

The Role of Local Government Authorities in Facilitating Community Participation for Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises Growth

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Abstract: *Community participation in Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) has been assumed to be one of the best ways to benefit from tourism sector. However, the persistent problem facing local tourism is how to improve the growth of SMTEs. This study was set to bridge this knowledge gap on the role of local government in supporting Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises. The study objective was to assess the Local Government Authorities role in facilitating community participating in tourism for the SMTEs growth. Guided by stakeholder's theory, the study followed a quantitative research approach and a cross-sectional survey design. Questionnaires were used to collect data from census of 232 SMTEs owners-managers. The study used multiple linear regressions for data analysis. The study findings indicated that community participation has positive and significance contribution to SMTEs growth in Tanzania. The study concludes that the LGAs' role in facilitating tourism is partially contributing to SMTEs growth. This could be attributed by tourism policy and Act which are not aligned to stipulate the roles of LGAs in local tourism. The most important lesson of the study is that if LGAs in their area of jurisdiction are actively engaged in tourism SMTEs will grow significantly. The study recommended a review of Tourism legal framework so that LGAs part to development process of local tourism*

Keywords: Participation, Local Government authorities, local Community, SMTEs

1. Introduction

Tourism is arguably the world's largest and fastest growing industry (UNWTO, 2017). The sector accounts for about 17% of the world's Gross National Product and 9% of the employment (WEF, 2018; WTTC, 2017). In Tanzania, tourism accounts for 3.8% of the GDP and generates nearly 30% of the country's total export earnings (NBS, 2017). The sector also in Tanzania, employs directly around 600,000 (4.3%) people through small and medium enterprises where some of them are related to large tourist enterprises and up to 2 million people indirectly (WTTC, 2017).

Despite of impressive economical performances of tourism, there is a myth that tourism does not adequately provide benefits nor improve the livelihoods of local people in Tanzanian (Muganda *et al*, 2012, Kalembo, 2011 and Mgonja, 2015). The complains in most cases originates from local communities who are largely engaging themselves in tourism through self-established Small and Medium Enterprises (SMTEs) (Gregoric and Pajic, 2016)

SMTEs seem to be the most and direct way for community to benefits from tourism at present, SMTEs growth rate is still limited due to a number of factors that act as the barriers to its growth (URT, 2010). Sangkyun *et al*. (2014) and Kim, *et al* (2014) note that, most tourism entrepreneurs and their small business are facing various challenges including limited tourism skills and the know-how to operate successful tourism establishments. Likewise, Boer, *et al*, (2011) note that in the developing countries SMTEs are facing stiff competition within themselves and from larger Tourism companies.

An experience from Canada has shown that implementation of favourable local financing on loans condition and interest enabled tourism SMEs to grow for approximately twelve

percent 12% of Canada's overall GDP (Elci, 2010; Pierce, 2011). Likewise, China in the mid 1990s decided to decentralized tourism sector. Most LGAs recognized tourism in their plans and promulgated a series of regulations and by laws to enhance tourism development (Jia, 2010). This reform in tourism resulted in multiple emerging and outstanding tourism SMEs hence an increase of income and employments to local people of China (Zhang, *et al*, 999; Yang and Gao, 2011).

Jamal and Stronza (2009) argues that, stakeholder's theory requires the destination planner/manager to consider adequate participation of key stakeholders if the destination has to achieve its sustainable development. In line with Muganda *et al*, (2013) argues that in this case stakeholders concerned and interests has to be reflected in the national and local tourism policies for the sake of promoting community participation and their tourism business growth. Theoretically, government policies put a broad agenda for development that generally influence tourism development process of the destinations (Sayers 2016). In this case it is necessary local tourism at the destination to have own tourism plans which uniquely address the challenges faced by the destination.

In line with above argument, the government of Tanzania, put more efforts to improve tourism development including SMTEs growth (URT, 2010). Such efforts can be seen in various policies and laws including the formulation of Decentralization by Devolution (D-by-D), National Tourism Policy of 1999 (URT, 1999), National Tourism Act of 2008 (URT, 2008). Despite the efforts taken by the government, the sector is still characterized by slow growth rate, stagnation and high failure rates of SMTEs which impair their potential to contribute to the economic development (Sitts, 2010 and TPSF, 2010).

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In addressing the SMTEs growth problem some previous studies have attributed the failures of SMTEs with various factors such financial literacy, in effective participation of community in tourism and business competitions from multinational companies (Worku, 2013; Mehraliyev, 2014; Janeska-iliev, 2015). Other factors affecting the potential for tourism small business to grow include political instability and poor local governance, infrastructure development, service standards, and human capacity (Okello and Novelli, 2014).

On the other hand, other studies in tourism such as (Muganda, *et al.*, 2013; Sitts, 2010; Safari, 2015 and Mitekaro, 2016) paid much attention on linking general tourism economic growth at the macro scale level and central government roles in the sector. These previous studies were limited attention on local tourism especially on what specific roles can LGAs be streamlined to part in facilitating community participation for the SMTEs growth in their area of jurisdictions.

Despite the previous studies being able to deliberate on local tourism development the knowledge is still demanding on the role of LGAs in facilitating community participation in SMTEs growth for tourism destination development purposes. This information is significant especially to date when the government aspires to improve the contribution of LGAs and SMTEs to the country's goal of reaching to middle income earning country. It is for this reason that this study was conducted at Mto wa Mbu in Monduli Arusha to assess the role of LGAs in facilitating community participation for the growth of SMTEs in their area of jurisdictions.

2. Methods

The research study was conducted at Mtowa Mbu Ward which comprises nine villages. The ward is found at Monduli district, Arusha region. The area's location supports tourism activities and it is found within the tourism nodes famous northern tourism circuit (Muganda *et al.*, 2013). As such tourism situation have attracted and resulted to the establishment of many SMTEs who are targeted people for collecting the required information for the study.

The target population size of this study was 232 SMTEs owners registered tourism business as per Monduli District Council report of 2015/2016 (URT, 2016). Given the small population the study follows census survey approach in data collections. This is in line with Creswell, (2014) together with Singh and Masuku (2014) who argue that a census is more attractive for small population because it eliminate sampling errors and provide data on all individuals in the population.

A quantitative survey was deployed to collect primary data using structured questionnaires from owner-managers of SMTEs. The study adopted a questionnaire of World Tourism Organization (2006) which seemed to be relevant to the study. Some questions were modified from questionnaire developed by Alshboul, (2016).

The data analysis involved data preparation, descriptive and inferential statistics. On the other hand, Coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to determine the goodness of fit of different models by indicating whether the proportion of SMTEs growth explained by all the combined predictor variables was equal, greater than or less than the population of each predictor variable. Regression analysis is a technique used to analyse the relationship between a single dependent variable and one or several independent variables (Byrene, 2013).

Multiple Regression Analysis was deployed to test hypothesis. The study hypothesised that the role of LGAs in facilitating community participation in tourism has significant contribution on SMTEs growth. Prior running regression Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed in order to ensure links between the observed and latent variables. Furthermore, correlation was deployed in order to check whether there is significant association among the study variables.

3. Results

3.1 Social Economic Information of the Respondents

In this study 42% of the total respondents were female while 68% of them were male. This gives an implication that more men are involved in tourism services than women. The findings are in line with the observation made by Baumus (2013) argument that men in tourism at work are more involving than women. The imbalance is presumed contributed by the fact that more women are engaged in other domestic responsibilities such as children caring, cooking for family and other family related activities. Due to cultural women are carrying more family responsibilities compared to men. Women are supposed wisely budget time of business and time for meeting home need such as to prepare food for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Furthermore, women have to take care children and other home activities at home. The observation also revealed that the majority of the women were engaged in petty economic activities like selling varieties fruits, vegetable and handcrafts to visitors. However, it is important to point out that the purpose of this study was not to make comparison of the men and women engaged in SMTEs but to understanding the status level of the respondents of the study.

On the other hand, result from Table 3.1 shows that (42%) SMTEs managers had completed a primary school while 41% of the respondents had finished secondary school level. The observation also revealed 11% of the respondents had College/University education level and the last group of respondents were 6% who had informal education only. These result patterns denote that most of the respondents had adequate education which has contributed in giving reliable and valid data to this current study. Having majority of the respondent's graduates of secondary school, it suggests that what was answered was known to them. This contribute in enhance the validity and reliability of findings.

Table 3.1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Education level		
Informal	13	6.34
Primary education	86	41.95
Secondary	84	40.98
College/University	22	10.73
Sex of respondent		
Male	140	68.29
Female	65	31.71
Age of respondent		
19-34	109	53.17
35-54	88	42.93
55 and above	8	3.90
Type of SMTEs		
Canteen	52	25.49
Art gallery	72	35.29
Tour operators	20	9.80
Traditional culture performance	34	16.67
Others	26	12.75

Source: Field survey, 2018

3.2 Descriptive Analysis

Generally, the findings of the study from Table 3.2 show that, about 64% of the SMTEs owners were on opinion that LGAs support in Community participation has an influence up on the growth of SMTEs. On the other hand, only 17% of the respondents were on the opinion that LGAs support to community has no influence upon the growth of SMTEs within their area. The study findings further show that about 19% of the respondent were in dilemma to say whether LGAs’ support community has or not an influence on the growth of SMTEs. Therefore, the study suggests that the role LGAs plays in supporting participating of community in tourism has contribution on the growth of SMTEs.

Table 3.2: Regression results of LGAs facilitation role and SMTEs growth

	Strong disagree		Disagree		Cum	Neutral		Agree		Strong agree		Cum
	N	%	N	%	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	%
Awareness	20	11	34	16	27	17	8	111	54	23	11	65
Information	14	7	16	8	15	42	20	110	54	23	11	65
By-law	4	2.0	21	11	13	48	23	115	56	17	8	64
Financial	13	6	16	8	14	43	21	107	52	27	13	65
Generally: Disagree 17% Neutral 19% Agree 64%												

3.3 Hypothesis testing

The study further examined the relationship of independent and dependent variables using multiple linear regression analysis technique. The following hypothesis was generated: *Local Government Authorities’ role in facilitating community participation in tourism has statistically positive contribution on SMTEs growth.* The participation item includes variables includes for awareness creation, dissemination of information, By law and financial support. The dependent variable is growth of SMTEs as expressed in Table 3.3.

Findings indicate positive and strong significant relationship between the LGAs facilitation role to community participation in tourism (CP) and SMTE growth in Tanzania. This is because ($\beta = .272, t = 3.895, p = 0.000$) lies within the threshold $p > 0.05$. Therefore, this study confirms that *Local Government Authorities’ role in facilitating community participation in tourism has statistically positive and significant contribution on SMTEs growth.* Thus, hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3.3: Regression model summary

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig	Correlations mode			Collinearity statistic		
	b	Std Error	Beta			Zero-order	partial	part	tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	3.819	0.679		5.621	0					
	CP	0.14	0.036	0.272	3.895	0	0.334	0.266	0.252	0.861	1.162

Source: field survey, 2018

4. Discussion

Generally, the findings from this study has confirmed that the role of LGAs in supporting community to participate in tourism activities have significance influence upon SMTEs growth in Tanzania. This fact arises the need for LGAs to incorporate tourism issue in their plans, budget and put more strategies to ensure that more local community participate in tourism through SMTEs. The findings adhere with the stakeholder’s theory which insist participation of key stakeholders if the destination has to achieve sustainable development (Jama and Stronza, 2009). The findings also have shown that in most cases Local community in the

destination often involves in tourism through SMTEs. Bearing the fact that SMTEs owners are facing more challenges in the process of establishing and running their business, thus LGAs moral and financial support is paramount. Specifically, this study has confirmed that the roles of LGAs in creating tourism awareness, dissemination of information, financial support and making by laws to in favor local participation in tourism has significant contribution to the growth of SMTEs.

4.1 LGA' role on community awareness creation for SMTEs growth

The result of the multiple regression analysis on Table 3.3 confirmed that community awareness is among the participations items which results to the significance influence on the growth of SMTEs in Tanzania. In line with regression findings the descriptive analysis was carried out to gauge opinion from the SMTEs owners to assess on how creation of tourism awareness to community played by LGAs influence the growth of SMTEs. The response from Table 3.2 revealed that 27% of the respondents could not realise whether LGA is creating awareness on community. However, 65% of the respondents were of the views that LGAs role in creating tourism awareness has contribution on SMTEs growth. The findings suggest that LGAs in their area of jurisdiction have to take more initiatives in order to create tourism awareness for SMTEs growth. Having awareness of tourism many local communities will be able to see more tourism opportunities and take advantage on it. Furthermore, having sufficient tourism awareness, local community be responsible in preserving attractions and environments ensuring sustainable development of tourism within the destinations.

The findings support the argument in the study of Sayers (2016) that the government has to encourage the general public to support development of local community public awareness program for them to be able to answer four fundamental questions: what is there positive to say about tourism? About which issues should the local community be consulted? what help should be offered and to whom? And who are the tourists and what are they are like? the study argued that awareness can be done through traditional knowledge passed down from generation to generation or from more formal institutional models.

The study further contradicts with the study of Litheko and Potgieter, (2016) in South Africa which found that the important thing to enable local community participate effectively in tourism is to improve promotion of attractions and accommodation services. The probable reason for difference between the two might be the supportive level of infrastructure and tourism setup of the countries.

4.2 Dissemination of tourism information for SMTEs growth

In line with regression analysis results the descriptive finding from Table 3.2 revealed that 42% of the respondents opined that LGA effort in dissemination of tourism information to local community have contribution on SMTEs growth in the destination area. In the other hand 65% of the respondents confirmed that the LGA effort in dissemination of tourism information to local community have contribution on SMTEs growth in the destination area. The findings suggest that for better participation in tourism activities community should be well informed. LGAs in their places has to put more efforts in disseminating tourism information to local community to enable them participate more effectively hence results to the growth of SMTEs.

The findings relate with study findings of Sitts (2010) who found that, lacking proper tourism information to local community or SMTEs owners sometimes lead to poor or wrong decision in their day to day operations of their business. Likewise, short of tourism information may result SMTEs owners fail to take tourism opportunities across destination. Likewise, the findings of study correspondent to the study of Teymouri (2012) in Iran which empirically found that data collection, processing and filling information are weak in the tourism destination affecting tourism operations. Having shortage information of tourism among the stakeholders resulted to failure of Iran small business in achieving a steady pattern of well-known and developed tourism destination.

In the same line of the findings, Pawlicz (2010) confirmed the study findings that if the business owner got right and timely information from tourism authorities will offer better and quality services to the tourists.

Generally, the results of the study might lead to conclude that it is essential for local communities get right information, timely and understanding about the decision-making processes for planning and management of tourism so that they can be actively concerned in tourism. It can also be observed from the finding that LGAs possess strategic position in dissemination of tourism information to local stakeholders within the destination.

4.3 Tourism bylaws

In this study, the result of the multiple regression analysis on Table 3.3 confirmed that tourism by law presented is among the participations items which results to the influence on the growth of SMTEs in Tanzania. In line with the descriptive analysis in Table 3.2 it was revealed that 64% of SMTEs owners were on opinion that the role of LGAs in making by laws are in favour of tourism by laws enhance community participation in tourism hence contribute to the growth of SMTEs. The results are in accordance to the stakeholder's theory which insist management of collaboration among stakeholders in the process of tourism development process. It well known that there are existing differences among stakeholders in terms of financial status, skills, markets knowledge just a few to mention. Therefore, for balancing purposes it is important for local planner to institute local laws which will regulate the diversities of interests and power relations among the stakeholders.

Tourism practices within destination involves multiple of stakeholders with different objectives, imposing by-laws may bring common understanding among stakeholders within the tourism destination. By-law is expecting to regulate different practices in materialization the actions of all stakeholders in relation to sustainable tourism principles thus avoiding of self-regulation.

The study findings were also observed by Abdulla (2013) who found that formulating by-laws for tourism destination minimise conflicts among the stakeholders especially on the issues of managing and controlling tourism resources. Likewise, the findings are in support to the study of Kuvan and Akan (2012) who found that imposing various by-laws

bring equity among different stakeholders in tourism practices. The destination needs to be controlled from overuse and malicious destruction of tourism resources in their places such as attractions and land usage. Generally, the study suggests that LGAs in Tanzania has to ensure that in their respective area of jurisdiction has to impose by law to favour the participation of local community in tourism.

4.4 Financial Support to SMTEs

The result of the multiple regression analysis on Table 3.3 confirmed that financial support is among the participations items which results to the significance contribution on the growth of SMTEs in Tanzania. In line with, the descriptive analysis from Table 3.2 the findings also found that 65% of the respondents were on opinion that the role of LGAs plays in giving financial support to local community result to effective participation in tourism hence contribute to the growth of SMTEs. The results justify the stakeholder's theory requirements which insist participation of every stakeholders in the process of tourism development. Local community being key stakeholders in the destination often face challenges of operating their business activities under small capital. This situation hinders them to participate effectively in tourism development process therefore LGA financial supports is paramount important.

The results further, imply that level of growth of SMTEs in tourism destination can be explained upon the level of financial support received from LGAs in their respective area. The findings relates to the study of Mehraliyev (2014) who found that financial sources of small business for funding the start-up and operations of their business is among of the major barrier for local community involvement in tourism sector.

The findings further correspond with the study conducted in Mozambique by Louis and Macamo, (2011). The results revealed that about 79% of SMEs were not able to access financial credits to financial institution due the prevailing loans conditions. Although the author results were silent on the relationship between SMTEs growth with support of LGAs. This study results have vivid shown financial support of LGAs to small business is vital. Although Tanzania is found with many financial institutions and micro finance to support local community the findings demonstrates that there still challenges such as acquiring process and credit conditions. As a matter of fact, not all local community can be able to fulfil the conditions imposed by credit facilities. This may be the reason as to why the findings of this study supports the assumption made that there is existing relationship between LGAs supports of community and growth of SMTEs.

Generally, the study findings and discussion necessitate the importance of LGAs' involvement in financial support to local community. The support enhances more participation of local community in tourism activities hence growth to SMTEs within the tourism destination. This means LGAs have to include tourism issues in their plans and development budget. However, integrating tourism issues in LGAs plans may not be an easy option, due to financial

constraints and the tourism legal framework existing in Tanzania if not addressed.

5. Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that the roles of LGAs in supporting participation of local community has significant contribution to the growth of SMTEs within the destination places. Despite of SMTEs owners being aware about the roles of LGAs in financial supports it is also surprising from the findings to see that the tourism Act of 2008 does not reinforce LGAs or councils to undertake coordination of local tourism activities into their plans and programs. As such LGAs has been considering tourism issues as an option rather than part and parcel of their responsibility. From this discussion, if we are to refer to stakeholder's theory the planning success of the destination occurs when local planners consider need, interest and ensure participation of all Stakeholders including local people. And if it is to conclude the engagement of LGAs in their area of jurisdiction as the local planner or manager of stakeholders in Tanzania tourism destination is weak. Thus, it can be further concluded that still LGAs' facilitation role in tourism is crucial determinants for community participation in tourism development and the growth of SMTEs. Specifically, the roles of LGAs in awareness creation and financials supports are crucial community participation factors for SMTEs to grow within the destination area.

6. Recommendation

It was found by the study that the real growth of SMTEs can be realised when there is adequate participation of local community in tourism activities. Further the study revealed that for sufficient participation of local community within the destination the support from LGAs is paramount needed. The study recommend that the objective of community participation can easily be achieved if local government authorities is parting with other tourism institutions in promoting local tourism. LGAs should also crafting their own local policies and strategies which targeting to encourage local community initiatives and enable them to engage in tourism business development at the destination.

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Appendixes

Dear Respondent,

Mr. Sanga is a PhD candidate at the Open University of Tanzania. He is currently undertaking a research on the role of Tanzania Local Government authorities on Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises growth as requirements for the fulfilment of the PhD studies. As manager/owner of the firm dealing with issues relating to tourism, you are kindly requested to provide some important information on key problems under investigation meant to improve economic tourism sustainable development in relation to SMTEs performance in local government. You have been selected in this survey because of your potential to provide the required information. I am aware that you are very busy, but I would be grateful if you could take the time to answer this questionnaire. All information given will be treated with strict confidentiality and it will only be used for this research purpose.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated for the success of this research.

Yours sincerely,

**Sanga
PhD Candidate**

Section I: Personal information

SN	Read options and tick one only	
1	Level of education of respondent	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. None <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Primary <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Tertiary (College, technical, university) <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Other, please specify: _____
2	Sex of respondent	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.Man <input type="checkbox"/> 2.Woman
3	Age of respondent
4	Name of the organization
5	Year of establishments
6	Type of SMTEs organization	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Restaurant <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Art Galley <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Tour Operator <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Traditional culture Performers <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Other, please specify: _____

Section II: Information related to the Local Government authorities and SMTEs growth

In the table below, circle your subjective opinion on the each role of LGA in tourism in relation to the Growth of SMTEs.

Key: 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Neutral, 4 for Agree, 5 for Strongly Agree

LGA Role in facilitating Community participation in tourism activities at the destination	Respondent's opinion				
1. LGAs play a big role in creating tourism awareness to local community	1	2	3	4	5
2. LGAs provides financial community to supports establishment of tourism business activities in our places	1	2	3	4	5
3. License issuance procedures by the LGA are easy and supportive to community participation in tourism at the destination	1	2	3	4	5
4. Important Tourism information are adequately disseminated by LGAs to local community	1	2	3	4	5
5. The bylaws imposed by LGAs for local tourism practices community to establish tourism business	1	2	3	4	5
6. Local community can elect its representatives to participate in tourism decision making Decision making	1	2	3	4	5
7. Local community receives various tourism Trainings organized by Local Government Authorities	1	2	3	4	5
8. Community received feedback regarding tourism matters discussed in various committees	1	2	3	4	5