

Tourism and Poverty Reduction in “Southern Circuits” of Tanzania: Experiences of Communities at the Gateway of Ruaha National Park

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Zusammenfassung: Tourismus und Armutsreduktion in den „Southern Circuits“ Tansanias. Das Fallbeispiel der Gemeinden am Eingang des Ruaha Nationalparks

Bei vorliegender Arbeit von Sr. Sabina Kabuga handelt es sich um eine Vorstudie zu ihrer Dissertation über den Nationalparktourismus und seinen Auswirkungen auf die Armutsbekämpfung in Tansania. Zu Beginn beleuchtet sie den Begriff Armut anhand verschiedener ökonomisch und nicht-ökonomisch ausgerichteter Ansätze und stellt in dieser Weise den allgemeinen Forschungsstand zum Thema Armutsreduktion im Globalen Süden vor. Ebenso diskutiert sie anhand des wissenschaftlichen Schrifttums die Frage, inwieweit Tourismus dabei eine Hauptrolle spielen kann. Der Untersuchungsraum ist von der Dimension her gesehen prominent: Der Ruaha Nationalpark (RUNAPA) im südlichen Teil ist nicht nur das flächengrößte Wildtier-Schutzgebiet Tansanias, sondern auch das zweitgrößte Afrikas. Was die Besucherzahl betrifft, so liegt sie bei rund 20.000 pro Jahr – im Vergleich zu den Ankünften in den bekannten Nationalparks Ostafrikas damit eher bescheiden. Andererseits sind die Besucherzahlen in den vergangenen zehn Jahren im Unterschied zu den zuletzt Genannten vergleichsweise stabil – zumindest im jährlichen Schnitt.

Die konkreten Fragestellungen sind: Welche Möglichkeiten bieten sich für die Bewohner der Nationalpark-nahen Siedlungen, um am Tourismus teilzuhaben? Profitieren sie davon? Wie hat sich durch den Park ihr Leben verändert? Das Forschungsdesign ist als Mixed Method angelegt und berücksichtigt sowohl quantitative als auch qualitative Datenerhebungstechniken. In der Untersuchungsform wurden daher standardisierte wie auch Fokusgruppen-orientierte Methoden angewandt.

Die ersten Ergebnisse aus dem groß angelegten Forschungsvorhaben, das in einer zweiten Phase mit dem Kilimandscharo Nationalpark auch den Gebirgstourismus einschließen wird, sind ernüchternd: Der sich ausbreitende Nationalparktourismus hat bislang den Lebensstandard der Bewohner des Untersuchungsgebiets insgesamt nicht verbessert. Obwohl in einigen Anstellungen die einheimische Bevölkerung tätig ist, haben nur ganz wenige Siedler in materieller oder in sozialer Hinsicht vom Tourismus profitieren können. Vor allem Frauen gingen leer aus. Zudem schwanken die Einkünfte im Jahreslauf beträchtlich, da während der Regenzeit – allein aufgrund schlechter Straßenverhältnisse – kaum Touristen kommen. Ferner zeigten die Befragungen, dass die meisten der neu geschaffenen Arbeitsplätze an besser ausgebildete Zuwanderer gingen.



Die Studentin Sabina B.M. Kabuga aus Tansania beschäftigt sich in ihrer Dissertation mit der Frage, inwieweit der Tourismus in den Nationalparks Ostafrikas auch der einheimischen Bevölkerung zugute kommt.

Anders sieht es beim Gesundheitssystem aus: Mit dem aufkommenden Tourismus hat sich auch die ärztliche Versorgung verbessert, indem sich auch NGOs niedergelassen haben und vor allem in den Grundschulen medizinische Unterstützung anbieten.

Die Ergebnisse bestätigen diesbezügliche Forschungen aus dem Innsbrucker Geographieinstitut über Kenia und Uganda. Armutsreduktion durch Nationalparktourismus ist durchaus möglich, allerdings muss dazu die einheimische Bevölkerung in diese Art von Tourismus einbezogen werden. Der RUNAPA leidet aber auch darunter, dass er infrastruktureller Hinsicht von der Regierung vernachlässigt wird, die mehr Augenmerk auf die „Northern Circuits“ Tansanias legt. Das Dissertationsvorhaben wird daher auch diese Nationalparks untersuchen. *Ernst Steinicke*

“People in Poverty go through each day with the will to survive, but without the support and possibilities to move up the ladder of Opportunity. Imagine where their efforts could take them if that ladder were in place. Our responsibility is to help put it there”. (Juan Somavia, International Labour Organization – Director General, 2003)

1 Introduction

The concept of poverty elimination means the process that seeks to reduce both economic and non-economic poverty in a community (Muganda et al, 2010). According to a wide range of literature, the incidences of poverty are predominant in the third world, making the populations in these regions the weakest and the most vulnerable segment of the world societies. As such, poverty alleviation has become the central strategy to both developmentalists, major donors and advocates of pro-poor tourism throughout the globe in the present century. In Tanzania, like other least developed nations, tourism growth signifies a good prospect towards poverty eradication as well as a tool for sustainable economic development and improved livelihoods. While it is often assumed that people are poor generation to generation, others however may be thrown into poverty as a result of economic volatility, geographical locality in which they reside, institutional policies in which they are entangled, or other shocks that hurt their livelihoods. The state of poverty, according to Anderson (2015), results when a significant number of people lack competitive power to access productive, environmental or cultural life-supporting assets. Using the Chambers & Conway’s (1992) Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF), this work investigates the tourism’s contributing role on poverty elimination among the local communities near the Ruaha National Park (RUNAPA), by examining both ‘Living Standards’ and other benefits as outcomes from tourism industry. Whilst carrying the same notion as an outcome, ‘Living Standards’ are also identified as one of economic dimensions of poverty in Alkire & Jahan (2018) Multidimension Poverty Index (MPI) model, hence fits the purpose of this paper. To capture the notable themes, the study focuses on examining the participation pathways as channels towards attaining tangible and intangible benefits of tourism. Rooted from

the author's doctoral field research in Human Geography, this work is concerned with how nature-based tourism specifically national parks tourism, act as a tool that pools people out of poverty in the peripheral communities of southern circuits of Tanzania. Given this scenario, it is worth noting that the notions of poverty alleviation, eradication, and reduction will be used interchangeably to imply acts or process of eliminating poverty. In spite of a wide spectrum of meaning it may carry, the term tourism in this paper refers to tourists' leisure use of national parks or wildlife resources and services provided to cater for the needs of tourists by tourism firms and hospitality facilities. Simultaneously, Protected Areas (PAs) such as National Parks (NPs), and Tourist Facilities (TFs) are conceptualized as 'venues' or platforms of 'opportunities' to which individuals have access to and gain material wealth for survival and improving their life through the provision of goods and/or services.

2 The Incidences of Poverty in Tanzania's Tourism Rural Destinations

Despite the Millennium Development Goals' (MGDs) pleading of halving the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day (Denman & Denman, 2004), the poverty especially in many third worlds' rural destinations remains a reality. Development literature shows that about 1.2 billion people live in "extreme consumption poverty"; among them, more than two-thirds are located in Asia while one fourth occupy the Sub-Saharan African territories. Worryingly, the extreme poverty concentration is forecasted to increase in these regions by 2030.

Among tropical countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania has suffered from poverty since the colonial era to the present. The recent global and national reports indicate that the majority of Tanzanians live below international poverty line with almost 35 people out of every 100 Tanzanians live in income poverty presently (IMF, 2011). The incidence of poverty in Tanzania and its rural tourism sites rest on peoples' high dependence on forest resources and on fragile agricultural economies for their survival. The study of Ellis & Mdoe (2003) highlights that rural destinations suffer from deteriorated infrastructure, low level of education attainment, inaccessibility to essential services and sometimes depopulation of the able-bodied as well as lack of political clout. Hence, due to common exposure to natural and socio-political shocks, the majority of rural dwellers, particularly those in or neighbouring to the national parks can be described as financially poor as well as socially and politically marginalized people. Surprisingly, however, holidays based on wildlife and nature including photographic safaris, walking safari and hunting which add earnings in the country have been reported as number one goal for the majority international tourists arriving in Tanzania, both in northern and southern tourism circuits (Muganda et al., 2010).

Whereas Laderchi et al. (2003) and Sultana (n.d.) agree that poverty is a global threat to humankind, yet there is partial agreement on what real poverty is. Due to its multidimensionality, different people, major international organisations as well as

development discourses view the components of poverty differently according to their worldviews.

Borrowing from Laderchi et al. (2003), poverty is described using four perspectives that is, monetary, the capability, social exclusion and the participatory definition of poverty:

According to economic approach (EA), poverty is defined in terms of ‘income and consumption’ associating it with deprivation trap of social, climatic and infrastructural conditions which interrupt individuals or households income and push them below the poverty line Sultana (n.d.). With this perception, poor people are those living on monetary deficiency to meet basic resources such as nutrition, clothing, rent and health services (Laderchi et al., 2003).

In Capability Approach (CA), poverty is typically described as a deprivation of certain basic capabilities or the failure to achieve the minimal adequate level required to satisfy certain crucial functionings (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). Although the CA approach acknowledges the income-based notion of poverty, it is centered however on what people are ‘able to do’, and ‘be’ as opposed to ‘what they have or what they feel’. This approach shifts from ‘material means of living’ to the ‘actual opportunities a person has’. Here, the notion of being poor is more than just having insufficient income and food, but rather one’s inability to lead a good life (Laderchi et al., 2003; Nussbaum & Sen, 1993).

In the Social Exclusion (SE) approach, the implication of poverty spans far beyond individuals or households to include groups. Poverty According to Social Exclusion standpoint refers to the inability to participate fully in decision making on issues of importance to a group or individual (Mutana & Mukwada, 2018). Precisely, the poor are those multi-dimensionally and dynamically excluded from ordinary ‘standard of living/living pattern’ in economic, political, cultural, and social dimension in the society in which they live or belong because of the low level of their resources (Stewart et al., 2007).

The fourth way of defining poverty is Participatory Approach (PA), and it is also known as Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) pioneered by Chambers. Here, poverty simply means the inability of the poor to contribute their perspective. In relation to this, it is argued that in the societies where some people are structurally excluded because of being really poor; their voices can hardly be heard in the communities where they dwell (Laderchi et al., 2003) .

Fundamentally, the monetary approach views poverty narrowly in terms of income and basic needs fulfillments, the latter three approaches –‘non-economic’ in contrary, correlates poverty widely with notions of vulnerability, isolation, social exclusion, powerlessness, lack of personal dignity, insecurity, un-sustainability, lack of self-respect, living standards, limited ownership of assets and limited participation among others (Sultana, n. d.). Owing to a wide spectrum of its indicators, the diversity of human lives

and the context in which it can be compared; it is agreeable that the understanding of the concept of poverty varies across regions, societies, institutions, communities and households as afore mentioned. While embracing other perspectives, this work is centered on income poverty and hence it considers a poor person as an individual or a household living below the international poverty line of US\$1 a day, whose life-standard may be impacted due to exclusion from tourism's revenue generating opportunities (Denman & Denman, 2004).

As many African societies, in Tanzania local people living in close proximity to nature reserves have often been described as “poor” and/or “of low awareness” and dependence on low-value wildlife resources and/or on agriculture to meet their livelihood and development aspirations. The Tanzania's long term policy of national parks creation, expansion and conservation is characterized by exclusion, displacement and relocation, the tendency which puts indigenous people living in these areas at a disadvantage (Sirima, 2010). Accompanying this, high poverty rates, inability of making transition out of nature-based resource dependent mode – “poverty traps” and persistent deprivation have been experienced by individuals and groups bordering nature reserves over times (Davis, 2011). These in turn take away the voice of the poor and cut them from decision making processes both at local and national levels.

3 Tourism and its Coincidence with Poverty Elimination

A good number of tourism publications perceive tourism as the world's largest rapid growing industry currently (Chen & Prebensen, 2017), and the remarkable expansion projected to continue at between 3 and 4 percent in 2019 (UNWTO, 2019). Owing to tourism's economic potentials, many countries, both in developed and developing worlds are turning to tourism to address their respective developmental and socio-economic challenges (Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Neuburger & Steinicke, 2012). This expectation is expressed in Erbes (1973), who described tourism as a “manna” from heaven capable of solving the economic difficulties of the developing countries in term of contribution to foreign exchange earnings, government revenues, regional development stimuli, and creation of income and employments.

In Tanzania, whereas cultures and beaches are still popular attractions, the most appealing tourism areas are in the nature reserves, all of which have been declared as national parks and game reserves since 1960s (Anderson, 2015). In all circuits, Tanzania's national park tourism is controlled and structured by government institution namely the Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA). The extant Tanzanian official statistics show that the sector contributes about 13 % of the GDP annually, second to that of agriculture; tourism thus accounts for over 11 % of all employment (UNWTO, 2017). Countrywide, national park tourism among other types, enhances other sectors and has stimulated broader benefits to economy by upgrading the infrastructures, conservation of rural habitats and gender equity (*ibid*). With such economic gains, Tanza-

nian government acknowledges the vital role tourism may play on poverty eradication. As a result, it has identified tourism as one of the tools for promoting economy and meeting country's goal of creating a poverty-free nation at all of its levels, particularly among the poor; the majority of whom live in tourism resource rich sites (IMF, 2011). Proponents of tourism-poverty alleviation believe that positive impacts of tourism can be felt in the life of the poor in four key areas:

First: Tourism's Geographical expansion and labour intensive nature, provide capacity to create direct and indirect employment opportunities in most tourist sites through formal and informal tourism sectors. The direct mode of employment includes working at the site of attraction whereas the indirect implies the provision of goods and services necessary to maintain tourists through internal transport, hotels and other accommodation units as well as certain local retail goods such as arts, crafts and locally made souvenirs.

Second: The diversified academic and non-academic activities that tourism industry has, enables it to employ people of varying skills including disadvantaged population of the communities who possess little or lacks formal training (IMF, 2011).

Third: Tourism utilizes natural and cultural resources of the poor in their local environments (Manwa & Manwa, 2014) whereby it automatically improves the welfare of the poorer members of the community.

Fourth: Recent researchers maintain that the growth of tourism can create better opportunities for local residents to balance benefits through adequate participation in decision making and ownership of tourism activities (Muganda et al., 2010; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). Thus, in agreeing with local inclusion models in tourism's decision making, Zhao and Ritchie propose anti-poverty integrative framework which is centered on three determinants: (i) opportunities, (ii) empowerment and (iii) security as key prerequisites to achieve the tourism's poverty alleviation goal (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007, p. 122). As poverty-reducing engine, tourism provides better opportunities and security for the poor, as well as empowering them in their local settings (Anderson, 2015). In this way tourism boosts the economy of the nation and its people. These nexuses and the associated effects on the aggregate tourism products demand add an important dimension to the analysis of the economic impacts of tourism expansion, not only to itself as a sectoral production but also to the suppliers of these services and goods.

This wholly, motivated a three-months field work in Summer 2018 – investigation of tourism's substantial impacts on poverty eradication among the rural dwellers next to the Ruaha National Park (RUNAPA) by asking the following key questions: *Which opportunities are available for residents participating in tourism? How in turn do the tourism activities – as livelihood strategy have benefited the local people involved so far? How does the Ruaha National Park impact the life of communities adjacent to it? What are the barriers that hinder the local people from participating and benefiting from tourism?*

4 Study Area and Methodologies

The RUNAPA – ‘Dream of Africa’ is the largest national park in Tanzania, the second largest Wildlife Protected Area (WPA) in Africa and the villages adjacent to it serve as the study area (Sirima, 2010). Gazetted in 1964, the Ruaha National Park is surrounded by the Rungwa-Kizigo-Muhezi game reserves. Following the recent expansion, the park covers about 20,226 square kilometers in its three regions – Iringa, Mbeya and Dodoma. Geographically, RUNAPA is situated in Central-Southern Tanzania, between latitude 7° and 8° S and longitude 34° and 35° E and about 130 km from Iringa municipality. The RUNAPA’s high diversity of flora and fauna attract both domestic and international tourists (Barnes, 1983), who add up the country’s revenue.

According to the information of RUNAPA over the last ten years, tourism in Ruaha National Park shows a steady or moderate growth (see table 1).

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Domestic	8,101	8,151	8,039	9,521	9,077	9,047	10,039	7,868	6,999	8,737
Foreign	11,541	11,630	11,042	13,849	14,311	14,005	11,486	11,816	12,536	12,509
Total	19,642	19,781	19,081	23,370	23,388	23,052	21,525	19,684	19,535	21,246

Table 1: The Ruaha National Park Ten Years Tourists’ Arrivals: 2008–2017

Source: Ruaha National Park, November, 2018

Although the livelihoods of the neighbouring communities have been mainly agriculture, the growth of tourism in Ruaha National Park since 2000s has resulted in the establishment of TANAPA and RUNAPA’s Outreach Programs – Community Conservation Services, Tourism’s Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Projects such as Friends of Ruaha Society (FORS), SPANEST, Wildlife Connections, Ruaha Carnivore Project as well as accommodation facilities within and adjacent to the park (Sirima, 2010). Given the purpose of this study, an investigation of tourism’s utility on poverty reduction in Southern circuit, it was conducted in three RUNAPA’s neighbouring villages – Tungamalenga, Makifu and Malinzanga of Iringa – the region which is recently identified as a centre of tourism in Southern circuit (Fig. 1). The selection of these study sites was based on the four key reasons:

The first reason is that the three villages are in close proximity to the RUNAPA. Exceptionally, the Tungamalenga and Makifu villages form the corridor towards the Ruaha National Park. Second, the selected villages seem to be more accessible from Iringa municipality than the other that are located in interior areas. This is attributed to the deteriorated infrastructure and lack of feeder roads – the reality that align with previous studies on the Tanzania’s rural infrastructure challenges (Davis, 2011; Sirima, 2010). Third, when compared to other villages in Iringa zone, the three villages were termed as “highly active” in tourism activities by the village government leaders commonly known as Executive Village Officials (VEOs). Following the “activeness” in tourism, almost all public and private tourists accommodation facilities such as hotels, lodges, camps, cottages, and bandas are concentrated in Tungamalenga and its sub-village

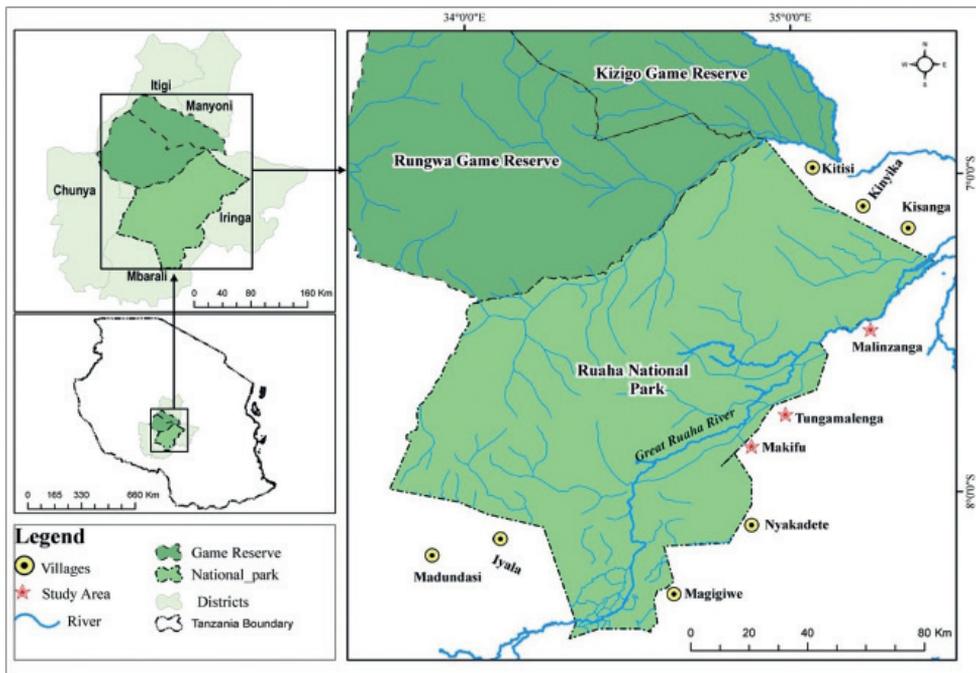


Fig. 1: Map of the Study Areas around Ruaha National Park (Cartographer: Anderson, University of Dar es Salaam 2018)

(Msembe) which is within the park. Thus, it is in these villages where numerous of public and private formal and informal small-scale tourism activities and operations are predominant. Fourth, all the three – Tungamalenga, Makifu and Malinzanga – villages are members of the Wildlife Management Areas¹ (WMAs) named MBOMIPA, a Kiswahili acronym for “*Matumizi Bora Maliasili Pawaga na Idodi*”, which means “Sustainable use of Natural Resources in Pawaga and Idodi (two administrative division) in which the WMAs are located. Being the member of MBOMIPA – WMAs which deal with conservation, make the three local communities eligible of accessing tourism benefits through commodification² of wildlife resources at the same time enjoying other

¹ In the Tanzania Wildlife Policy, Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) is defined as “an area set aside by a village government for the purpose of biological and natural resource conservation” (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 1998). The WMA’s central idea is to allow the local communities to participate in conservation and receive directly tourism’s economic benefits through investment agreements for the consumptive and non-consumptive use of natural resources (commonly through tourist hunting, safari/photographic tourism enterprises, and tourist accommodation businesses (Green & Adams, 2015).

² Commodification is the notion which refers to marketing or commercialization of wildlife resources through tourist’s hunting in gazetted areas – hunting block and through investments agreement between Village Authorized Association with private investors for non-consumptive use of wildlife (Green & Adams, 2015).

conservation activities, businesses and tourism's community development programs (Green & Adams, 2015).

Thus, the three-villages' high standing in tourism activities make them suitable places for investigating how people have taken advantage of involving themselves in tourism either individually or communally.

4.1 Research Design

This is a Mixed Method Case Study design which recognizes quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures. The Mixed-Method approach provides better opportunities of answering research questions, evaluation and trust of the research findings (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 152). Likewise, the Case Study involves: (i) An empirical investigation of a contemporary social phenomenon within its real-life context. (ii) It incorporates the views of the people (participants) in the field of study; thus, allowing for a holistic and reality-based research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016).

4.2 Data Sources, Acquisitions and Analysis Techniques

A range of methods including questionnaires, interviews as well as focus group discussions (FGD) were used to gather primary qualitative and quantitative information whereas the existing reports provided secondary information. The data were collected from three purposeful selected villages and sub-villages of Tungamalenga, Makifu and Malinzanga near the RUNAPA, from October through the end of December, 2018. A total of 246 households, approximately 81 household questionnaires per village, 15 interviews, and 5 focus group discussions were conducted. Generally, individuals participating in the study were about 282 in total.

At first the household semi-structured questionnaires were administered to provide socio-demographic data and characteristics of the living standards of people at a household level. The general understanding of the quality of life was triangulated with formal observation of the resident's housing conditions. Interviews with the Ruaha National Park officials provided insights on benefit sharing schemes. The hotel/lodge/camp managers interviews offered understandings on the mechanisms of employees' recruitment as an identification of access factors to tourism jobs. Ten private tourist's hotels, lodge and camps located inside and outside the national park chosen randomly on the basis of their accessibility, were used as representative of tourism businesses. Data from focus group discussions of the same tourist companies' employees provided primary understanding on the nature of benefit accrued from tourism activities. The similar techniques, allowed the collection of data from informal activities (e.g. curio/handcraft businesses).

Furthermore, focus group discussions (FGDs) with local government officials commonly known as Village Executive Officers (VEOs) and leaders of institutions, mainly education (schools) and health (health care centres) were conducted. These

key informants provided their perspectives on the types of accrued tourism benefits and the barriers that hinder people from engaging and benefiting from tourism sector at community level.

Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Kiswahili, the Tanzania's national language, and later translated into English. The participants were involved in the research voluntarily; the information was taken as field notes in the researcher's and assistants' note books and tape recorded. The commencement of analysis started with translation of field data from Kiswahili into English; thereafter the materials transcribed verbatim, coded, categorized, and placed into key themes. The thematic analysis was employed for qualitative information based on the six-phases provided by Braun & Clarke (2006, pp. 87–93). Thus, the participants' voice – direct statements from the focus group discussions as well as from the interviewees are presented to convey stated views and or insightful experiences.

For analyzing quantitative data the questionnaires were coded and processed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences –Version 25 (SPSS). At a household level, 'monetary income' was analyzed as both a 'poverty measure' and as a 'Living Standards' indicator in addition to household assets. Descriptive analysis technique was applied to generate frequencies and give to a clear picture of socio-economic characteristics and the living standards of residents as a whole.

5 Findings: Tourism's Participation, Benefits, and its Performance in Poverty Reduction

This section presents and discusses findings on how the growing tourism in Ruaha National Park–Southern circuits of Tanzania can be instrumental in reducing poverty among the neighbouring communities. A thorough understanding of tourism's potential role in poverty reduction and the living standards is presented based on the emerging themes from the field data focusing on material and social benefits as tourism's outcomes indicated in Ashley (2000) and Chambers & Conway (1992) Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF).

5.1 The Residents' Tourism's Participation Pathways

Within the scope of this study, two basic participatory modes emerged as tourism participating opportunities leading categories of permanent and casual wage-employment. Interview with one tourist hotel manager captured this:

"We provide employments to support the local community. All our neighbours here need jobs, once one is employed here he/she is assured of full-time contract". (A tourist camp administrative manager 'A').

Again, interview data highlighted the initiative of involving the community in tourism:

"Even if an individual has no education still we take and train them in different departments. Then we employ them based on the skills achieved – 'we take them from Zero to the Hero'. This is because most of the people in the local community

have neither received formal education nor higher education” (A tourist lodge administrative manager ‘D’).

Likewise, another manager of the tourists lodge outside the National Park expressed the reality that:

“Our company has 6 staff, all of them are from Tungamalenga and Mapogoro – the local area. This is our commitment and a social responsibility; the company itself decided voluntarily to have 60 percent of its employees from the local communities depending on the posts available”. (A tourist lodge administrative manager ‘G’).

Another official of the Ruaha National Park had this to say:

“People involve in tourism through employments. Jobs for permanent employment are advertised and recruitment is done by TANAPA. For Temporary jobs, we recruit people from nearby villages”. This is not obligatory, but it is only our policy of ‘Ujirani Mwema–Good Neighbourliness’. (Ruaha National Park official, #1).

Another perceived opportunity of participating is handcraft tourism entrepreneurship. One respondent who informally runs a small-scale tourism businesses highlighted that:

“Previously, I was employed in a curio shop and after realizing its benefits, I resigned from the job and established my own ‘Maasai Boma’ at my compound. I am totally immersed in tourism activities”. (P#5 handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

In the same line another participant – a handcraft seller expressed this:

“When I noticed that handcraft selling is a good business, I decided to attend a Vocation Training School (VETA) for attaining drawing and painting skills. Thereafter, I started my own curio shop. Frankly, if I am not involved in curio business or if the government says curio shops are not needed here, I will migrate from this village although it is my home, because my family depends on tourism”. (P#2, handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

This confirms that the expanding tourism in Ruaha offers livelihood opportunities to informal traders. Placing the ‘training’ as a key focus of small-scale tourism business establishment, coincides with views of proponents of pro-poor tourism such as Zhao and Ritchie on the criticality of empowerment – physical capital for the local tourism entrepreneurs in order to understand the tourist’s expectations and needs and eventually maximize the profits of participating in tourism by providing the products that actually the tourists need (Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007)

5.2 Tourism’s Benefits and Residents’ Current Living Standards

At the community level, the general quality of life is expressed through attributes like people’s occupation, incomes, material possessions and access to some basic services. On the question of ‘major occupation’, it is seen that among 246 households dwelling in the three villages, 203 (82.5%) practice agriculture as their main occupation and only 23 (9.3%) of the families are involve in tourism related activities as

their livelihood option. These, correlate with the result on the question regarding their involvement in tourism related activities; wherein, those responded with ‘yes’ were only 26 (10.6 %) while the rest 215 (87.4 %) answered with ‘no’ implying not involving. The first impression is that agriculture is highly considered as suitable livelihood strategy – the reality of most rural areas in Tanzania. Secondly, tourism is assumed to be a less important livelihood option in Iringa region and in these villages in particular. On assessing the income, the results show that about 46 (18 %) earn nothing on a monthly basis while the majority of the families, about 143 (58.1 %) earn a monthly income of Tanzanian shillings³ – Tsh.100,000, which is equivalent to less than US \$ 50 per month. The statistics further show that, the earnings of 53 (21.5 %) households are within the range of Tsh. 200,000–300,000 which is approximate to US \$ 134 per month. Together, these results make a total of 242 (81.2 %) families living below US \$ 1 a day, a typical indicator of poverty and thus, tourism like agriculture plays a partial role in income generation in these communities. Additionally, respondents’ ownership of assets was characterized by those that support agricultural production such as land 183 (74.4 %), hand hoe 150 (61 %), motorcycle 27 (11 %), bicycle 99 (40.2 %), as well as mobile phones 133 (54.1 %). Most participants mentioned that motorcycles and bicycles assist as a means of transport for going to the farms. In spite of the fact that the majority earn very minimal income, the data shows that people own their homes depicted by 184 (74.8 %) households, most of them (64 %) having iron roofing, though most of them were small in size. In terms of water access about 138 (56.1 %) families are supplied from public stand pipe, while 59 (24 %) get hand-pumped water from shallow well within a close proximity of less than 40 m. Those who access water from their homes are relatively few only 13 (5.3 %) families. With regard to food access, the results show relatively low number of households 55 (22.4 %) who have high reliability of food while the majority are either moderately supplied 93 (48.8 %) or live with insufficient food, about 71 (28.8 %) families. In brief, in terms of housing, food availability, water, and electricity supply, the results suggest relatively improved livelihoods which might not be influenced by engagement in tourism activities as one survey respondent in Tungamalenga commented angrily:

“Every year people come here to ask the similar questions about tourism, after getting the information they need they go and we never see any changes in our life. Well, I have some assets, but they are not because of tourism activities”
(Household’s participant, Tungamalenga).

5.3 Material and Social Assets as Tourism Outcomes

The tourism’s formal and non-formal wage earners as well private local entrepreneurs dealing with small-handcraft businesses obtain monetary benefits from these kind of jobs which enable them taking care of their families:

³ 1 US \$ is about Tanzania shillings 2,240 as per www.poundsterlinglive.com (2018)

“Curio shop has money, and when the money starts to flow, one cannot stop doing this business. In my ‘Family Maasai Boma’ I have started ‘the Maasai dances’—the group made up of my children and wives. Whenever my children and wives sing for the tourists, they receive Tsh. 100,000/- (P#5, handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

A sharp contrast however regarding the ‘adequacy in payments’ was noticed that, even though the tourist hotel workers get paid, the income seems to be low to meet their families’ daily needs. The formally employed participants in tourist lodge expressed this fact:

“What we can say is that the amount we earn from tourism jobs hardly fulfills our needs. It is only fifty-fifty (50/50) or half-half. Approximate our salaries range from Tsh. 100,000/- to Tsh. 250,0000/- per month. Generally speaking the earnings are not enough”. (Tourist hotel employees, FGD, Tungamalenga).

Handcrafts sellers acknowledged having good earnings which could possibly lift them out of poverty, but the seasonality nature of tourism jobs force them sometimes to live almost with ‘minimal or no income’, the situation which explains their low living standards. In the focus group discussion, one participant shared the reality:

“Personally, in high season for example I earn about Tsh. 3,000,000/-, but in low season I don’t get anything” (P#1, handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

Referring to the whole community, the RUNAPA’s neighbouring villages experience some tourism’s benefits through selling of agricultural products locally. However, these type of activities hardly guarantee reliable incomes because they are seasonal. One of the participant maintained that:

“People of Tungamalenga survive because of tourism, but they are not aware of it. If you want to prove that wait during the low season you will see if our local market will continue”. (P #5, handcraft seller’s FGD, Tungamalenga).

Additionally, the truth of seasonal earnings was experienced by some of the employees of the tourist hotels and campsites. The focus group discussion revealed this:

“Mostly, our job contracts are seasonal, i.e. based on the number of visitors. In low season, workers are reduced or take break from work. Those who take break are not paid”. (Formal employees, P #1 and # 2, FGD, Tungamalenga).

With respect to natural assets as tourism outcomes, participants admitted to own land and possess some assets:

“I have bought five acres of land and a house. All my assets plus provision of education to my children come from curio shop business”. (P#1, handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

The similar confirmation was given by another respondent:

“Since I started tourism activities in 2003, I have bought pieces of land, cows and goats. I also have provided health services and education to my family. My

two sons are in college for tourism studies so that they can carry on the management of tourism businesses of our family. More importantly, I have married the second wife out of profit gained from tourism activities” (P#5-handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

6 Socio-Spatial Exclusion Barriers to Residents’ Participation in Tourism Industry

The combined educational, economic, socio-behavioural and infrastructural or accessibility barriers are significant obstacles emerging from all the data which result into people’s inability to seize the opportunities created by tourism. Many families being small-scale farmers and pastoralists showed misconception of the tourism concept itself. For them, tourism is considered as “going to the national park”, not something else. This has two implications. First, ‘misconception’ of the tourism practices makes people perceiving it as less attractive and insignificant for livelihood. Second, the lack of formal education and predominance of only primary school holders in these villages culminate into inability to take the available tourism’s chances. From these educational barriers, some local respondents from one of the focus group discussion commented:

“People here in South are not yet educated in tourism, so, they do not see these opportunities. They also do not engage in tourism because they have no experience in tourism activities. They concentrate in agriculture and small-scale businesses. (P#3, handcraft sellers’ FGD, Tungamalenga).

One of the Village Executive Officers (VEOs) has these to say:

“Tungamalenga is the village that is at the entrance of Ruaha National Park; but the opportunities that are provided to the youths from here are casual and seasonal”. The problem is that the locals people are not educated”. Many who are employed are from outside these villages because these jobs need education while many of our youths have no education”. (P#3, VEOs’ FGD).

Spatially, the growth of nature-based tourism over the past decades has been concentrated mainly in Tanzania’s northern circuit. Several tourist’s investments that stem from the northern circuits – in Arusha regions or abroad extend their operations into the southern areas. These extension tendencies of tour operators and hotel investors do not necessarily maximize the participation opportunities for residents, instead it perpetuates the gaps in tourism’s participation by introducing the ‘moving in’ with their workers hence the scope of participation for most local people is increasingly narrowed. One of the key informants made a reference:

“Many investors of tourist hotels are foreigners and even most of those who do cleaning are not from here either; people from here are less than 5%. It is not their fault because in the Northern is where tourism started”. (P#2, FGD, Malinzanga).

In the same focus group discussion, another participant expressed his experience:

“Many employees in Ruaha national park are from other regions. The basic reason is the lack or low education of the residents. In 2016 for example, we got the post of a driver from the National Park which required the candidate from this village. We tried the whole year to find if there would be someone who could take this post with no success. Thus, the employees in Ruaha National Park who are from this village are not even 10”. (P#4, FGD, Malinzanga).

Consequently one manager of a tourist lodge, confirmed by stating:

“We employ people from the neighborhoods, but the professionals are employed from Arusha” (A tourist lodge administrative manager ‘D’).

Definitely, the above expressions demonstrate the intersectionality of economic and education barriers. As the limited professionals prevail, most tourist’s companies opt for indoor training vis-à-vis academic qualifications as capacity building mechanisms to the newly employed non-skilled personnel. This introduces a ‘social network’ as a social norm manifested in investors employing mostly ‘unprofessional people who they know’. Since people of low economic status become constrained, their livelihood alternative in their local environment is often relying on informal unpaid labour, or occupying low paying or unprofessional positions in tourism as in other sectors. Thus, the poor in rural settings who frequently have limited access to information and connection to influential professional networks tend automatically to be out of the employment circle. This truth was captured from one respondent in Malinzanga:

“The Ruaha National Park (RUNAPA) hasn’t been able to employ us, there are no people who get employment from this village. The possibilities of employment in the national park are through networks”. Besides, we don’t get even information regarding the employment opportunities because there is no representative in the National Park from the nearby villages” (P#2, FGD, Malinzanga).

Similarly, one of the operational managers of a tourist camp specified the importance of social network:

“We employ someone we know. We employ many friends and families, that is cousins, brothers and sisters. For example about 80 % of our workers come from Mufindi area”. (A tourist campsite administrative manager ‘E’).

The study findings support the above argument; also the key informants appear to be convinced that the indigenous people experience social exclusion which minimizes their position in tourism:

“There are very few chances of employing people from this village; tourists hotels, lodge or camps employ their relatives. The Ruaha National Park is ‘completely extreme (ndo kabisa)’, almost all workers even the cleaners come from Arusha”. (P#4 handcrafts’ sellers FGD, Tungamalenga).

Emphasizing on ‘poverty’ itself as a problem – economic barrier, villagers’ executive officials noted:

“Tourism in this country gives opportunity to everyone. In Serengeti for example, people take opportunities using their own costs. In these southern areas where awareness and education are very low; also many people are financially poor as compared to the northerners”. (P#1, VEOs’ FGD).

The same conclusion is true from the managerial interviewee:

“The system of recruiting everybody as in the past was dropped long time ago. Instead, we take trustworthy youth, we train them and we eventually employ them. Despite that education is considered as a criterion for employment in other job positions, these tourism jobs are not based on certificate qualifications; education is not a priority in these jobs. Thus, we don’t look on certificates at all. Basically we hire people we know”. (A tourist lodge administrative manager ‘G’).

Further, there was a strong desire by household participants as key informants to also participate in tourism which is minimal at present. However, this exclusion seems to be attributable to ‘accessibility barrier’ as evolving theme which includes lack of markets, gender, poor infrastructural development and physical environment which the villagers occupy – rural settings. A household pastoralist’s highlighted feelings of being excluded:

“When the tourists come from the park, they only visit ‘whom they know’; they don’t come to us—a small group of Maasai women. They have overlooked us, we only see tourists going to the national park; we neither sell anything to tourists nor participate in tourism”. The tourist cars don’t even stop here. “We actually don’t know the problem, why are we excluded”. (Household’s participant).

A willingness to engage in tourism is exemplified by participant in Malinzanga by stating:

“I would like to make many baskets, but I can’t do it because I am afraid of my husband, you know men how they are. He wants me to go to the farm every day because for him farm is more important; how can we feed our children if we don’t farm? To make sure that I get time for basket making that I sell occasionally I have to work so much consecutively in the farm to make my husband happy; then I take probably one day for making baskets. I do this actually to get my pocket money as I cannot depend on him for everything”. (Household’s participant).

Located in Southern circuit, the impenetrability nature of Ruaha National Park translates into ‘non-participation’ and low marketability of tourism products as compared to the Northern tourism circuit. Following the RUNAPA’s poor accessibility and low infrastructural development, most of tourists use air transport for direct access to Ruaha, a tendency that exacerbates limited consumption of locally produced goods. This is true from the data as experienced by handcraft traders:

“There is no market for our goods, also there is no tourism market centre in Tungamalenga village. In Arusha for example, the government has built tourist

business centres where all small-scale tourist businesses are assembled, and thus, they are more accessible to the buyers. It is easy for them to sell and get profit". (P#1, handicrafts' sellers, FGD, Tungamalenga).

When asked about the source of market, another woman noted:

"I make the baskets but there are no people who buy in this village. However, I only have some women from Dar es Salaam, who occasionally come and pick them. I know that I don't get any profit out of this work because they buy them at a low price but I have nothing to do. I heard that, after buying my baskets they modify them and sell for higher price to tourists in the big city. My brother promised to find market for me in Dar es Salaam; perhaps it will be better". (Household's participant).

Another manager of the tourist lodge confirmed on the geographical inaccessibility:

"Most of the guests come by plane; this is a disadvantage to the nearby community, it limits the people to use the opportunities that come with tourism growth. In addition, the adjacent communities do not have education to access the available opportunities and benefits. Above all, Ruaha is very expensive because of poor infrastructure". (A tourist camp administrative manager 'C').

Once lacking of awareness, enthusiasm and interest as well as when counterproductive behaviours such as laziness, absenteeism, absconding exist, they can hinder access to permanent and/or casual jobs. In this paper, these counterproductive behaviours, allied with personal characteristics (gender), led to the birth of 'socio-behavioural barrier' as another important setback in tourism opportunities. Almost all managers of ten tourists firms interviewed, raised concerns about such undesirable behaviors as major problems that place the villagers in a disadvantageous position of taking posts in tourist's firms or themselves being involved in tourism. One respondent provided his insights:

"It is somehow possible to get workers from Idodi and Pawaga but it is difficult to get workers from the local area especially from Tungamalenga. People from Tungamalenga and other nearby communities have no interest and are relatively not much committed in performing the job. Currently we experience the tendency of absenteeism and absconding from work, though this condition was not there previously". (A tourist campsite administrative manager 'B').

Besides, an account on the limited entrepreneurial mindset in exploring and exploiting tourism opportunities was provided from a focus group discussion's key informant:

"When I was constructing my Curio shop, people thought that "I am crazy or confused". Then, one day I sold a lot of curio items; and the guys started saying "ah! he sells actually!" Surprisingly, they do not come and learn this business" (P#2- handicrafts' sellers FGD, Tungamalenga).

Subsequently, referring to the 'socio-behavioural barrier' one of the RUNAPA officials shared views:

“For the casual labourers from Tungamalenga and those from nearby villages are troublesome because of dodging the work. Hence, many tourist camps employ workers from far away from these villages. Besides, children from local communities do not go to school, so they lose job opportunities”. (RUNAPA, official, #3).

As long as wildlife viewing is connected to the forests, it is described as ‘risky environments’ for women; in this sense physical environment and socio-demographic attributes are ‘filters’ that favour males over females in tourism’s job opportunities – a notion of ‘horizontal segregation’ (Jordan, 1997). In addition, women’s social responsibilities seem to contribute in limiting them from taking tourism jobs. As studies indicate high ‘occupational segregation’ both ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical segregation’ prevails in tourism sector like in other job careers. An indication of this is the dominance of men holding key managerial positions in nine (9) out of ten (10) surveyed Ruaha’s hotels/lodge and camps—a typical ‘gender pyramid’. These findings tell the sameness of ‘non and/or partial-participation’ of women across tourist’s hotels:

“This company has 27 employees of whom 5 are females the rest are males and it attract more males than females”. (A tourist campsite administrative manager ‘C’).

Likewise, the existence of horizontal segregation, portraying the less representation of women in work place and their inability to perform was captured during the interview:

“All our employees are men; thus all job positions are occupied by men. Because the nature of work done in the company is difficult for women. Also, the environment is very ‘risky, i.e threatening’ because of wild animals.” (A tourist campsite administrative manager ‘F’).

Despite the women’s capabilities being recognized, the gender roles were vividly mentioned as cause of women’s exclusion in tourist jobs:

“Culturally, women are less interested in the tourism jobs especially hotel jobs in these areas. Also, most of these jobs are done in the forest / the national park as you can see, our hotel is in the forest. Besides, women’s social responsibilities which exclude them from this type of work. Because of the mother role, women need to be closer to their families. (A tourist lodge administrative manager ‘G’).

7 Conclusion Remarks

This paper has investigated how the growth of Ruaha National Park (RUNAPA) and the existence of tourist establishments have impacted the life of the people in its proximity by focusing primarily to wage earners and those who conduct tourism related businesses privately in three villages of Tungamalenga, Malinzanga and Makifu in Iringa District. The combined quantitative and qualitative data, have provided mixed results on the role of tourism in poverty reduction at individual and community levels.

Positively, the study has highlighted the achievement of tourism, specifically on the importance of indoor training as a mechanism for facilitating and maximizing the

tourism opportunities for the poor, i.e. the unskilled and low-skilled people in rural areas. These results correspond to those identified in several pro-poor tourism studies (Anderson, 2015; Ashley et al., 2000; Scheyvens & Momsen, 2008; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007).

Likewise, the contributions of tourism have been felt on its capacity to generate income for sustenance of life particularly to those involved in tourism related activities directly. Certainly, the RUNAPA and tourism entities have created somewhat direct employments for the services and goods providers. Indirectly, tourism supports has been felt by the communities through educational and health benefits systems. Health benefits have been accessible to all in the study areas. Importantly, the primary school children particularly children from pastoralists families are seen as the most beneficiaries through the Non-Governmental tourism-based projects and firms.

On other side of the coin, the substantial tourism benefits have not been felt by the majority, but only by the fewest. The findings have shed remarkable disparities in access to tourism benefits across gender, age, education attainment and locality. To explain this: the males, youths, qualified individuals as well as migrants have benefited more than their counterparts, i.e. females, the aged as well as the ones who possess no qualification or skills. Therefore, the implication here is that the casual employments that most local people are accessible to and most jobs being occupied by migrants makes residents continual having minimal financial wages and poor quality of life. The 'unidirectional' nature of tourism benefits reflects the findings in current tourism literature in Africa and Tanzania as well (Anderson, 2015; Manwa & Manwa, 2014).

Overall insufficient and limited education/qualification, awareness, enthusiasm, experiences, and physical impenetrability of Ruaha as well as seasonality nature of tourism jobs are identified as leading barriers that hamper residents from exploring tourism opportunities and participating in activities related to it. As noted previously, this suggests that some people are left behind from experiencing the benefits that tourism brings. Importantly, these findings are not particularly surprising given the discussed interlinked barriers.

Therefore, towards achieving of a meaningful and a wider contribution of tourism in poverty eradication, this paper suggests: first, promotion of tourism through capacity building strategies in the Southern circuit like in other parts of the country so as to create awareness and provide important skills needed in tourism jobs. Second: With the current government efforts, the special consideration of infrastructure expansion should consider the Southern circuits in order to enhance physical connectivity and marketability of tourism products. Third: The counterproductive behaviours such as absconding, absenteeism, and above all laziness should be addressed. Merging 'the three' may build productive mindset among the local people, widens opportunities and maximizes tourism benefits in a more inclusive way.

To this end, this paper concludes that the growing tourism has not been able to improve the quality of life in Tungamalenga, Makifu and Malinzanga villages; people are poor not only monetarily but socially as well. As such, poverty eradication game still has a long way to go. This is the prospect for further research.

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