km coastline and its numerous mountain ranges make it ideal for adventure tourism, as described by George (2014). In addition, the wide open spaces and a warm climate lend itself to outdoor activities. Certain areas of South Africa, such as the North West province and Mpumalanga to mention a few, promote themselves as being particularly suitable for adventure tourism (George, 2014).

- Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism constitutes tourists visiting rural areas to experience local culture, has the potential to benefit host communities and to provide motivation for them to care for and maintain their cultural heritage (Liu, 2006; Sdrali & Chazapi, 2007; Karmakar, 2011). Local communities' involvement and cooperation with tour operators, property owners, and policy makers are said to be crucial for the success of cultural tourism activities (Sdrali & Chazapi, 2007).

- Heritage tourism

As a form of tourism, as described by Viljoen and Henama (2017), heritage tourism also includes visits to sites or areas of particular historical importance. This can consist of urban or built environments, dwellings associated with well-known individuals, monuments, rural and natural landscapes and specific locations or places of cultural significance where historic events may have occurred. Heritage tourism, due to its scope and the significant value the global market places on it, is regarded as one of the most important types of tourism as it attracts large numbers of visitors every year (Timothy & Boyd, 2006).

Orchestrating combinations of these types of tourism into different packages for different markets will undoubtedly facilitate the sustainable development of a rural region.

Research Method

A well-designed research plan forms the basis of a research process (Cooper & Schindler, 2011) and research is described as a practical activity that intends to unravel things in a systematic way. Research, as defined by Coldwell and Herbst (2004), Cresswell, Eberson, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen and Plano Clark (2016) and Devlin (2018), is a process of designing, gathering, analysing and reporting information to uncover opportunities and reduce the risks of decision making.

A convergent parallel mixed methods design was used for the purpose of this study based on the empirical nature of the study whereby the quantitative and qualitative data collected were analysed and then compared through the use of the triangulation method, as explained by Cresswell (2008) and Hesse-Biber (2017). Often the purpose of triangulation in a specific context is to obtain confirmation of findings through convergence of different perspectives, as mentioned by Jack and Raturi (2006). The qualitative and quantitative methods in this study complemented each other, providing richness and detailed findings that would not have been possible from using one method alone.

The qualitative data obtained through in-depth interviews were analysed through description, categorisation, unitising data, and the recognition of relationships and the development of themes so as to identify similarities in the data and to relate it to the literature in order to obtain threads and draw conclusions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). The application of this method was in line with the descriptions of McCartney, Butler and Bennet (2008) and San Martin and Del Bosque (2008). A survey was undertaken to obtain the quantitative data needed and the data extracted was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for the purpose of this study. The survey was conducted in four villages nearby the BBKTA administration offices in Moruleng and the villages selected were: Lerome, Lesetlheng, Matangwaneng, and Manamakgotheng.

The qualitative sample size for the purpose of this study comprised of six high-level participants (interviewees). This involved representatives from the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela Traditional Authority (BBKTA), the Moses Kotane Local Municipality (MKLM), the North West Parks Board (NWPB), the Moses Kotane Accommodation Association (MKAA), and also the Mankwe TVET College. The sample size for the quantitative component was 800 residents (referred to at the community) who reside in the area of the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela (BBK) community as stakeholders. The recommended sample size, according to Matthews (2010), with a 95% level of confidence and a 5% margin of error for a population of 350 000 is 384. All effort was made to obtain more completed questionnaires to reduce the margin of error to 3.5%, thus 800 questionnaires were distributed and 480 were returned. However, after the data editing and cleaning process was complete, 359 qualified to be used and was captured onto an Excel spreadsheet.

Research Findings

Following is a presentation of the findings obtained after both sets of data were processed.

Qualitative Component

Four of the six respondents who participated in the interviews indicated that each one have over 10 years of experience in tourism. This indicates that the informants who participated in the in-depth interviews are experienced and proficient in tourism and this facilitated obtaining reliable and credible data with regards to the phenomenon under study.

The steps involved in data analysis was to scan the data so as to extract main themes and other relevant opinions that may not fall within the predetermined initial themes but may be important for further analysis. Different themes were identified and the data was then classified into sub-themes, as indicated in Table 1. The two main themes include (1) the state of tourism development and (2) the strategic management of tourism stakeholders. Furthermore, the sub-themes allowed for probing on the current tourism development in the BBK community and its associated benefits, and to acquire insight into the community-group's level of understanding.

The answers found represented the dialectical nature of tourism development in the BBK community and the importance of the community-group's role in the sustainable development of rural tourism.

Table 1: Layout of themes

Theme	Sub-theme
State of tourism development	**Tourism performance** • Tourism benefits **Role of the community-group** • Awareness • Attitude • Perception • Involvement • Participation
Strategic management of tourism stakeholders	**Tourism policy** • Barriers concerning current policy • Inadequate stakeholder collaboration • Insufficient government support **Strategic management of tourism development** • Community-group • Education and training • Relationship building

- **State of tourism development**

The BBKTA as DMMO employs tourism as an economic sector that can develop the rural region seeing that it has become an important source of revenue and employment opportunities for local residents. The BBK tourism destination has attracted a reasonable number of tourists due to the diverse tourism offerings it has. However, there is a need to create awareness amongst the community-group to ensure they derive a comprehensive understanding of their role as tourism stakeholders. Subsequently, this will shape their attitudes and perception to be positive and improve their level of involvement and participation in the tourism development process. For tourism to be successful and sustainable in local communities, stakeholders of the community-group must be willing partners in the entire process of development. Voluntary commitment (buy-in) by means of multi-stakeholder partnerships guided by the seventeen intertwined Sustainable Development Goals of 2030 ought to be cultivated. Tourism is an opportunity for the cultural exchange between tourists and the community-group who collectively can contributed towards creating a unique and authentic ambience for the BKK destination. Tourists' interest in the tourism products, culture and heritage has warranted local residents to be more appreciative of their culture and other local resources that are often taken for granted.

- **Strategic management of tourism stakeholders**

The sustainable development of rural tourism in the BBK community is largely depended on the involvement and participation of tourism stakeholders in the entire process of tourism development, specifically the community-group, and the relationship with the community-group should be planned and managed strategically.

As revealed by the findings, most importantly, respondents indicated that the Master Plan was aligned with the Moses Kotane Local Municipality's developmental plans. The plan further outline a clear vision for tourism development and highlight the development plans through infrastructure development and investing in educational programs. However, there is a barrier concerning current policy as there is a lack of stakeholder synergy and collaboration with tourism stakeholders in the destination and this hinders establishing an effective planning process. Other factors reported are the uncertainty in policy formulation as these have adverse effects on attracting private investment to a destination needed for further tourism development.

The BBKTA, as a stakeholder in local government and other sustainable developmental bodies/agencies, should ideally introduce a number of educational, training and tourism awareness programs in the BBK area to inform and create awareness of the importance of tourism development amongst the community-group. Tourism awareness programs will equip community members with the necessary knowledge on how to get involved and participate in this sector. Tourism awareness and education plays a very important role in the sustainable development of a destination.

The in-depth interviews facilitated access to the thoughts and feelings of the respondents, which enabled obtaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study and this is ascribed to the respondents' level of experience in tourism.

Quantitative Component
A slightly higher number of the respondents were females (51.3%) and the distribution signifies a fair representation from both gender groups participating in the survey and this then also enables valid comparisons. A greater percentage of respondents (67.1%) range between the ages 20 to 40 years compared to those who are between the ages of 41 to 60 years (24.4%). This noticeably highlights that a greater percentage of respondents are in their economical active phase and in all probability are prepared to be involved and participate in the tourism sector as employees or owning a business and contribute towards the development of tourism in the BBK community.

A slightly low percentage of respondents, 30% (16 +14), are economically active and earn income from an organisation by whom they were employed, or as entrepreneurs. Unemployed respondents were 28%. As revealed by the findings, a high percentage of respondents who participated in the survey are unemployed and this highlights the need for the BBKTA to strategically develop and manage tourism in the area, and an alternative approach to this is by involving the community in the tourism development process. Tourism increases employment opportunities and in particular in rural areas where the diversification created by tourism can assist members of a community to benefit from tourism development and be less dependent on only one industry (for example agriculture).

The findings pointed out that only a somewhat low percentage (39%) of respondents do benefit from tourism in its current state and that an overwhelming majority (61%) of respondents indicated that they do not benefit from tourism, as highlighted in Figure 3. These findings are in concurrence with the findings that a high percentage of respondents are unemployed. These findings could suggest to the BBKTA that the community as stakeholder should be encouraged to participate in tourism development through entrepreneurship initiatives and other related programs. An inclusive practice of tourism growth development will bring sustainable benefits to the community which will also curb urban migration. The involvement of the community in tourism for generating economic or social benefits can influence their attitude towards tourism and tourism development, such as that of the BBK. Tourism relies on the goodwill and cooperation of the community because

they are an integral part of a destination and its products. Section B of the questionnaire contained 36 items to acquire data from respondents regarding tourism development in the destination and on how tourism is managed by the local destination management and marketing organisation.

Figure 3: Tourists visit to the BBK area and tourism benefits for the community
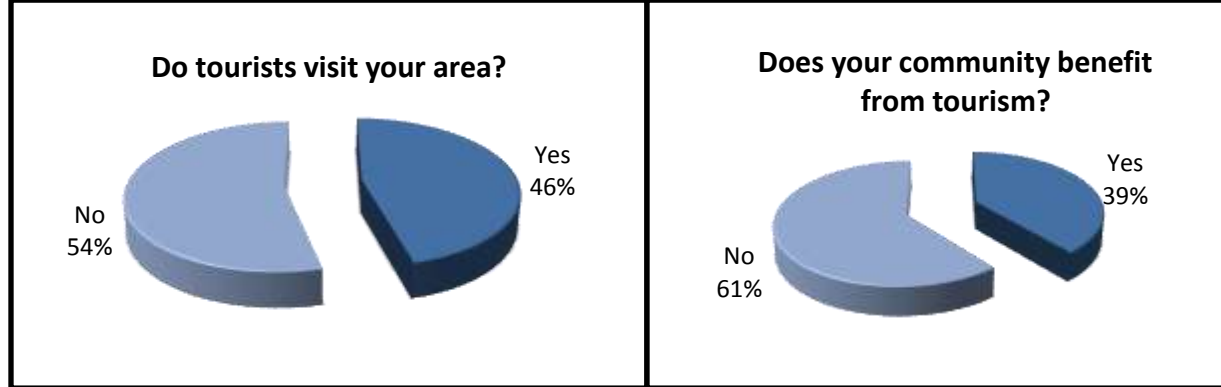
A five-point Likert type interval scale was used with 1 representing strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree. The reliabilities, by means of Cronbach alpha calculation in the dataset were determined. A Cronbach alpha of more than 0.70 is considered as good but moderate and a Cronbach alpha of more than 0.60 is also considered as acceptable for exploratory studies as in this case (Pentz, 2011).

Table 2 presents the reliability analyses of the following constructs:
- Awareness – seven items (AW1 – AW7) measuring the community's level of awareness towards tourism.
- Attitude – seven items (AT1 – AT7) measuring the community's attitude towards tourism development in their area.
- Perception – six items (PE1 – PE6) measuring the community's perception towards tourism development.
- Involvement – six items (IN1 – IN6) measuring the community's level of involvement in tourism activities.
- Participation – four items (PT1 – PT4) measuring the community's participation in the tourism development process.
- Trust – three items (TR1 – TR3) measuring the trust level towards the BBKTA as a local destination management organisation.
- Commitment – three items (CO1 – CO3) measuring the community's level of commitment to the BBKTA tourism initiatives and programs.

Table 2: Reliability of constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	No. of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Internal consistency
Awareness (AW)	0.758	7	3.19	0.52	Acceptable
Attitude (AT)	0.835	7	2.76	0.45	Good
Perception* (PE)	0.771	5	3.05	0.32	Acceptable
Involvement* (IN)	0.840	2	2.23	0	Good
Participation* (PT)	0.708	2	3.74	0.03	Acceptable
Trust (TR)	0.780	3	2.87	0.19	Acceptable
Commitment (CO)	**0.552**	**3**	**3.41**	**0.50**	**Poor**

The 'commitment' scale items (CO1, CO2 and CO3) were removed. The Cronbach's alpha score (α = 0.552) for the three items that probed the 'respondents' level of commitment towards the BBKTA in the management of tourism in the destination' was lower than 0.70, and as a result the items were removed. Therefore, all the removing constructs shown in Table 2 had acceptable reliability coefficients above 0.7 and were retained in the measurement instrument, except 'commitment'. The developed measurement instrument thus is regarded as a reliable measurement to measure respondents' viewpoints on tourism in the BBK community.

The importance of the strategic management of relationships with the community-group as primary stakeholders commences with gathering knowledge and understanding on their perspective towards tourism. Table 3 outlines respondents' viewpoints on tourism and the table indicates that a significant percentage (65.5% = 38.2%+27.3%) of the respondents are not knowledgeable about tourism (AW).

Table 3: Respondents viewpoint on tourism

Codes	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
AW	Community members of this village are knowledgeable about tourism.(n =359)	3.1%	17.5%	13.9%	38.2%	27.3%	3.69
	Community members understand their role in tourism development. (n=358)	1.7%	14.5%	11.5%	42.7%	29.6%	3.84
AT	There is a positive attitude of community members of this village towards tourists. (n=357)	10.1%	52.9%	13.7%	16.5%	6.7%	2.57
	My quality of life has improved because of tourism development. (n=358)	3.4%	21.8%	21.5%	34.1%	19.3%	3.44
PE	Community members perceive tourism development as their responsibility. (n=358)	7.5%	22.9%	20.1%	34.4%	15.1%	3.27
	Tourism has improved the infrastructure of this village (n=357)	11.2%	32.5%	17.6%	27.2%	11.5%	2.95
IN	Partnership and collaboration between stakeholders is important in the development of sustainable tourism. (n=357)	32.3%	38.1%	12.9%	9.8%	7.0%	2.21
	The tourism industry is depended on the community members' involvement (n=359)	31.5%	38.2%	11.7%	12.0%	6.7%	2.24
PT	I have participated in a form of decision making process. (n=356)	5.3%	17.7%	10.4%	33.4%	33.1%	3.71
	Community participate in the formulation of laws and regulations of tourism. (n=358)	5.0%	12.8%	15.6%	34.1%	32.4%	3.76
TR	The community trust the BBKTA as an organisation that manages the tourism activities on their behalf. (n=357)	9.8%	31.7%	15.7%	25.8%	17.1%	3.09
	BBKTA is dedicated towards the development of tourism. (n=357)	9.2%	41.2%	18.5%	20.7%	10.4%	2.82

This should indicate that the community is either unaware of tourism development or are not knowledgeable about the importance of tourism in the development of the rural area and this is in concurrence with the 61% who also indicated that the community does not benefit from tourism. Furthermore, respondents were asked if the community understand their role in tourism development and this recorded the highest mean score, thus respondents disagreed with the

statement. This reveals that the community do not understand their role as stakeholders in the tourism development process. In order to encourage the community to participate in the development of tourism in rural areas, their favourable perceptions regarding tourism activities are important to be sought.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether members of the community do have responsibilities in the tourism development process in the BBK region (PE), and half of respondents 50% (34.4% + 15.1%) indicated that it was not the responsibility of the community. This finding is in concurrence with item AW as shown in Table 2, where the majority of the respondents indicated that they do not understand their role in tourism development. The community's realisation of their role and responsibility in tourism development is of paramount importance for the sustainable development of rural tourism, especially in the BBK community. Community participation is also an empowerment process and involves local residents in identifying problems, influencing decision-making and services that affect their lives, gaining and also sharing the benefits of development taking place within their community.

Respondents were requested to indicate whether they participate in any step of the decision-making process in tourism development (PT). A substantial percentage 66.5% (33.4% + 33.1%) responded negatively. Similarly, respondents were requested to indicate if the community participate in formulating the laws and regulations of tourism (PT). Table 2 indicate that an overwhelmingly majority of 66.5% (34.1% + 32.4%) once again responded negatively to the statement. The mean score of 3.73, as reflected in Table 2, indicate a negative skewness of data distribution as most respondents disagreed with the items in the factor indicating their level of participation in tourism.

Community participation in tourism contributes towards development, empowerment and the greater self-reliance of a community. Overall, involving the residents of a community as stakeholders is a key component for effective planning and implementation.

Data Triangulation
Data triangulation involves using different sources of information in order to increase the validity of a study. The community as a stakeholder group was used as participants in the survey research (quantitative approach), whereas tourism sector organisation as stakeholders were utilised for the in-depth interviews (qualitative approach) to gain insight into their perspective of tourism development in the BBK community. Information from different angles can be used to corroborate, elaborate or illuminate the research problem. Furthermore, during the analysis stage, feedback from the stakeholders was compared to determine areas of agreement as well as areas of divergence.

For instance, the qualitative findings revealed that the tourism sector in the BBK community is an important economic sector that contributes towards the quality of life of community members. Furthermore, the qualitative results revealed that tourism provides a cultural exchange between tourists and the community and creates a positive environment for tourism development. In contrast, the quantitative results revealed that the majority of respondents stated that there are no benefits linked with the tourism sector in the BBK community. These findings suggest that the BBKTA as local destination management and marketing organisation should propagate information to encourage the community to get involved and to participate in tourism through initiatives such as entrepreneurship.

Data triangulation clearly highlighted that there are areas of agreement and also divergence in terms of the findings between the qualitative and quantitative components of this study. Data

triangulation proved to be a vital component in the process of ensuring that the findings are more reliable and variable, and furthermore plays an important role in increasing the rate of certainty and neutrality in terms of the results of this study.

Discussion

The BBKTA as DMMO should take note of the demographic make-up of the community and their viewpoints on tourism development in the BBK area. Their viewpoint will enable the BBKTA to develop strategies to ensure inclusive tourism development for the benefit of all stakeholders in the community-group. Inclusive tourism development will empower the community-group take ownership of tourism projects in the community through participation in the decision-making process and sharing tourism benefits. This is supported by Giampiccoli, Jugmohan and Mtapuri (2014) who suggested that the creation of inclusive tourism development is necessary for community development as it (1) creates employment, (2) improve local residents' standard of living and (3) improve their sense of worth in the community, which in turn would lead to the community-group to support tourism development in the BBK region.

It is imperative to point out that the quantitative research findings revealed that the stakeholders in the community-group do not participate in a form of the decision-making process in tourism development in the BBK community. Furthermore, respondents indicated that stakeholders of the community-group do not participate in the formulation of laws and regulations related to tourism. The BBKTA should organise and facilitate community participation workshops to obtain the views of stakeholders on tourism development as this will enable the effective formulation of local tourism policy and laws. Furthermore, community participation workshops will inform the BBKTA of the viewpoints of stakeholders on tourism and other related matters that might influence the development of tourism. Findings from the qualitative component concur with the literature review where it was indicated that the community-group's participation in the tourism development process ought to be considered from two perspectives: (1) in the decision-making process and (2) in terms of the benefits of tourism development. Gursoy, Chi and Dyer (2010) affirmed that the hospitality of a community-group affects the health of the tourism sector, and as a result a tourism destination should be developed in accordance to their specific needs.

The primary objective of this study was to develop a framework for the strategic management of relationship with the community-group as stakeholders in pursuit of sustainable rural tourism development, that of the BBK as in this case. After collecting data on the viewpoints of the respondents concerning tourism in the BBK community and determining the level of importance they place on the tourism development process, the results obtained confirm the importance of stakeholder involvement and participation in the development of rural tourism and developing continuous rural tourism education and training programs for local communities. The findings and recommendations of this study provide traditional authorities, local government and other tourism role-players with information on how the development of sustainable tourism in a South African rural setting can be successful.

There are specific techniques and processes that will assist the BBKTA in defining their goals and strategically manage their tourism activities and programmes. This includes environmental scanning, stakeholder analysis, strategy selection, positioning, and the implementation of strategic plans. Strategy control and evaluation is the last phase of the strategic management process and provides feedback on the performance of selected strategies and programmes, and furthermore serves as input into the formulation and implementation phase of the next strategic management process. The strategic management process must reflect and be consistent with the roles of the organisation as this is in agreement with Ehlers and Lazenby (2010) and Harrington

and Ottenbacher (2011) who explained that the strategic management of resources, in particular the management of stakeholders, would enable an organisation to achieve sustainable tourism development.

Finally, the BBKTA should align their strategic management process of tourism development and stakeholder relations with that of the Moses Kotane Local Municipality (MKLM), seeing that the BBK community is located within the municipality's demarcation area, who should be regarded as (1) a primary stakeholder and (2) a strategic partner in service delivery to the community-group. The successful formulation and implementation of a strategic plan at local level will require a comprehensive and developmental approach which depends on effective cooperation between the BBKTA, local government (MKLM), and the stakeholders constituting the community-group. The stakeholders of the community-group's viewpoints on tourism will serve as input for the strategy planning and formulation phase and this will most likely result in the effective implementation of plans because of the support of stakeholders for tourism activities and programmes.

Conclusion

This paper explored the perception of tourism experts on the state of tourism development in the BBK community and the viewpoint of the stakeholders of the community-group on tourism using a mixed method design. Tourism experts were interviewed and the local community participated in a survey study.

The results of this study indicate that the BBK area is attracting a reasonable number of tourists, but, however, the study further established that stakeholders in the community-group are of the opinion that they do not benefit from tourism because they are not involved or participate in the development process of tourism. There are contradictions in the findings and this can be explained by the differences in the study setting and triangulation proved to be a vital component of the study, to ascertain the rate of certainty and neutrality to the results of the study. The successful formulation and implementation of a strategic plan at local level will require a comprehensive and developmental approach which depends on the effective cooperation between the BBKTA (Local destination management and marketing organisation), the local government, and the stakeholders of the community-group. Collaboration and partnership would play a prominent role in harnessing the enormous potential of tourism in the BBK community. It is concluded from this study that the strategic development of sustainable rural tourism will not only contribute towards the economic prosperity of the BKK area but also towards the prosperity of the community, as well as to the attractiveness of the area in its entirety.

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