



PERGAMON

Tourism Management 21 (2000) 613–633

**TOURISM  
MANAGEMENT**

www.elsevier.com/locate/tourman

# Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries

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Received 18 February 1999; accepted 20 August 1999

## Abstract

This study deals with a normative concept of participatory development approach, which originates in the developed world. In particular, it analyses and explains the limitations to the participatory tourism development approach in the context of developing countries. It was found that there are operational, structural and cultural limits to community participation in the TDP in many developing countries although they do not equally exist in every tourist destination. Moreover, while these limits tend to exhibit higher intensity and greater persistence in the developing world than in the developed world, they appear to be a reflection of prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural structure in many developing countries. On the other hand, it was also found that although these limitations may vary over time according to types, scale and levels of tourism development, the market served, and cultural attributes of local communities, forms and scale of tourism developed are beyond the control of local communities. It concludes that formulating and implementing the participatory tourism development approach requires a total change in socio-political, legal, administrative and economic structure of many developing countries, for which hard political choices and logical decisions based on cumbersome social, economic and environmental trade-offs are sine qua non alongside deliberate help, collaboration and co-operation of major international donor agencies, NGOs, international tour operators and multinational companies. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Community participation; Tourism development; Limits; Developing countries

## 1. Introduction

Community participation in the tourism development process (TDP) has emerged and been refined in the context of developed countries. It has also been popularised by advocates writing on developed countries. These scholars have made substantial contributions to studies of the participatory tourism development approach by advocating it under the prevailing conditions in the developed world (Blank, 1989; Gunn, 1988; Haywood, 1988; Keogh, 1990; Murphy, 1985; Reed, 1997; Simmons, 1994). However, practicality of participatory tourism development approach in developing countries seems not to be considered in detail. On the other hand, it is claimed that '[d]eveloping countries may avoid many of the problems that have plagued past tourism... by involving diverse social groups from the popular sectors of local communities in decision making' (Brohman, 1996,

p. 568) without examining socio-cultural, economic and political conditions of tourist destinations although it is these conditions that determine whether the community participation in the TDP will work or not. As Todaro (1994, pp. 36–37) asserts in the context of developing countries:

... it is often not the correctness of economic policies alone that determines the outcome of national approaches to critical development problems. The political structure and the vested interests and allegiances of ruling elites... will typically determine what strategies are possible and where the main roadblocks to effective economic and social change may lie...

Moreover, he contends that the pattern of power and wealth distribution among various groups in most developing countries is itself the reflection of their economic, social and political histories and it is likely to vary from one nation to the next. Nonetheless, developing nations are ruled by a small group of well-organised powerful elites to a larger extent than developed countries are.

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This study suggests that although community participation in the TDP is highly desirable, there seems to be formidable operational, structural and cultural limitations to this tourism development approach in many developing countries. As Din (1997, p. 78) has recognised, the notion of community participation in the TDP 'may not be readily applicable to Third World destinations where public scrutiny is lacking owing to a universal ignorance of the planning procedure, especially with regards to the role of the review process'. It should be noted that community involvement in the TDP can be 'viewed from at least two perspectives: in the decision-making process and in the benefits of tourism development' (Timothy, 1999, p. 372). It is the main aim of this article to examine these limitations to public participation in the decision-making process of tourism development in developing countries though public participation in the benefits of tourism is not totally ignored. Moreover, although desirability and practicality of the participatory tourism development approach appear to be inter-related, this study will primarily focus on barriers to practicality of applying the community participation. Following a review of definitions of community participation the article progresses to consider these limitations to community participation in the decision-making process of tourism development.

It is argued that 'Third World' tourism has been set up by agreements between foreign image-makers/investors and local elites. There has been no participation by, and consultation of, the people of the host country in shaping the phenomenon' (Linton, 1987, p. 96). In this regard, the reader is reminded here that there is insufficient written material on particularly limitations to the participatory tourism development approach in developing nations. This is not surprising since 'there are few examples from the Old South of where this (community participation in the TDP) has successfully occurred ...' (Harrison, 1994, p. 717). As Timothy (1999, p. 383) argues in the context of Indonesia, 'The education of local residents and the involvement of locals in the economic benefits of tourism are happening in theory ... and to a lesser extent in practice. However, residents and other stakeholders participation in decision-making has not been recognised as important in planning documents, nor has it been addressed in practice ... , except in a few isolated cases'. Although McIntyre, Hetherington and Inskip (1993) have given the cases of Zambia and Mexico as examples of community involvement in tourism development, these cases also represent manipulative participation, passive participation or pseudo participation. That is to say, there seems to be no evidence which shows that participatory tourism development practices have gone beyond community consultation or manipulative participation in the developing world. After examining several participatory tourism development practices in developing nations, Mowforth and Munt (1998, p. 240) have

stated that 'the push for local participation comes from a position of power, the first world: It is easier to promote the principles of local participation on paper, from a distance, than to practice them'. Several cases regarding participatory tourism development practices in developing countries, which they have analysed are examples of, in their words, 'manipulative participation or passive participation according to Pretty's typology' (Mowforth & Munt, 1998, p. 242). The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) (1994) has given 25 case studies of tourism planning in the developing world. Only one of them, the Sri Lanka tourism plan, considered community consultation (indirect participation or degree of tokenism) via tourism committees composed of local interest groups and local agents of central government. However, it has not been operationalised and remained as a proposal.

Nevertheless, it may be said that it is impossible to discuss every relevant issue regarding participatory tourism development approach based upon merely the literature on developing countries. Consequently, some of the perceived problems of the participatory tourism development approach in the developing world are examined and argued based upon the related arguments for the developed world by carefully taking into account socio-political, economic and cultural structure of developing countries. This should not be surprising since some of the limitations to the participatory development approach do apply internationally (especially when one considers peripheral regional development in developed countries). However, effects of these problems on operation of the participatory development approach vary from developed nations to developing nations. It is likely that these limitations make community participation in the TDP less probable in developing countries that do not have the basis of the pre-industrial phase experienced last century in Western Europe and North America, where now better economic, legislative and political structure are in operation, than in developing countries.

## 2. Community participation in the development process

It is argued that 'the notion of community participation is deeply ideological in that it reflects beliefs derived from social and political theories about how societies should be organised' (Midgley, 1986, p. 4) and how development should take place. However, to Sewell and Coppock (1977), its emergence as a new catchword is rooted in the failures of these theories. They have argued that involvement of the public in a development process has two main considerations. The first is philosophical and the second is pragmatic. The former is related to political theories of democracy that people have the right to be informed and consulted and convey their views on matters which affect them to decision-makers. In modern

democratic government, elected representatives have, however, failed to represent grassroots and at least significant segments of communities have feelings of alienation towards governmental decision-making. Pragmatic considerations are chiefly related to the failure of plans and the decision-making process which could not determine public preferences correctly. Therefore, planners and politicians had subsequently difficulties in obtaining public support; either at the ballot box or after implementation.

Moreover, proponents of community participation have contended that community participation as an element of development has been considered, promoted and woven into the development process in different ways since the 1950s and early 1960s under different terms and names (de Kadt, 1982; Gow & Vansant, 1983). That is to say; the concept of community participation has been a component of the political dynamics of the post-industrial era, which mirrored in part a longer term movement toward a new public administration. In other words, the interest of the citizen in participating in government decision-making and the demand for direct participation in the development process have emerged due to the needs of government itself, as a response to community action (Smith, 1981), and as a result of the absence of the affluence and security of the period following World War II.

The overall result is that since the 1970s in many ways, community participation has become an umbrella term for a supposedly new genre of development intervention. Not surprisingly, to propose a development strategy that is not participatory is now almost reactionary. More importantly, major aspects of development intervention, research, planning, implementation and control, have been reoriented so as to make them more participatory. 'Where the targets of a plan are not fully realised, this is often attributed as much to inadequate public involvement as to a lack of labour or capital' (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1970, p. 31).

In the course of researching community participation in the development process, it seems quite natural to ask for a definition of the concept of community participation. As de Vaus (1996, p. 48) argues, 'concepts do not have real or set meanings can lead to conceptual anarchy, a problem with no entirely satisfactory solution. The most practical action is to clarify how a concept has been defined and to keep this definition clearly in mind when drawing conclusions and comparing the findings with those of other researchers'. Following this recommendation it seems to be useful to examine definitions of community participation.

### *2.1. Definitions of community participation in the development process*

Community participation implies a desire to avoid using traditional bureaucratic paternalism, according to

which agencies believe that they are close to the ideas of members of the community, and they know best what is good for people in the community (Skelcher, 1993). By way of definition, community participation refers to a form of voluntary action in which individuals confront opportunities and responsibilities of citizenship. The opportunities for such participation include joining in the process of self-governance, responding to authoritative decisions that impact on one's life, and working co-operatively with others on issues of mutual concern (Til, 1984). Hence, to some extent, it is an educational and empowering process in which people, in partnership with those able to assist them, identify problems and needs and increasingly assume responsibility themselves to plan, manage, control and assess the collective actions that are proved necessary (Askew, 1989). 'In this sense community participation, as an ideal type, involves a shift of power, from those who have had major decision-making roles to those who traditionally have not had such a role' (Willis, 1995, p. 212). That is to say, community participation is a tool to readjust the balance of power and reassert local community views against those of the developers or the local authority, or to redefine professionalism, which may determine the conditions of successful participation and prevent manipulation of a community in the participation process.

In other words, community participation is to design 'development in such a way that intended beneficiaries are encouraged to take matters into their own hands, to participate in their own development through mobilising their own resources, defining their own needs, and making their own decisions about how to meet them' (Stone, 1989, p. 207). This may imply that community participation as a development strategy is based on community resources, needs and decisions. Hence, community is the main actor in the development process. On the other hand, the concept of community participation is seen as a powerful tool to educate the community in rights, laws and political good sense (Low, 1991 quoting Tocqueville, n.d.). Moreover, it is stated that 'since the leadership of society would inevitably be in the hands of an elite, it was necessary to ensure that its members were educated in the broadest sense and deeply valued individual liberty and democracy. The individual would, therefore, learn the politics of democracy by participating in local institutions and associations' (Low, 1991, p. 86, quoting Mill, 1973). 'We do not learn to read or write, to ride or swim, by merely being told how to do it but by doing it, so it is only by practicing popular government on a limited scale, that people will ever learn how to exercise it on a large scale' (Low, 1991, p. 86, quoting Mill, 1973, p. 186). On the basis of Low's argument, it may be proposed that active and direct participation of local people in local affairs is an indispensable tool for public education. Without using this instrument, democracy and individual liberty may not be sustainable.

The conceptual argument regarding community participation seems to have focused on political dimension and ignored the economic and financial considerations which are often the primary drivers at the local level. This may be owing to the fact that it is the political structure or system that determines pre-conditions for participation in the development process. For example, '... high levels of literacy and mass communications have not produced democracy in Singapore, Malaysia, or the many oil-rich states of the Gulf' (Diamond, Linz & Lipset, 1995, p. 23). However, the role of an advanced level of economic development, which produced greater economic security and more wide-spread education, is important to reduce socioeconomic inequality and mitigate feelings of relative deprivation and injustice in the lower class. Thus, it facilitates and encourages participation of local community in their affairs. 'Economic development also tends to alter the relationship between state and society, to increase the number and variety of independent organisations that check the state and broaden political participation, and to reduce corruption, nepotism, and state control over jobs and opportunities to accumulate wealth' (Lipset, 1981, p. 51). Therefore, this study will also examine economic factors such as lack of financial and human resources that discourage community participation in the TDP.

As the above definitional arguments suggest that the concept of community participation in the development process is multi-dimensional and includes representation from many disciplines. Hence, it may not be possible to encapsulate the concept within one single and definite term. It has been implied that it may take very different forms, ranging between citizen power to manipulation or it can vary from minimal forms involving information exchange (surveys, handouts, questionnaires, and the like) to full forms of community control (Arnstein, 1971; Willis, 1995). Indeed, it is a tricky concept, not easy either to define or to accomplish and, like democracy, it creates socially desirable expectations which cannot be met easily in the real world. It may be easy for policy makers to see it as an evolving concept and popular to accept in theory, but troublesome to execute in practice and putting the idea into operation is not precisely comprehended, particularly in developing countries.

## *2.2. Community participation in the tourism development process*

The infrastructures of community participation are the legacies of western ideology; the influence of community development programs in developing countries; western social work and community radicalism; and the United Nations' (UN) participatory development programs, which, indeed, provided a source of inclination for community participation as a modern concept in housing,

transportation, education, health, etc. Naturally, accumulation of participatory experiences in social, political and economic life have become the modern sources of inclination for community participation in the tourism development process. However, students of tourism seem not to have benefited from these participatory experiences in those sectors of economy as there are very few references in the tourism literature to these sectoral studies. They have not yet explained what community participation in the TDP or community-based tourism development approach means.

It has been stated that the people who enjoy or suffer, the main impacts of tourism are those who live in the communities in tourist destination areas; thus communities at the tourist destination must participate in planning decisions regarding tourism development (Lea, 1988; Murphy, 1985). It is also argued that 'communities are the destination of most travelers... it is in communities that tourism happens. Because of this, tourism industry development and management must be brought effectively to bear in communities' (Blank, 1989, p. 4). It is noted that the outcome of numerous tourism impact and resident attitude studies in host communities 'has been a call for increased public participation and, in particular, a more community-oriented approach to tourism planning' (Keogh, 1990, p. 450). In this context, it is debated that a destination community is an important component of the tourism product and 'the industry uses the community as a resource, sell it as a product, and in the process affects the lives of everyone' (Murphy, 1985, p. 165). Hence, community participation in the TDP is needed for 'a reasonable degree of consensus' that is essential for long-term success of the tourist destination (Ritchie, 1988, p. 199); 'strong community support' that is important for successful tourism development (Getz, 1983, p. 87); 'desired guest-host relationships' (Haywood, 1988, p. 117); and for increasing the quality of tourism's benefits to national development (Lea, 1988).

In parallel to these statements, Inskip (1991) pointed out that host communities must have a voice in shaping their future community as their right and has called for the maximum involvement of the local community to maximise socio-economic benefits of tourism for the community. George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies (1991, p. 9) has stated that, as its assembly report of 'Policy Issues for the 1990s, '[r]esident responsive tourism is the watchword for tomorrow: community demands for active participation in the setting of the tourism agenda and its priorities for tourism development and management cannot be ignored'. Murphy (1985) has argued that community-oriented tourism development requires to find a way of creating more workable partnerships between the tourism industry and local communities and develop facilities both for host and guest. Mathieson and Wall (1982, p. 181) have

noted that ‘the public now demand that their concerns be incorporated into the decisions-making process ... there has been little public involvement in tourism planning. This explains the neglect of this topic in the literature on tourism’.

Prentice (1993, p. 218) has stated that ‘community involvement in tourism development have become an ideology of tourism planning’. It is argued that ‘a community-based approach to tourism development is a prerequisite to sustainability’ (Woodley, 1993, p. 137). Willams and Gill (1994, p. 184) have claimed that ‘community involvement in establishing desirable conditions is perhaps the single most important element of growth management’ in tourist destinations. Ryan and Montgomery (1994, p. 369) have noted that ‘... communities need only to be educated about the benefits of tourism, and that their involvement in good visitor management techniques will actually solve problems’.

Simmons (1994, p. 99) has argued that involvement of a community in the tourism development process is vital ‘if any region wishes to deliver tourism experiences which ensure both visitor satisfaction and ongoing benefits for the residents of destination areas’. Hall (1994) has claimed that ‘... satisfying local needs it may also be possible to satisfy the needs of the tourist’, which is one of the key components of the notion of community participation. Brohman (1996) has advocated community participation in the tourism development process as a tool to solve major problems of tourism in developing nations. He has contended that community participation in the TDP will achieve more equal distribution of the benefits, discourage undemocratic decision-making and will meet the needs of local community in better way.

The above theoretical arguments for participatory tourism development approach seem to be good news. If applied, most of the problems of tourism development may be avoided. Perhaps, thus it is difficult to challenge them. However, these arguments have left enough room to pose some interesting and, perhaps, difficult questions about the approach’s validity and practicality. For example, who is the local community or who should participate and who should not participate in the TDP? How will the participatory tourism development approach be initiated? Who will initiate it? Why will they do so? How will participation by local people in the TDP ensure a better distribution of benefits of tourism? Can local people protect or defend their interests? Will any form of community participation contribute to tourists’ satisfaction? What should be the form and mode of participation? Is every form of participation effective under every circumstance? Who will decide on the form and level of participation? Is the participatory tourism development approach feasible in terms of politics and finance? How will the level of development in a community, and scale and type of tourism development affect community participation in the TDP?

The intention of the author in posing the above questions is to imply that there are limits to community participation in the decision-making process of tourism development in the context of developing countries, rather than providing immediate answers to them. However, it is not claimed that these limits do not exist at any level or to any extent in the developed world. Some of these limits to participatory tourism development approach may be observed especially in rural regions of, or peripheral regional economic development, in advanced economies as well.

As argued, it is very difficult to define community participation, but it appears to be essential to clarify it for the purpose of this article since mere reference to conceptual arguments in the previous section of this study does not indicate what exactly it implies or means in the context of this article. Hence, it should be noted that community participation here refers to Arnstein’s (1971, pp. 70–71) degrees of citizen power (partnership, delegated power and citizen control) and Pretty’s (1995) interactive participation and self-mobilisation. That is to say, this study will focus on community participation in the decision-making process though public involvement in the benefits of tourism development is not ignored.

Before progressing further, it seems to be useful to consider the meaning and scope of the term ‘developing countries’ as this article will examine limits to community participation in the TDP in the context of developing countries.

### *2.3. Definition of the terms of developing countries*

There is an ongoing debate on meaning and usefulness of the terms ‘the Third World’, ‘First World’ and ‘Second World’ among some of the world system theorists (Harrison, 1988). Moreover, the terms ‘the Third World’, ‘underdeveloped countries’, ‘developing countries’, ‘poor countries’, ‘the South’ and ‘less developed countries’ (LDC’s) are mostly used interchangeably. But it is not an easy task to define precisely what is meant by these terms (McQueen, 1977). Although ‘they are all attempts at grouping a large number of countries into one category, often knowing that the reality is quite different. In essence, they all include the same countries with a few deviations depending on who is conducting the classification’ (Oppermann & Chon, 1997, p. 4).

On the other hand, it is argued that the changes in Eastern Europe diminished those features that differentiated it from ‘the Third World’. ‘The emphasis on civil society, new economic and political institutions, even on national identities, is reminiscent of the ‘new nations’ of the 1950s and 1960s and, arguably, the nations of Eastern Europe are only now emerging from a period of colonialism’ (Harrison, 1992, p. 1). That is to say, ‘Times have changed. With the Second World no longer an actor on the geopolitical stage, it is now simply illogical to posit

the existence of a Third World' (Harrison, 1994, p. 707). In fact, 'as well as in terminology, the disappearance of the Second World entails the disappearance of the Third World' (Harrison, 1992, p. 1).

Consequently, we are increasingly dealing with 'a heterogeneous yet hierarchical and inegalitarian structure of capitalist states, each with increasingly polarized internal class divisions' (Cliffe & Seldon, 1991, p. 9). 'When discussing issues of development, it is no longer possible to regard Albania, Romania and Bulgaria, for example, as obviously different from Egypt, Zambia or Pakistan. The whiff of convergence is in the air' (Harrison, 1992, p. 1; 1994). Now, it has become more obvious that developing countries are so heterogeneous, economically, culturally and in virtually every other way, that they exhibit no single defining feature. Although Buchanan (1971, p. 20 quoting *New Left Review*, 1963, p. 4) describes 'the Third World is a universe of radical scarcity ... , [where] 'the inadequacy of means of livelihood is the first and distinguishing truth of this area', it seems to be very difficult to give a comprehensive definition of the terms of the Third World/developing countries to everybody's satisfaction.

Although it may not be acceptable to everybody, in this article reference will be made to developing countries/developing nations, rather than to the 'Third World', which is no longer deemed appropriate, for reason already given, for the purpose of this article. However, mere reference to developing nations does not indicate which countries should be placed in that category. In the context of this article, at the risk of over-generalisation, developing countries collectively refers to Asian, Latin American and the former second world countries to distinguish them from the economically advanced 'capitalist democratic' countries. In other words, developing nations/countries here refer to countries not regarded by the World Bank as High Income Economies, as well as about a dozen oil-rich states and a few island economies with relatively high GNP per capita (see Harrison, 1992, p. 2). Clearly, in this heterogeneous collection of nation states some countries are closer to 'development' than others. Thus, depending upon level of development in each country the limits to participatory tourism development approach exhibit different intensity and persistence in each developing country.

#### 2.4. *Limitations to community participation in the TDP*

As analysis of studies on participatory tourism development approaches suggests that its proponents have popularised it in the context of developed countries and made considerable contribution to theoretical foundation of this proactive tourism development approach. However, limitations to participatory tourism development approach have hardly been debated by scholars of tourism. The literature of developmental studies in general has revealed that there seems to be an agreement

amongst the scholars that in spite of an insistence on community participation in the development process, it has been observed that the performance of participatory development strategy is not encouraging and authentic participation (Arnstein's citizen power or Petty's self mobilization and interactive participation) seldom occurs. Though an agreement on the limited success of community participation has emerged, there seems to be no consensus on what are the reasons for it.

By keeping in mind the structure of international tourism, limitations to community participation in the TDP in developing countries may be analysed under three main headings; limitations at the operational level; structural limitations; and cultural limitations. It should be noted that such areas of limitations are not mutually exclusive. Although there is no special reason beyond this classification, it is supposed that it will facilitate understanding of limits to community participation in the TDP, at least at a theoretical level.

#### 2.5. *Limitations at the operational level*

Implementation of participatory development approaches in developing countries is likely to meet obstacles usually associated with the operational procedures of the task. Some of these obstacles include the centralisation of public administration of tourism development, lack of co-ordination between involved parties and lack of information made available to the local people of the tourist destination.

- *Centralization of public administration of Tourism:* Formulation and implementation of any kind of community participation approach requires decentralisation of the political, administrative and financial powers of central government to local government at least to some extent. However, as UN (1981, p. 15) noted, in many developing countries planning is a highly centralised activity. The planning organisation has been established at national level and is under the direct management of national chief political executive.

The effect of this is to restrict the influence of community-level groups on the planning process, and implementing plans. Under these circumstances, centralisation has stifled popular participation in planning. It has increased the vertical distance between planners and the broad mass of the population.

It may be added that the UN's comment is not for a specific sector of an economy. It seems to be valid for tourism as well; since governments in developing countries have seen tourism as a relatively easy, effective and cheap instrument to achieve export-led industrialisation

as a core principle of free market economy recommended by international donor agencies (Tosun, 1998c). That is why, developing countries recognised that tourism is too important to leave to the market, and governmental posts at the cabinet level were created to develop, monitor and administer tourism policy (Poirier, 1997). That is to say, planning and management of tourism has been centralised in a way that can contribute to achieving pre-determined governments' objectives. Hence, it is not easy to persuade governments in developing countries to delegate its various powers to regional or local authorities. For example, since the late 1950s and early 1960s decentralization has been advocated and tried in practice, but the overall results were not always satisfactory (Tosun & Jenkins, 1996). Moreover, many developing countries such as India, Mexico, Thailand and Turkey have a strong central government that has practiced administrative tutelage on local government. This tutelage practice of the central government has precluded an emergence of responsive, effective and autonomous institutions at the local level (see Das Gupta, 1995; Jones, 1990; Koker, 1995). Ultimately, this has ushered in non-participation or pseudo-participation of local people in their own affairs including tourism development. This implies that the public administration system in many developing countries seems to be too bureaucratic to respond to public needs effectively and efficiently.

On the other hand, it is argued that 'there is a lack of political will to implement participation because of the implications for the distribution of power and resources' (Desai, 1995, p. 40). By winning elections and being in power for certain time intervals, politicians and their appointees seem to have claimed that they are entitled to take all necessary decisions in the name of those who elected them without further participation requirements during their terms of office. Moreover, by reference to totalitarian regimes in the developing world, it has been argued that the state is not only disinterested in development, but also "[r]igorously suppress the effort of progressive elements to bring about meaningful changes' (Midgley, 1987, p. 11). That is to say, in developing countries politicians seem to be far from the realisation of development ideals, particularly the participatory development strategy (Benicourt, 1982). Ultimately, this may create lack of co-ordination and co-operation amongst agencies, which can hinder community participation in the tourism development process. Moreover, politicians and their appointees have seen grassroots movements as nothing more than residents' egotism, narrow personal and local interests.

The above argument suggests that unwillingness of politicians and their appointees at central level, and highly centralised public administration system appear to hinder emergence and operationalisation of participatory tourism development approach in many developing

countries. As developing world politicians are motivated/forced to satisfy international agencies and organised business class, it seems to be difficult to gain support of the politicians for participatory tourism development approach which may pose questions about current style and scale of tourism development in the developing countries unless a growth of patronal NIMBY (not in my backyard) takes place.

- *Lack of co-ordination*: 'The lack of co-ordination and cohesion within the highly fragmented tourism industry is a well-known problem' to tourism professionals (Jamal & Getz, 1995, p. 186). It is obvious that '... No one business or government establishment can operate in isolation' (Gunn, 1988, p. 272). Thus, development of co-ordination mechanisms among the formal bodies, between the public and the private sector, and among private enterprises is essential for the highly fragmented tourism industry (Inskeep, 1991).

However, 'too often in developing countries the planning process is very fragmented one authority being concerned with the impetus for development, while others are expected to manage the impact of the development' (Jenkins, 1982, p. 241). In many tourist destinations in developing countries such as Turkey (Tosun, 1998c), Thailand (Elliott, 1983), Kenya (Dieke, 1991) and Bali (Jenkins, 1982), this may be a missing ingredient of the tourism development process. In this regard, it is argued that tourism projects did not benefit from a full co-ordination between local and tourism planners (Jenkins, 1982) owing to the fact that there is a traditional powerful bureaucracy which dominates legislative and operational processes. Any approaches which are in conflict with this unnecessary traditional bureaucracy are not acceptable to the powerful bureaucrats. Particularly, this traditional bureaucracy is an obstacle to establishing co-ordination and co-operation between and among the various bodies. Moreover, there is also 'bureaucratic jealousys' among official authorities. For example, the Ministry of Tourism may not tolerate any bureaucratic department trespassing on what it regards as its territory. Ultimately, this may create a lack of co-ordination amongst agencies (Tosun, 1998a). Clearly, under such bureaucratic structure operating a co-ordinated strategy may demand ministers to reduce their range of responsibilities, and thus their role to offer patronage to their clients; both of which are not acceptable for them. Moreover, 'Third World politicians can also be very opportunist, offering sops where political gain is likely to accrue, and yielding where political pressure is greatest. Such serving incrementalism can be very damaging to co-ordinated policy-making' (Jones, 1990, p. 264). It is to be regretted, but, unfortunately, lack of co-ordination appears to be a usual situation in the TDP in many developing countries, if not all.

Tourism is an amalgam of many different components that constitute a whole product. What happens in other sectors has important implications for the tourism product. Therefore, lack of co-ordination and co-operation between departments of government can be very damaging to not only the quality of the tourism product, but also to the effectiveness of participatory tourism development approach. On the other hand, lack of definition in roles of agencies, overlap in responsibilities of government departments and little accountability between them make the most needed co-ordination for participatory tourism development approach less possible. In brief, a participatory tourism development strategy will invite more actors to play roles in the tourism development process, and thus increase the need for interaction amongst agencies. Any lack of co-ordination may frustrate potential opportunities for the community to involve itself in tourism development.

- *Lack of Information:* In most developing countries, tourism data are insufficient, even that collected may not have been disseminated to the citizens in ways that are comprehensible to them. Most residents are not well-informed regarding tourism development; therefore, low public involvement should be expected. Thus, the general public is in need of information which may allow it to participate in the TDP in a more informed manner. For example, Tosun and Jenkins (1996) argued in relation to Turkey that The Ministry of Tourism and the bodies responsible for authorisation of tourism investment and incentives are not accessible for the majority of indigenous people in local tourist destinations. They are accessible for the rich and educated elites. In this sense, there is a big communication gap between communities and decision-makers. This lack of communication does not only increase the knowledge gap between local communities and decision-makers but also accelerates isolation of the local community from the tourism development process. Consequently, the knowledge gaps between centralised authorities and local communities make it difficult for a host community to participate in the tourism development process.

On the other hand, decision-makers may not have up-dated information about socio-economic structures of local communities in tourist destinations due to the fact that gathering such data requires continuous research that is not possible in the absence of financial resources and expertise. The implication of the above argument may be that greater awareness and interest among members of local communities could be achieved if meaningful and comprehensible information contained in reports and plans is disseminated. Thus, for the purpose of achieving better tourism development through community participation, information about the

structure of local communities and data regarding local, national and international tourism should be collected in a comprehensible manner and disseminated to local communities and institutions.

## 2.6. *Structural limitations to community participation in the TDP*

Emergence and implementation of a participatory tourism development approach seem to be problematic due to the prevailing structural constraints in many developing countries. These are usually associated with institutional, power structures, legislative, and economic systems. Some of these structural limitations will be examined below.

- *Attitudes of professionals:* The role of technocrats (professionals) in shaping tourism policies in developing countries cannot be ignored. Some professionals claim that planning and development efforts are ‘value-free’ or politically neutral exercises. Hence, the participation of a community in the development process can only serve to politicise it and deviate it from its professional base. Although some professionals are sensitive to the need for some forms of participation, they may consider a ‘present-oriented’ mentality makes it impossible for them to projects beyond current needs and problems (UN, 1981).

The main tension between technocracy and participation stems from the confidence of the technocrat that his/her professional qualifications find the ‘One Right Answer’ to development problems (Wolfe, 1982). The technical service officers, who formulated draft plans, are usually confident of the quality of their work. That is to say, the possibility of other and better alternatives being suggested by amateurs is seen as unrealistic. It is understandable and reasonable for professional groups not to allow lay people to become involved in the decisions-making process. It may also cost the professional groups time and money.

It is not easy to persuade professionals, most of who do not have close contact with local people and lack a tourism background, to accept participatory tourism development as a viable approach in many developing countries. In this context, emergence and acceptance of participatory tourism development may depend largely on the existence of powerful non-governmental organisations (NGOs) aiming at defending participatory development as a democratic right of host communities in tourist destinations. Establishment and efficiency of NGOs may require support by central government who is not always willing to share its powers with such organizations (see Mathur, 1995). The question of how to persuade tourism professionals to accept participatory tourism development remains an unknown under the current complex socio-economic and political structures in



developing countries. But, it seems obvious that without a positive attitude by professionals towards participatory tourism development, the emergence of such an approach may not be possible, unless specifically written into the project terms of references.

- *Lack of expertise:* It is contended that although community participation seems to be highly desirable, few developing countries have sufficient experience in this area. Lack of qualified personal and the working attitudes of professionals who have been trained in traditional planning techniques which do not involve community participation, and who have little idea of how to incorporate it in their planning (Desai, 1995). This is particularly true for the tourism industry in developing countries since tourism has recently been recognised as a professional area in these developing countries. That is to say, owing to its relatively short history in the economies of these countries, as Inskip (1988) has stated, the services of tourism planners for projects in both the public and private sectors are currently in demand in developing countries that still lack expertise in tourism planning even though they may have qualified urban and regional planners.

Developed countries have responded to the need for tourism planning by adopting suitable educational and research programs on tourism planning. Many developing countries have already failed to do so. Adopting appropriate educational and research programs developed in and for developed countries seems to be difficult due to the fact that they require expertise and financial resources. For example, it is reported that ‘planning lags behind change, as it often does in Turkey, and change brings the destruction of much of the country’s rich historical heritage’ (The Economist, 1996, p. 3). In the absence of expertise, tourism development has been seen as tourism growth and tourism development plans refer to improving infrastructures, increasing bed capacity and other components of tourist superstructure. In the broader context of sectoral development planning, these activities in relation to tourism growth is not effective planning and do not reflect concerns of contemporary approaches to tourism development. As a result, myopic tourism development approaches have emerged in many developing countries.

However, although some developing countries have achieved accumulation of qualified human capital in tourism via sending students to developed countries (e.g. Turkey, India and Malaysia), and sharing the experiences of international donor agencies and international consultants (e.g. Turkey, Sri-Lanka, Egypt, India, Indonesia, etc.), personal experience of the author suggests that these countries appear not to have benefited from these human resources educated abroad because of widespread favoritism, nepotism and personality clashes.

Moreover, in the absence of equal opportunity for personal promotion, these Western-educated experts tend to seek job opportunities in Western countries or in private sector.

On the other hand, Tosun and Jenkins (1998) argued that in most developing countries tourism development planning often proceeds in an ad hoc way. Substantive tourism planning is usually donor-assistance driven. The planning team is based on foreign expertise (being paid for by foreign donors) with some counterpart training. The steering committee to oversee the planning exercise, is usually more concerned with outputs rather than objectives. In these circumstances, notions of sustainability and community participation are icons to current development jargon rather than realistic implementable parameters.

The above argument reveals that the lack of expertise in field of tourism is a significant barrier to practicing a participatory tourism development approach in the developing world. Community participation as a multi-dimensional phenomenon does not only require tourism planners, but also sociologists, economists, social-psychologists and political scientists with some prior knowledge of tourism. In the absence of these experts, it appears to be difficult to formulate and implement participatory tourism development approach. Moreover, it suggests that the prevailing human resources management system does not encourage the limited numbers of Western-educated experts to use their expertise for developing tourism in a better way via the participatory development approach.

- *Elite domination:* In some developing countries there is very little democratic experience or semi-democratic experience or no prospect of an opening to freedom. In some other developing nations although there is a formal structure of constitutional, multiparty democracy, these democratic institutions and regulations are not shared with the majority. That is to say, in these countries democracy is limited to business elites and state elites (e.g. Thailand, Brazil, South Korea, Chile, etc.) (Diamond et al., 1995). ‘Even a democratic state in the developing world is almost indistinguishable in crucial aspects from its authoritarian counterpart’ (Sangmpam, 1992, p. 402). Elites have a fear that the propertyless and uneducated masses could use their numerical strength to take care of their interests through political power or coercion. Therefore, they do not want to share fruits of democracy with the hitherto excluded who constitute the majority in many developing countries.

It is this elitist approach to the democratisation process and development that have ushered in clientelism in many developing countries ‘where the ruling party’s access to immense state resources, and the clientelistic tradition that gave the political class wide scope in

distributing state resources ...' (Diamond et al., 1995, p. 32). That is to say, there is a haphazard resources allocation system by the state authorities and preferential access to state decision-making bodies that is extremely important for being successful in business in the developing world. Of course, 'political patronage is not unknown in the North (consider the notorious 'pork barrel' system in the United States) but it is widespread throughout the developing world, where it takes the form of 'clientelism' (John, 1990, p. 269). It is not surprising that patron-client relations have also affected tourism development in many developing nations. For example, there were rumours of corruption and gossip about the partnership between the bourgeoisie, the upper echelons of the party, and the favoured businessmen regarding too generous incentives given to the tourism industry in many developing countries (Clancy, 1999; Tosun, 1999). For instance, in Turkey one of the biggest daily newspapers reported that misuse of incentives given to the tourism industry appeared in different forms. In this regard, it was claimed that 'there were cases where incentives were given on the bases of inner party courtesy or intimacy of friendship and relationship rather than entrepreneur capability' (Tosun, 1998b, p. 602, quoting Kusluvan, 1994).

Given the elitist approach to democratic rule and regulation in the developing world, it tends to become a rule rather than an exception to favour the interest of the dominant class at the expense of the vast majority who has been historically excluded from political and modern economic activities. As a result, felt needs of local indigenous communities in some tourist destinations of the developing world have been ignored so as to serve dominant business interests. For example, in the case of Varna, Bulgaria in the early 1990s while residents of the town suffered cuts in electricity supply, the hotels were unaffected (Harrison, 1994).

With special reference to Santa Cruz, Mexico, it is argued that local residents anticipated many problems owing to irresponsible tourism development. For instance, shops could not maintain adequate stocks to meet needs of the increased number of people. Public transportation capacity was not sufficient; buses had irregular schedules and taxis were usually full. Residents complained that a visit to the public health clinic took an entire day, as there were insufficient facilities and staff for the demand. They sought out private doctors in the town of Pochutla, an hour's bus ride away (Long, 1991). Moreover, it is stated that local people have already lost their beaches. For example the Club Med resort did not allow non-guests to enter any part of its facility. '... as soon as the resort was in operation, they (local people) would no longer be able to use the beaches... . They saw Santa Cruz Bay as the future playground for foreigners' (Long, 1991, p. 210). Additionally, it is also reported that 'the original residents of Santa Cruz were suddenly faced with social stratification.... The new upper and middle class

community members openly referred to the indigenous people of Santa Cruz as ugly and stupid ...' (Long, 1991, p. 211). Wider evidence in this regard suggests that while the local people do not have acceptable houses, schools of national standard, proper irrigation systems and modern agricultural equipment, luxury hotels and leisure facilities for tourists have received a major share from public funds as incentives to comfort the Western mass tourist by creating a protective ecological bubble of his accustomed environment.

On the other hand, foreign domination of the developing world tourism industry resulted in the loss of control over resources which may increase any adverse impacts of tourism development. Members of local communities usually find themselves caught up in a 'globally integrated system of resources over which they cannot exercise control' (Brohman, 1996, p. 55). Decision-makers at central level and elitist bodies who are exogenous to communities in tourist destinations target to control local communities and their resources upon which they depend. Decisions affecting their daily life, future and many local matters are normally made without considering these local people, rather they are made 'according to the narrow interests of those that control the tourism industry' (Brohman, 1996, p. 55). The struggle between elites and local people to control resources has been ignored by local and central governments. Since more and more regions are developed for mass tourism, adoption of political economic policies that effect a balance between local ownership and external ownership of resources and control over those resources as well as between tourism and other sectors of the economy becomes a crucial need. Thus if communities in tourist destinations are not empowered in a real sense, involvement may be restricted to elites in the community, which often results in their interests being considered rather than the interests of the community. In other words, domain of elites in participatory decision-making may enhance their own status and legalise what they are doing at the expense of excluded communities.

Consequently, the stimulus towards community participation provides little more than a symbolic sham intended to defuse discontent. From this point of view, many important decisions occur out of the community eye, emerging as non-decisions. Therefore, it is not surprising that tourism development in many tourist destinations in developing countries is not driven by the community, but driven by local elites in conjunction with international tour operators as a reflection of Britton's (1982) 'three-tiered hierarchy' of the industry. Under the given structure of the international tourism system it is difficult for developing countries to develop a proactive tourism development approach by which to decrease or eradicate the influences of external actors on tourism development. That is to say, a participatory tourism development approach may not function to contribute to

a better tourism development under the current power structure of developing countries where the majority of populations live in poverty which limits and excludes them from local and national affairs unless deliberate measures are urgently taken to empower indigenous local communities via special educational programs, financial and fiscal instruments, and political decentralisation. However, it should be kept in mind that utilising these instruments/strategies to empower local communities requires hard political choices, a confident decision-making process and the collaboration of international tour operators and donor agencies.

- *Lack of appropriate legal system:* Participatory tourism development strategies may bring unorganised groups into the policy-making process. Creating opportunities for those who are poorly organised may not negate the influence of the interest groups already active in tourist development. Thus, a legal structure which can defend community interests and ensure a community's participatory right in tourism development may be needed. However, legal structures in many developing countries do not encourage local people to participate in their local affairs; rather the legislative structure puts a distance between grass-roots and formal authorities, and it is difficult to understand how it is operated from a lay person's point of view. In this context, it is argued with special references to India that participatory attempts are not effective and efficient owing to the lack of enabling environment. The legal structure is not encouraging to educate communities about their rights and how they can establish organisations to promote their interests. Moreover, such organisations must get government approval, for which a level of literacy, that the poor clearly lack, is essential (Mathur, 1995).

There is evidence that 'For the sake of expediency and in the interests of short-term profits local environmental laws are frequently flouted. Such an example is the recent construction of the Ramada Hotel Varca in southern Goa, India, which violated both the maximum height and minimum distance from the sea criteria' (Cater, 1991, p. 12). In some developing countries such as Turkey and Mexico local indigenous communities' right to use public places such as beaches and sea is violated by tourism operators (see Long, 1991; Tosun, 1998a). In the context of developing countries, it is contended that the state has not usually been the expression of societies. It acts in accordance with a mercantilist model. Laws favour a small group of elites and discriminates against the interests of the powerless majority, which has token legality. The system does not only 'concentrate the nation's wealth in a small minority but it also concedes to that minority the right to that wealth' (Llosa, 1995, p. 291). Of course, the inappropriate legal system that works against participatory development varies from one

country to another one. For example, legal structure are often in place in ex-colonies but they just are not implemented by existing local government. This may confirm de Kadt's (1979) assertion that the ability of local authorities to impose laws and regulation are limited and directed by important interest groups outside the community in the developing world.

The above argument implies that although participatory rights are needed as legal protection, they may not themselves guarantee authentic community participation in the TDP because of other structural limitations prevailing in many developing countries. As Leftwich (1995, p. 436) stated, '... if the politics do not give rise to the kind of state which can generate, sustain and protect an effective and independent capacity for governance, then there will be no positive developmental consequences'. That is to say, efficient and effective participatory tourism development approach requires high level of supporting institutions, both within and outside the state. Unless the institutions enforce rule and regulation to be obeyed, it is meaningless to establish legal framework.

- *Lack of trained human resources:* 'Most economists would probably agree that it is the human resources of a nation, not its capital or its natural resources, that ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development' (Todaro, 1994, p. 363). That is to say, '... human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organisations, and carry forward national development' (Harbison, 1973, p. 3). However, lack of qualified human resources in the tourism sector in many local destinations in the developing world has stimulated an influx of employees from other parts of country to work in tourism. The few attractive jobs requiring high skills are occupied by foreigners (e.g. the law relating to the tourism industry allows companies to employ up to 20 percentage foreigners in Turkey) and well-educated people from high income groups. The low status, unskilled jobs associated with low wages and hard working conditions have been left for members of destination communities who were working on farms or for those unskilled people who moved from less developed parts of the country in order to work in the construction of the tourism industry, and then have become cheap labour input. This has not only limited the participation of local people in tourism, it has also created a cultural backlash between local people and the seasonal workers and increased the burden on public services (Inskeep & Kallenberger, 1992; Long, 1991; Tosun & Jenkins, 1996).

'Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilise them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop

anything else' (Harbison, 1973, p. 3). That is to say, '[w]ithout a trained local work force, the industry can only function by importing staff, in which case the principle of ensuring local benefits from tourism is thwarted' (Woodley, 1993, p. 143). Thus, for active participation of local people in tourism, training is an essential element, which must be outfitted to the needs of the community. In this regard, it is contended that training must occur at the local level, otherwise residents would not be interested in participating (Woodley, 1993). Additionally, the personal experience of the author suggests that low literacy rates in developing countries may necessitate the replacement of traditional training manuals and written materials to be effective. However, formulation and implementation of training programs will require expertise and financial resources. These are often scarce, expensive, and thus not attainable in the developing world.

- *Relatively high cost of community participation:* Community participation requires considerable time, money and skills to organise and sustain participation (Paul, 1987). That is to say, 'it is more time consuming and may lead to conflicting objectives amongst the local aims' (WTO, 1994, p. 10) since it may raise expectations in the community, which may not be easy to meet. On the other hand, as Murphy (1985) noted, effective management of tourism industry requires day-to-day and season-to-season operational decisions. It may not be possible to ask community to participate in these day-to-day decisions. Therefore, this time consuming and complex process of participatory development strategy may lead to delay in decision-making, which may burden the developers with high loan interest (Fogg, 1981). This may also disappoint those who expect quick return from investment.

Moreover, public bodies may not want to spend their limited financial resources on organising community participation whose benefit appears to be relatively long term. Private sector may avoid practicing participatory tourism development strategy since it involves contradictory investment criteria. To overcome these problems may be the real test for this kind of development approach. Thus, most state agencies may resist the kinds of reforms which demand them always to follow and elaborate costly procedures intended to increase community involvement (Ethridge, 1982). On the other hand, it may not be accepted by local authorities since their representatives' role may be questioned through moves towards citizens' empowerment in addition to being expensive in terms of resource implication.

The above argument suggests that a participatory tourism development approach is likely to require relatively more bureaucratic formalities that demand more money, organisational skills, time and effort. As the financial and qualified human resources are scarce in many developing countries, these scarce resources will be

likely directed to physical investments, rather than costly administrative procedures, particularly at the beginning of tourism development. As a result, it may be said that because participatory tourism development increases demands on scarce resources in developing countries, this is another limitation on participatory tourism development.

- *Lack of financial resources:* The introduction of tourism within communities usually requires funds to be allocated to develop a tourist infrastructure of facilities (Reed, 1997). These facilities often are based on Western standards even in the poorest host countries (Cohen, 1972). However, financial resources needed for tourism investment are very scarce and in most cases, not readily available in developing countries (see Pearce, 1991; Long, 1991; Tosun, 1998b). This shortcoming has appeared as a major limitation to the implementation of participatory tourism development in developing countries and even in relatively undeveloped regions of developed countries. In this context, it is stated that ownership and investment is one of the most important variables that determine control over the tourism industry. In many relatively less developed communities financing for tourism is not sufficient at local level, and thus must come from outside interests. When financial resources originate from non-local interests, the loss of control which emerges from outside investment is not easy to overcome. In spite of efforts to encourage community participation, if residents do not own the tourism infrastructure, control over growth and style of development is difficult to achieve (Woodley, 1993).

For example, it is reported that the opportunities created by tourism development were vast but their importance was not understood fully by indigenous people in Mexico. Whereas, the in-immigrants entrepreneurs who were attracted by the tourism development understood the types of business in demand at the development site. 'When the project was first announced there were opportunities for small-scale business investment, but many local leaders doubted its viability or success, thus missing those opportunities' (Long, 1991, p. 212). The Mexican case does not only reflect the lack of financial resources that has prevented the local community participating in the tourism development process as entrepreneurs, it also mirrors existing of cultural barriers to participation of local community. The case of Urgup, Turkey appears to be similar to the Mexican case. It is stated that 'the local people do not have enough capital to establish proper hotels and shops to serve tourists. The capital must come from non-local sources. Thus, it is very difficult for the local people to play a leading role as entrepreneurs in the tourism industry' (Tosun, 1998b, p. 601).

As the above comments imply, resources at the local level are not enough to finance the present scale of

tourism development particularly at the local level in many developing countries, which is one of the structural barriers to community participation in the tourism development process. As popularly argued in the tourism literature, tourism is an industry developed for and by foreigners in developing countries due to the fact that developing countries lack financial and qualified human resources to invest in and manage tourism particularly on a large scale. Severe macro-economic problems prevailing in these countries made them accept tourism as a part of an export-led development strategy without considering the nature of international tourism that has dependency as its central feature. This argument may suggest that tourism growth in developing countries is beyond the control of these countries. Therefore, implementation of a participatory tourism development approach as a pro-active development strategy is largely at the mercy of foreigners such as international tour operators and multinational companies.

### 2.7. *Cultural limitations*

There seem to be some cultural factors such as limited capacity of poor people to handle development effectively, and apathy and low level of awareness in the local community, that function as obstacles to emergence and operationalisation of participatory tourism development approach.

- *Limited capacity of poor people:* Grass-roots have limited capacity to handle the things which directly affect their dignity (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; UN, 1981). 'Depending on their motives, power holders can hire poor people to co-opt them, to placate them or to utilise the have-nots' special skills and insights' (Arnstein, 1971, p. 74). Moreover, as it is pointed out, the vast majority of the people in the developing world have difficulty meeting basic and felt needs, which limits them to get closely involved in issues of community concern. Satisfaction of the people's needs are at the mercy of government administrators. The lack of effective grass-root organisations that can be instrumental in determining and improving the collective interests of the poor intensifies this dependence. 'In the absence of corrective measures, popular participation in administration, under these circumstances, is likely to be manipulative in nature' (UN, 1982, p. 22)

The UN seems to have touched on a significant point which exists in tourist destinations of many developing countries. Host communities usually and widely have difficulty in accessing services of a welfare state (see Long, 1991; Tosun, 1998b). Many governments in developing nations have focused on serving organised groups such as civil servants and employed workers in the modern sectors of the economy. People in rural areas living on

farming have not been given enough opportunities to use basic welfare services such as hospitals and schools. Logically, and according to Maslow's need hierarchy, they are motivated to meet their basic needs and felt-needs by ignoring wider socio-political issues which indeed prevent them from satisfying their needs in more efficient ways.

The above argument suggests that the biggest challenge for the poor in many local tourist destinations in the developing world appears to be mere survival, which occupies all the time and consumes their energy. Hence, participating in the TDP which demands time and energy may be a luxury that the host communities cannot afford. Furthermore, when tourism development has taken place in local destinations of developing countries, central and local governments may have invested large amounts of public resources in tourism to create tourist infrastructure based on Western standards to attract maximum numbers of foreign tourists while host communities live on the poverty limit. That is to say, socio-economic and political issues have been handled in isolation from local communities in tourist destinations. Consequently, host communities have not been given an opportunity to develop their capacity. Under these conditions implementation of participatory tourism development approach is likely to be ineffective and token in nature.

- *Apathy and Low Level of awareness in the local community:* The perception of a low level of interest in and awareness about socio-cultural, economic and political issues amongst the grassroots is generally accepted. There seems to be several reasons for this argument. Firstly, for years, indeed centuries in some cases, the grass-roots has been excluded from the affairs which have affected their dignity, that have rendered them apathetic about taking a hand in matters beyond their immediate family domain. Apathy among the poor stops them effectively demanding that the institutions which serve them accommodate their needs. The output is that 'their plight worsens and their capacity for effective action is further weakened. A vicious cycle of poverty reinforces a vicious cycle of bureaucratic dysfunction' (Miller & Rein, 1975, p. 7).

Secondly, 'Citizens tend to participate only when strongly motivated to do so, and most of the time they are not motivated' (Rosener, 1982, p. 344). This may arise from the belief that their idea will not be considered, which does not motivate them to express an interest. And indeed, many poor people often act with a fear of making objections which could be used against them at a later date. In this regard, Brohman (1996) has contended that the current style of tourism development has increased alienation amongst local populations. It may be further argued that it is this kind of alienation which may force local people to be apathetic which causes low levels of

awareness about potential and current costs and the possible benefits of tourism development. Ultimately, alienation of local people may have stopped them from having sufficient knowledge about the nature of tourism development in their locality.

To Simmons (1994) and Tosun (1998b), the potential poor knowledge of tourism amongst local people make considerable efforts necessary to persuade the general public to participate in the tourism development process. That is to say, 'there is evidence of a need for greater public awareness about tourism, its benefits and its costs, how the industry is structured, about its current contribution to a community's welfare, and about how tourism might evolve' (Simmons, 1994, p. 105). Moreover, McIntyre, Hetherington and Inskeep (1993, p. 28) argue that though the community usually try to gain benefits from tourism, they may not have 'a realistic understanding of what they are doing in achieving this development and what are the impacts of tourism'. Jamal and Getz (1995) also note that lack of awareness is one of the factors which acts as barriers to effective communication at community level tourism development. Additionally, in many tourist destinations a lack of indigenous tourism planners has resulted in planners from a different cultural background being brought in to lead the process. This may create communication barriers and low credibility arising from the cultural differences. On the other hand, sometimes, there are language differences between planners and residents, which also create barriers to effective participation.

In brief, the above argument may suggest that apathy and low level of awareness in host communities in developing countries exist as one of the main limitations to a participatory tourism development approach. To tackle this problem is a difficult task that requires considerable time and money.

As evidence suggests, political instability, patron-client relationship, low level of literacy, unfair and unequal distribution of income, severe macro-economic problems, lack of services of welfare state, lack of democratic institutions, lack of democratic understanding among state elites, unwillingness of elite to share fruits of development with majority of society in the developing world have ushered in these limitations to community participation in the TDP at higher intensity and greater persistence than in the developed world.

### 3. Conclusion

This article has investigated and discussed the limits to community participation in the TDP in the context of developing countries. Clearly, the described limitations may not be only specific to participatory tourism development strategy. Some of them may also be seen as common problems of development and participatory de-

velopment in general in many developing countries. Hence, it should be accepted that these limitations may be an extension of the prevailing social, political and economic structure in developing countries, which have prevented them from achieving a higher level of development. That is to say, '[t]o the extent that problems in any sector, such as tourism, reflect the existing socio-economic situation ...' (de Kadt, 1979, p. 45). In this respect, eradication of these barriers to participatory tourism development approach largely depends upon mitigating common problems of developing countries. Thus, it may be naive to suppose that participatory tourism development approach will change existing structure of a local tourism industry in a developing country without changing dominant socio-economic and political structure of that locality. On the other hand, it should be accepted that community participation as citizen power is not a simple matter but it involves different ideological beliefs, political forces, administrative arrangements, re-distribution of wealth and power, and varying perceptions of what is possible, which seem to be unacceptable for the prevailing ruling class in many developing countries. Hence, community participation in the development process cannot become much of reality unless specific and deliberate strategies at local, national and international levels are developed to tackle with the outlined limitations. Obviously, there is no single blueprint and a set of fixed rules to operationalise participatory tourism development approach. Any intervention must be adapted to the specific environment in which it is to be implemented. In this context, the following recommended policy suggestions should be seen as broad guidelines to lessen excessive and aggressive bureaucratisation, centralisation and depersonalisation of government-administered tourism development, and empower the poor in a gradual manner.

That is to say, several broad conclusions can be drawn from the overall discussion, which may function as policy implications for participatory tourism development approach in the developing world and as well as a summary of this study. First, as noted, community involvement in tourism can be considered from at least two viewpoints: in the decision-making process and in the benefits of tourism development. However, community participation in the TDP in many developing countries has been recognised as helping local people get more economic benefits via employing them as workers or encouraging them to operate a small scale business, rather than creating opportunities for local people to have a say in the decision-making process of tourism development. Several studies have already revealed that without creating opportunities for local people to take part in the decision-making process it would be very difficult for local communities to get adequate benefits from tourism development (see Clancy, 1999; Long, 1991; Tosun, 1998b; Timothy, 1999). On the other hand, although

local people at the initial stage of tourism development (Butler's, 1980, exploration stage) own and operate small scale guest-houses, economy class hotels or souvenir shops, and work as workers in the tourism industry in many developing countries (Long, 1991; Tosun, 1998b, Pearce, 1989 quoting Haider, 1985 and Rodrnburg, 1980) after Noronba's (1976) discovery, and local response and initiative stages it becomes gradually more difficult for these indigenous people to operate a tourism-related business and work in the sector since tourism development becomes institutionalised (Butler's development stage). This attracts capital owners to open large scale businesses. In other words, in a gradual manner local control over tourism development is lost as local tourist destinations attract more Plog's (1973) allocentrics and Cohen's (1972) institutionalised tourists. Due to the emergence of a strong competition under the imperfect market conditions, these locally owned small businesses in the tourism industry cannot survive and are closed. That is to say, as local tourist destinations move towards development stage from exploration stage in Butler's tourist area cycle of evolution model, local people may lose control over local tourism development. In brief, relatively larger capital flows to local tourist destinations tend to threaten local control over local tourism development, rather than strengthening local people to participate in the benefits and decision-making process of tourism development in a better way. This may reflect the assertion that 'the technical, economic and commercial characteristics of modern tourist travel favour the development of integrated enterprises, further reducing the possibility of local participation' (Pearce, 1989, p. 94).

The above argument about the relationship between tourist area cycle of evolution and local people participation in the TDP may imply that the opportunities for communities to participate in the TDP may vary over time with the type and scale of tourism developed, thresholds of entry, and the markets served. In this regard, it is suggested that deliberate measurements must be taken at the 'exploration stage' of tourist destinations to empower local people to keep control over tourism development before local destinations become more popular and attractive for large capital owners.

Second, one may argue that these limitations in debate may not be equally valid for ecotourism and alternative tourism in the developing world. In other words, it may be claimed that sustainable or alternative tourism including ecotourism can create better opportunities for achieving development and public participation in the TDP (see Brohman, 1996; Smith & Eadington, 1992). Although this seems to be true to some extent, there are several reasons which constrain its validity. First, it is ironic, but perhaps not unreasonable, to postulate that 'the high profile of ecotourism or alternative tourism is directly dependent upon the existence of well-developed mass-tourism sectors, which account for most of the

participants' (Weaver, 1998, p. 205). Second, it is argued that only the educated and often moneyed elite is accepted within privileged fraternities of alternative tourists whose travel patterns are largely driven by ego enhancement and status building (Butler, 1990). That is to say, as a deliberate sector, these alternative tourism activities constitute only a very small-scale portion of the tourism sector owing to the fact that 'much of Third World tourism today is not small-scale, ecologically oriented or even broadly participatory' (Clancy, 1995, p. 5). For example, it is argued that specialised alternative tourist accommodation accounts for only a small minority of available rooms. If it is quantified strictly in terms of primary-purpose visits and especially the provision of specialised accommodation, alternative tourism is negligible since these appear to account for only a very small minority of the tourism sector. Clearly, the benefits of alternative forms of tourism such as the direct revenue and employment generating capacity are limited by the dominance of popular, casual, passive and diversionary ecotourists, whose expenditures within the protected areas or in adjacent communities tend to be minimal. Park entry fees and possibly some local food and souvenir purchases are amongst the few associated direct outlays, although alternative tourists themselves may only account for a small proportion of such expenditures when assessed against total park visitation. Furthermore, 'park entry fees are usually nominal and accrue to the government rather than local communities' (Weaver, 1998, p. 209). Third, as de Kadt (1992) contended, the compulsory call for community control via alternative tourism often neglects the tendency of the local elite to adopt the organs of participation for its own benefit or the possibility that these communities will become dependent on outside experts owing to their lack of prior experience in tourism planning. On the other hand, the local communities may actually want to develop a more intensive mode of tourism. This may become a problem for those experts who do not accept the legitimacy of mass tourism. 'If these experts attempt to impose an AT (alternative tourism) model or to re-educate the local people so that they change their preferences, the entire issue of local decision-making control and community-based tourism is called into question' (Weaver, 1998, p. 15).

Fourth, highly centralised public administration system and planning activities are a common problem of many developing countries, which work against participatory tourism development approach. As a result, the structure of local governments in many developing countries has been shaped by the state, reflecting bureaucratic and fiscal concerns of the central governments, and has not been a source of democratic citizen participation in local public spaces (see Gow & Vansant, 1983; Koker, 1995). Obviously, moving towards a more participatory tourism development policy requires decentralisation of public administration system including tourism planning

activities. In this context, political and administrative decentralisation should be supported in parallel to the conception that local bodies know local problems and feelings, and so what is suitable, better than the central authorities possibly can. That is to say, meaningful participation necessitates a systematic local autonomy, through which communities bring to light the possibilities of exercising choice and thereby becoming capable of handling their own development. Hence, local governments should be re-organised to defend, protect and reflect concerns and interests of local people in their administrative territories. Additional financial resources should be made available for local governments to use particularly for community development projects and organisation of participatory activities. In other words, there must be an explicit and adequate financial commitment to the community involvement in the TDP. In this regard, goodwill is not enough.

On the other hand, public officers and private sector lack of experience in participatory development activities, and their experience in tourism is negligible in many local tourist destinations in the developing world. The lack of expertise and competence in tourism-related matters may influence the effectiveness and efficiency of participatory tourism development approach. Moreover, re-organisation and empowerment of local governments may move patron–client relations to provincial level. ‘Traditional local elites are likely to be most intransigent in their traditional, local settings. If power is passed to them, the repression of the weaker and disadvantaged castes and classes is likely to worsen’ (Mathur, 1995, p. 158). In this vein, a cautionary approach is needed. New measures should ensure the equality of treatment of all residents and should avoid creating other problems or shaping the form of prevailing problems rather than solving them. By taking into account specific local circumstances appropriate policies and institutional framework can be formulated to avoid this type of problem. Moreover, within the proposed decentralised public administration structure, special education and training programs should be designed to enable local indigenous people to become involved in the tourism development process as entrepreneurs and employees. As part of this educational and training program, free consultancy services should be made available to tourism-related and other small business in local tourist destinations. While entrepreneurial skills and professional qualifications of local people could be developed through the education and training programs, tourism entrepreneurs could be induced to employ local people by fiscal and monetary policies. Moreover, local tourism development workers may be hired to work with local people to develop tourism products and market the local value added aspects of the area to tour operators, travel agents and individual tourists.

Fifth, socio-political, cultural and economic structure of developing countries have ‘overpoliticised the

state’, that has ushered in patron–client relationship between politicians and elite business interests. This socio-political and cultural pathology push for particularistic preferences rather than universal norms in the allocation of scarce resources of many developing countries. Tourism as a high priority sector in the export-led growth strategy of the developing world has been shaped and directed by this clientelistic approach, that operates at the expense of the majority at local, regional and national level. Consequently, the noted structure of developing countries has not only isolated local people from their affairs including tourism development, but it also undermined the principles of sustainable development such as improving the basic needs of a given community, reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty so as to lead people to gain self-esteem and to feel free from the three evils of want, ignorance and squalor without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need. It is suggested that ‘if the forces making for inequality are left free rein in their society and if policies aimed at the eradication of poverty are not vigorously pursued’ (de Kadt, 1979, p. 45), it will be very difficult to implement a participatory tourism development approach whose aim is to enable hitherto excluded to have a say in their affairs and benefit from fruits of development based upon equal opportunity right.

The overall discussion regarding to the limits of community participation in the TDP reveals that implementation of participatory tourism development approach requires a total change in socio-political, legal and economic structure of developing countries. These changes should stimulate developing nations to move towards establishing a ‘democratic state’ which ultimately works against clientelism and favouritism, and empower grassroots to participate in their affairs. Once the democratic state is established, it makes it easier to utilise financial, fiscal, and educational instruments to enable local people to involve in the TDP. However, although a democratic state facilitates implementation of participatory development approach, and thus is highly desirable, ‘it has been politics and the state rather than governance or democracy that explains the differences between successful and unsuccessful development records’ (Leftwich, 1995, p. 437). Hence, a ‘developmental state’, which refers to ‘a state whose political and bureaucratic elite has the genuine developmental determination and autonomous capacity to define, pursue and implement developmental goals’ (Leftwich, 1995, p. 437), is also *sine quo non* for the success of participatory development approach. This suggests that genuine community participation also requires a change in attitudes and behaviour of decision-makers to deal with hitherto excluded, which may lead to new patterns of distributing power and controlling resources. Without such a state no developing nation is likely to achieve participatory development since ‘democratic market-friendly strategies will sooner or



later break up on the rocks of their own internally generated economic inequalities and escalating political strife, especially in 'premature' democracy' (Leftwich, 1995, p. 438).

Sixth, evidence in other sectors of the economy suggests that Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have increasingly played an important role in the development projects some of which have employed community participation as an instrument in developing countries (Desai, 1995; Mathur, 1995; Paul, 1987). 'The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule' (Walter Benjamin n.d. cited in Taussig, 1989, p. 64) in developing nations. Hence, mobilisation of local communities by external organisations seems to be an essential condition when there is lack of confidence and fear in the community leaders and communities themselves (Desai, 1995). This appears to be true for many indigenous local communities in many local tourist destinations in developing countries since any reaction of poor people about type, scale, direction and distribution of benefit of tourism development may be seen as a threat for mass tourism development from which the indigenous people have alleged benefits. Moreover, such reaction of local communities may be viewed by dominant groups as revolutionary ideological movements. This possibility of misunderstanding may frustrate local people to express their opinions about local tourism development matters.

'As agents of development for the poor, NGOs ... are closer to the people and therefore understand them better' (Mathur, 1995, p. 158). Under the noted socio-political, cultural and economic pathology of many developing countries, NGOs seems to be a good institutional tool to empower indigenous host communities via various educational, organisational, financial, socio-cultural, psychological and political means to move towards a more participatory tourism development approach. NGOs may have two main functions in this context: service delivery and policy advocacy (see Desai, 1995). Service delivery means to provide technical, legal, educational and training services to indigenous host communities for involving in the TDP. Policy advocacy means to bring about social, economic and political changes by influencing attitudes, policy and practice, seeking to reform state approach to tourism development and lobbying directly for the policy changes.

NGOs may assist indigenous host communities, community-based organisations particularly to access other institutions such as municipalities, banks, technical training schools, fiscal and financial incentives provided by governments for tourism, etc. On the other hand, 'it is increasingly recognised that NGOs do a better job than governments not only in promoting participation but also in converting aid money into development that lasts. They are becoming an important resource in the implementation of donor-aided participatory approaches'

(Mathur, 1995, p. 158). When lack of financial resources especially at local level is considered, the role of NGOs becomes obvious to find additional financial resources for initiating and maintaining participatory tourism development approach. As a result, they can give ordinary local people a greater stake and more influence in the success of the local tourism industry through a better organised local tourism industry.

However, NGOs are obliged to operate in a 'crowded' institutional environment and they are influenced by external relationships with multiple actors such as local and central governments, donor and other (often competing) NGOs, community organisations and beneficiaries (Desai, 1995). It is suggested that the interaction between governments and NGOs does not proceed in a totally trouble-free manner. Many NGOs see poverty and inequality as resulting from governmental policies and actions. Their participatory approach, especially their emphasis on empowerment, thus tends to be viewed by dominant groups as subversive or revolutionary ideology (Mathur, 1995). Hence, the particular political conditions and bureaucratic procedures of governments authorities control many opportunities of NGOs activity, and set very specific parameters to the extent to which communities and NGOs participate in the TDP. Consequently, this may reduce the role of NGOs in participatory tourism development approach.

Seventh, chronic macro-economic problems of many developing countries, the structure of international tourism system such as domination of Transnational Tourism Corporations, dependency on a few international tour operators and tourist generating countries, and intense competition between identical tourist destinations in terms of price, rather than product differentiation and quality put developing countries in a position where they cannot afford to reject or oppose decisions of international tour operators and other related dominant actors due to the real possibility of losing substantial economic benefits from international tourism for which they have already made massive and irreversible fixed investment. Under these market conditions macro-economic imperatives, and the noted socio-political pathology it appears to be very difficult, if not impossible, for many developing countries to develop and implement a pro-active tourism development approach such as 'participatory tourism development' whose main principles and objectives versus interests of these dominant international and national actors at least in the short term.

It becomes clear that developing countries need deliberate help from and collaboration and co-operation of a wide range of international donor-agencies, international NGOs, international tour operators and Transnational Companies in order to move towards a more participatory tourism development practices which requires re-structuring the public administration system, and re-distribution of power and wealth, for which hard

political choices and logical decisions based on cumbersome social, economic and environmental trade-off are *sine qua non*. That is to say, without the collaboration and the willingness of western governments, international donor agencies and multinational companies to share their accumulated experiences it is unlikely that a participatory tourism development approach will emerge and be implemented in developing countries. In this context, future research should focus particularly on how developing countries can collaborate with these external actors to encourage community participation through which tourism can be developed in a more sustainable manner. In this regard, it can be debated that while many developing countries encounter growing mass poverty, economic, financial and political instability, and environmental degradation, the developed world may not live in isolated enclaves of prosperity as this appears to be unacceptable on humanitarian grounds and the long-term well-being of developed countries is linked to economic progress, preservation of the environment and peace and stability in the developing world.

Seventh, it should be accepted that community participation in the TDP is in part determined by cultural attributes of local communities. In this context, it is contended that although community participation in decision-making for tourism in the sense of Western paradigms seems to rarely occur in developing countries, it may not be right to claim that local people involvement does not happen at all. Public participation in the TDP can take place in many forms, 'which may be a result of a melange of place-specific conditions, such as the cultural attributes of the community and its decision-making traditions that are already in place' (Timothy, 1999, p. 388). For example, as Sofield (1996) demonstrated in his study of Solomons, Island culture requires consultation with communities. If that consultation does not take place, rights have been affronted with the result that violence can occur. As it is clearly reported in the Solomon Islands case, ignorance of local culture which requires proper consultation with local people by foreign investor escalated a conflict. The dispute between the local people (the customary land owners) and the foreign investor has not only created a conflict, but it also brought about a serious diplomatic rift between two sovereign states (Solomon Islands and Australia). The 'final result was the complete dismantling of the resort and repossession of the island by the local community' (Sofield, 1996, p. 183).

However, such a strong participatory culture does not exist equally in all host communities. Thus, it should not be generalised for all developing societies, and expectations from this strategy should not be exaggerated. As it is asserted 'the cultural remoteness of host communities to tourism-related businesses in developing countries appears to be an important limitation to local participation in the tourism development process' (Tosun, 1998b,

p. 607). 'Unlike the ideal-typical case as depicted in evolutionary models in tourism literature, the extent of local entrepreneurial involvement is usually very limited, owing to the fact that the local indigenous groups are rarely adequately preadapted to the business culture in tourism' (Din, 1988, p. 563). But, without a financial commitment by local communities, community participation as a strategy might be ineffective. It should be noted that removing the cultural barriers to participatory tourism development approach requires long educational process and flexibility rather than once-over rigid development efforts. That is to say, participatory capacity cannot be built like a road or dam; it must be developed. Rigid schedules are inappropriate and can lead to initiatives or pressures that impede long-term progress. Hence, flexibility is an essential ingredient of any form of participatory development approach; it is part of the requirement of realism in the context of the participatory development approach.

Ninth, as implied, in many developing countries tourism development planning is a foreign-inspired process (Tosun & Jenkins, 1998a–c). Governments of developing countries have received advice from foreign experts who recommended large-scale tourism development (Pearce, 1989). In this foreign-inspired tourism development process, local participation as a call for community empowerment that has been invoked in many UN agency reports has not been recognised. 'This leaves the interest of the indigenous group perpetually marginalised from the development process' (Din, 1997, p. 79). In this regard, this article suggests that more attempts should be made to comprehend why there is a lack of local participation and how this can be removed. One solution may be that the role of technical advisors be re-examined to make sure that tourism planning team will pay sufficient attention to the interest of indigenous people when giving advice to authorities in destination areas of developing countries. That is to say, tourism experts and researchers must direct more attention towards ensuring a greater degree of indigenous participation and begin looking at the development process from the viewpoint of local host communities. Only then the interest of local people can be incorporated in the TDP.

Finally, it should be noted that the political economy of tourism suggests that tourism development itself is a reflection of political economy of the industry and broader historical, economic and political relations among regions, countries, and classes. In many developing countries, particularly within the hotel industry, ownership and control is confined mainly to foreign chains and large-scale national business. This ensures that only multi-national companies and large-scale national capital reap most of benefits associated with the industry. As Briton's (1982) studies with special references to small Pacific Island destinations reveal, the multi-national companies control much of transport,

accommodation, and packaged tourism products. Under such dependency situation, local groups — namely elite classes — also obtain some benefits, while subordinated classes receive the smallest portion. This may suggest that direct participation by local people in management and operation of tourism facilities is also negligible.

This article has been written as an attempt to open up much needed discussion on participatory tourism development approaches in developing countries. In this context, it suggests that future research should investigate pre-conditions for participatory tourism development approach and develop strategies to operationalise this pro-active tourism development approach with special references to a specific local or national tourist destination alongside investigating the role of external actors in promoting participatory tourism development approach in the developing world.

### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

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