

Aspects of Community Participation in Eco-tourism: A Systematic Review

Shankar Tiwari¹, Deepak Marahatta¹, Hari Devkota¹

¹Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

*Corresponding author: sankar.207730@cdrd.tu.edu.np

Abstract: Encouraging community involvement in ecotourism initiatives fosters a sense of local ownership and responsibility, which are crucial for ecotourism's lasting success and sustainability. This long-term environmental stewardship is vital for ensuring the preservation and protection of natural resources and promoting responsible tourism practices. This study comprehensively analyzes the significance of community participation in ecotourism. The study explores the types, roles, and challenges of community participation in ecotourism. Through a systematic review, the literature is collected mainly from the Scopus database, Science Direct, and Google Scholar, which were published after 2005. By following four steps of conducting thematic analysis: searching, selecting, extracting, and synthesizing, 53 articles were selected as per selection criteria. The findings highlight the diverse array of community participation, ranging from active to passive, including the role of participation of women in ecotourism. It further identified the role of community participation in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects and explored possible challenges of ecotourism. The possible challenges of community participation in ecotourism, such as disparities of benefits sharing, lack of sufficient cooperation among the stakeholders, and lack of community involvement in different activities, underline the urgent need to develop comprehensive strategies to address these issues. Recommendations for future research advocate for comparative studies across diverse regions, longitudinal research, and deeper explorations of power dynamics within communities to inform more equitable and sustainable ecotourism practices.

Keywords: Community Participation, Cultural, Economic, Ecotourism, Sustainable Development

Conflicts of interest: None

Supporting agencies: None

Received 9.3.2024

Revised 13.5.2024

Accepted 18.15.2024

Cite This Article: Tiwari, S., Marahatta, D. & Devkota, H. (2024). Aspects of Community Participation in Eco-tourism: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Advancements*, 2(1), 71-79.

1. Introduction

Ecotourism, also called sustainable tourism, prioritizes the responsible management of resources while providing maximum benefits to people. It involves traveling to natural areas to observe and appreciate the scenery, flora, fauna, and cultural expressions of both the past and present (Coria & Calfucura, 2012; Dowling & Moore, 2012; Fennell, 2015). By generating income that can be used for the sustainable management of these sites, creating local job opportunities, and fostering a sense of community ownership, ecotourism can boost economic growth and support the conservation of protected areas (Jalani, 2012).

Crucially, community participation is integral to ecotourism. It involves residents' planning, decision-making, and implementing ecotourism projects to align them with local needs, cultures, and aspirations (Bello et al., 2018; Garrod, 2003). This approach promotes local ownership and long-term environmental stewardship, which are essential for the success and sustainability of ecotourism (Rustini et al., 2022). Active community participation, including decision-making and contributing physical energy, skills, and property, is identified as a critical element in ecotourism tourism development. Such involvement positively influences and enhances the tourism sector's performance in ecotourism (Sobhani et al., 2022).

In response to the need for sustainable development, many developing countries have adopted innovative tourism models that promote community growth and environmental conservation (Yanes et al., 2019). Ecotourism is particularly promising among these models as it offers sustainable economic opportunities while protecting natural ecosystems (Scheyvens, 1999). It is widely acknowledged that involving local communities in the planning and managing of ecotourism sites is key to achieving sustainable outcomes (Garrod, 2003).

The participatory approach, which emphasizes community empowerment and bottom-up planning, has gained momentum in global development initiatives (Henkel & Stirrat, 2001; Lane, 2005). This approach recognizes the dual benefits of involving local communities: preserving natural resources and stimulating local economic development (Ashley & Roe, 1998). However, there is ongoing debate about the level of citizen empowerment required for meaningful participation in tourism planning and development.

Ecotourism projects often occur in culturally and economically sensitive areas, making local populations vulnerable to the impacts of tourism (Butcher, 2011). In this context, ecotourism should be viewed as more than just a niche travel market, as it can significantly impact the livelihoods of destination populations (Cobbinah et al., 2015). Furthermore, local communities often bear a disproportionate burden of the costs versus benefits due to limited control over ecotourism design and management (Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Since ecotourism can directly impact the community, community involvement is crucial in designing and executing ecotourism initiatives.

Many literatures mention the significance of community participation in ecotourism. For instance, a study showed that local communities' involvement in ecotourism involves significant control over activities and equitable economic benefits (Scheyvens, 2011). Likewise, Mensah (2017) emphasizes the importance of community participation in ecotourism, highlighting the need for deep-rooted involvement of the local people in the planning process and control over development initiatives. Furthermore, Coria and Calfucum (2012) mentioned that sustainable development principles such as fair benefit distribution and respect for local values are crucial in ecotourism.

Though community participation in ecotourism plays a significant role, some existing literature primarily focuses on the distribution of tourism benefits and their impact only, which overlooks the active participation of communities in the planning process (Mbaiwa, 2005; Spenceley & Goodwin, 2007; Stone & Stone, 2011; Snyman, 2014). Some literature shows that empowering local communities to set goals and express their concerns is vital in ecotourism to maximize tourism's advantages (Murphy, 2013; Timothy, 1999). Nevertheless, some factors, such as resource constraints and operational, structural, and cultural challenges, hinder effective community participation in planning and decision-making (Tosun, 2000, 2006; Marzuki et al., 2012; Saufi et al., 2014).

Despite the growing interest in ecotourism, a comprehensive review of community participation in ecotourism that focuses on the role of community participation in ecotourism, the types of participation that occur in ecotourism, and the significant challenges of community participation in ecotourism is lacking. This study, therefore, aims to fill such gaps in the existing literature by reviewing the literature and identifying the role of community participation in various aspects, types of participation that occur in ecotourism development, and significant challenges of community participation in ecotourism development. The research question guiding this study is how different types of community participation occur in ecotourism and how community participation promotes economic, social-cultural, and environmental aspects. For this, the study is mainly based on a systematic review of the existing literature.

2. Materials and methods

Conducting a 'thematic synthesis' of the studies, the researcher followed the study design guidelines outlined by Thomas and Harden (2008) for thematic analysis. This approach involves identifying and analyzing themes that emerge from the data. Thomas and Harden (2008) provided four-step guidelines for conducting thematic analysis: searching, selecting, extracting, and thematically synthesizing.

To find relevant articles on community participation in ecotourism, the researcher used Google Scholar, Science Direct, and Scopus databases, combining various keywords such as 'Ecotourism,' 'Community Participation,' 'Community-Based Ecotourism,' 'Community Involvement,' 'Sustainable Tourism,' 'the role of ecotourism in sustainable tourism,' and 'ecotourism impact'. Given the varying search algorithms, different results combinations were combined, generating 140 articles that required careful screening.

The screening phase involved reviewing articles published between 2005 and 2023 to understand the importance and role of community participation in ecotourism. The final selection of 53 articles for content analysis was based on their relevance to the research objectives and research questions, which aimed to understand the role of community participation in ecotourism while eliminating irrelevant material.

3. Results and discussion

Community involvement in ecotourism also satisfies the criteria of sustainable tourist development, such as biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, and environmental protection (Stronza & Pêgas, 2008). The significant roles of community participation as per the literature are discussed in this section.

3.1. Economic role

Community participation in ecotourism plays a significant economic role by contributing to sustainable development and empowering local communities. Various literature shows that it benefits the communities economically and contributes towards sustained economic growth.

Economic benefits to the communities: Encouraging participation in ecotourism initiatives within local communities can provide substantial economic advantages, particularly for those facing financial difficulties. Ecotourism projects offer diverse employment opportunities throughout numerous sectors, including transportation, restaurants, gift shops, eco-lodges, and guiding services (Reimer & Walter, 2013). Furthermore, the arrival of tourists stimulates demand for local handicrafts, agricultural products, and services, supporting the growth of related industries (Jalani, 2012).

Research has shown that ecotourism can transform indigenous communities, providing sustainable alternatives to traditional livelihoods such as hunting and agriculture (Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010). Agro-tourism activities provided supplemental income that could contribute significantly to the preservation of small and mid-scale farms (Khanal et al., 2024). In Botswana, for example, ecotourism has emerged as a viable alternative to hunting and gathering, enhancing economic stability and reducing vulnerability to external factors (Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010). Similarly, studies conducted in China have highlighted the economic benefits of community involvement in ecotourism, including increased output, income, and employment opportunities (Li et al., 2018).

Sustainable Economic Growth: In addition to immediate financial gains, community engagement in ecotourism promotes sustainable economic growth. In Ghana's Kakum National Park, local communities benefit from tourism-related activities such as handicraft sales and accommodation services, fostering entrepreneurial skills, and diversifying the local economy (Mensah, 2017). Nonetheless, the distribution of benefits within communities is frequently unequal, influenced by factors such as land ownership (Palmer & Chuamuangphan, 2018). Individuals without land ownership may be more inclined to participate in ecotourism to generate self-reliant income, highlighting the importance of property rights in shaping economic prospects within ecotourism.

3.2. Socio-cultural role of community participation in ecotourism

In order to create a sustainable tourism model that respects and promotes local cultures and traditions, communities must participate in ecotourism. Communities actively involved can share their unique heritage and customs with visitors while ensuring that tourism development aligns with their socio-cultural values. This not only empowers and enhances the livelihood of the communities but also brings about different social development initiatives.

Numerous studies have shown that community involvement in ecotourism positively impacts preserving the region's socio-cultural identity, values, and uniqueness. This engagement fosters education, healthcare improvements, and increased support for the area, promoting respect for the local way of life and advancing gender equity, infrastructure development, and cultural appreciation (Acquah et al., 2017; Bhatta, 2019; Das & Chatterjee, 2015).

Furthermore, community participation in ecotourism has led to various social development initiatives. For example, in the Annapurna Conservation Area of Nepal, the local community has initiated awareness camps and adult literacy programs, which showcase the transformative potential of community involvement in ecotourism (Bajracharya et al., 2007). As communities gain a deeper understanding of ecotourism principles, there is a noticeable decline in unsustainable activities like hunting, fishing, and deforestation, indicating a positive correlation between community participation and the preservation of the region's socio-cultural identity (Kiper et al., 2011; Reimer & Walter, 2013).

3.3. The role of ecotourism in environmental protection

Community participation in ecotourism plays a vital role in preventing deforestation, conserving flora and fauna, and promoting the growth of greenery and alternative energy sources (Zambrano et al., 2010). It generates revenue for environmental preservation efforts, but it also aids in preserving biodiversity by protecting natural areas (Bajracharya et al., 2007; Bray et al., 2003). In addition, community participation in ecotourism initiatives promotes sustainable development strategies that minimize the use of natural resources, ensuring long-term benefits for the local area and its inhabitants (Ashok et al., 2017).

3.4. Types of community participation in ecotourism

Ecotourism is a form of tourism that prioritizes environmental conservation and community development. For ecotourism to be successful, it is crucial to involve local communities in decision-making and ensure equitable distribution of benefits. Community participation in ecotourism can take various forms, including active, passive, collaborative, and women's participation.

Active Community Participation: Active community participation is a critical component of sustainable tourism development, as it enables local communities to have a say in regional decision-making and gain a sense of ownership over the process. This empowerment facilitates an equitable distribution of ecotourism benefits among community members. For instance, the Chiphat Community-Based Ecotourism Project in Cambodia and indigenous communities in

the Amazon illustrate how local management can provide equal access to employment and benefits through a rotation system (Reimer & Walter, 2013; Stronza & Gordillo, 2008). In Botswana's Chobe district, community organization involvement in crucial decision-making has led to the collaborative success of ecotourism approaches (Stone, 2015). These examples demonstrate the potential of active participation to drive sustainable ecotourism practices and gain community support.

However, active participation also presents challenges, such as navigating complex sociopolitical dynamics and ensuring inclusive decision-making processes. Research from Tambopata, Peru, indicates that projects with genuine community engagement in decision-making have a more sustainable future than those offering only employment opportunities (Hill & Hill, 2011). Thus, economic incentives alone are insufficient, and effective community involvement is crucial for sustainable tourism development.

Passive Participation in Ecotourism: Passive participation in ecotourism can negatively affect local communities, leading to feelings of exclusion and reduced support for sustainable tourism initiatives. Studies conducted in South Africa's Hhuhuwe-Umfolozzi Park and Ghana's Kakum National Park have shown conflicts arising from the lack of local ownership and decision-making (Adeleke & Nzama, 2013; Appiah-Opoku, 2004). The lack of local communities' involvement in ecotourism development in Malaysia has hindered the industry's sustainability (Kunjuraman, 2022). Centralized administrations in developing countries can also limit community participation (Osman et al., 2018).

Land ownership and proximity to ecotourism sites can influence passive participation. In Thailand's Chang Rai province, landless individuals are more likely to engage in ecotourism due to limited alternative income sources (Palmer & Chuamuangphan, 2018). In Nigeria's Okomu National Park, disparities in participation levels are observed based on the distance from park settlements, where those living near the park are active. In contrast, those away from the park are passive (Digun-Aweto et al., 2019). Passive participation in ecotourism can exacerbate existing inequalities within communities and undermine the sustainability of ecotourism projects.

Collaborative Participation: The success and sustainability of ecotourism projects rely heavily on collaborative participation. Finding the right balance between external assistance and local authority is crucial to ensure that community values and conservation goals are respected. However, this balance can be tricky to achieve, as formal organizations may not fully understand local nuances, and communities may have limited capacity to engage with external groups effectively (Farrelly, 2011).

One practical way to foster collaboration is through joint ventures, where communities partner with external entities to access additional resources or expertise. The Binsar Protected Area in India and the 'Posada Amazonas' in the Peruvian Amazon are successful examples of this approach, where communities retain control over ecotourism initiatives while collaborating with corporate enterprises (Bhalla et al., 2016; Jamal & Stronza, 2009). However, collaborations must also navigate ideological differences, as Western development perspectives can sometimes overshadow community decision-making influenced by neoliberalism (Fletcher, 2009).

Women's Participation in Ecotourism: Incorporating women into ecotourism initiatives is crucial for promoting gender equality and community development. Empowering women by involving them in decision-making enhances project success and fosters broader community benefits (Andrews et al., 2013; Scheyvens, 1999).

Numerous examples from countries such as India, Cambodia, South Africa, Mexico, Fiji, and Nepal demonstrate the positive impact of women's participation in ecotourism. Women's involvement in forest management, marine area networks, and homestay programs empowers them economically and contributes to cultural expression and social inclusion (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Bray et al., 2003; Broome & Kothari, 2008).

Despite the significance of women's participation in ecotourism, some challenges remain. For instance, despite the significant efforts of Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE program, female engagement is significantly low (Mutandwa & Gadzirayi, 2007). This is because of the high number of illiteracies among the women, and they are culturally bound not to come out of their homes, and they do not have time to spend on any activities other than their household chores. Therefore, some efforts are necessary to overcome barriers and ensure women's active roles in ecotourism for successful conservation and community development. Advocating for inclusive practices is pivotal in amplifying women's voices and recognizing their valuable contributions to ecotourism.

Community participation in ecotourism is crucial for its success. Active, passive, collaborative, and women's participation are various forms of involvement, each with benefits and challenges. Practicing inclusive decision-making and ensuring equitable distribution of benefits can help drive sustainable ecotourism practices and promote community development.

3.5. The challenges of community involvement in ecotourism

Disparities in Participation: Ecotourism initiatives often promise sustainable development and benefits for local communities, but participation imbalances can lead to inequality and unfairness. Studies have uncovered significant factors contributing to these disparities, such as distance from ecotourism sites and conflicts over ownership. In Nigeria's Okomu National Park, community involvement was influenced by proximity to the park, while in China, stakeholder groups outside of the local community primarily benefited from economic gains (Aweto et al., 2019; He et al., 2008). Similarly, participation disparities are exemplified by conflict over ownership of the activities and poor cooperation

among the stakeholders, like in the case of Ethiopia's Alatish National Park (Berhanu & Seleshi, 2013; Teressa, 2015). In some regions, ecotourism has already brought inequality among the people and created only limited community participation (Snyman, 2014).

Insufficient Cooperation among Stakeholders: Community participation in ecotourism is hampered by poor integration among stakeholders. Some studies highlight a lack of collaboration between community tourism enterprises and other stakeholders, often due to inadequate resources and official registration (K.C., 2016; Tesfaye, 2017; Thomas, 2013). Moreover, in some cases, inadequate cooperation between stakeholders and park offices further hinders community involvement, as seen at Alatish National Park Ethiopia (Berhanu & Seleshi, 2013). One of the reasons for not having good cooperation is holding hierarchical power structures within communities, which creates differences in involvement between indigenous and non-indigenous people, with the latter group having a higher presence in the structure (Afenyo & Amuquandoh, 2014; Farrelly, 2011).

Diversities within Local Communities: It is essential to recognize that local communities are not homogenous and that their diversity can impact participation in ecotourism. Power dynamics within communities can marginalize certain groups, as evident in Tafi Atome, Ghana, where non-indigenous residents face participation and benefit disparities (Afenyo & Amuquandoh, 2014). Acknowledging this diversity is crucial for promoting fair participation in ecotourism initiatives, accounting for differing interests and power dynamics within communities (Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Southgate, 2006).

Lack of Community Engagement: The lack of community engagement in tourism development is a pressing issue. One of the biggest challenges is a lack of awareness, particularly among local populations. In some indigenous communities, decision-making power is concentrated among older members, which can limit participation among younger generations (Ramos & Prideaux, 2014). Additionally, there is a perception that ecotourism does not benefit the community, which can contribute to disinterest (Cobbinah et al., 2015). Similarly, in some developing countries, many people are preoccupied with immediate family concerns, which can limit engagement in broader community issues (Hall, 2008; Tosun, 2000). To foster genuine community engagement in ecotourism initiatives, it is essential to address these underlying concerns.

4. Discussion

The Importance of Community Involvement in Ecotourism: The research highlights the crucial role of community engagement in ecotourism endeavors, showcasing its significance in promoting sustainability and fostering local development (Rampheri & Dube, 2021; Scheyvens, 1999). Successful examples, such as those observed in Cambodia, the Amazon, and Botswana, demonstrate the positive impact of active community participation, emphasizing the critical role of decentralized decision-making and local empowerment in achieving success. These instances are juxtaposed with the challenges posed by centralized governance, underscoring the need for inclusive frameworks to ensure equitable participation and benefit-sharing practices on a global scale.

The Potential of Ecotourism to Transform Lives and Lift Communities out of Poverty: The review highlights the transformative potential of ecotourism in alleviating poverty, illustrating its capacity to replace traditional livelihoods and create economic opportunities in regions like Botswana and Belize (Stone, 2015). However, disparities in the distribution of benefits highlight the need for fair mechanisms to ensure that economic gains are shared equitably among community members. Collaborative efforts between local communities and external organizations emerge as critical for empowerment and autonomy preservation, with successful partnerships in India and Peru demonstrating the potential of balanced collaborations for sustainable development (Bhalla et al., 2016; Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

The Influence of External Organizations on Community Participation in Ecotourism: External organizations, particularly Western NGOs, are crucial in shaping community participation in ecotourism. While successful partnerships in Namibia demonstrate the potential for positive collaborations, challenges faced in Thailand highlight the importance of delicately balancing community ownership across diverse global contexts. To preserve community agency, these partnerships must prioritize local empowerment and autonomy.

Promoting Gender Equality and Inclusivity in Ecotourism: Ecotourism has witnessed the remarkable contributions of women in countries like India, Cambodia, and Mexico, emphasizing the broader advantages of inclusivity. By linking gender equality in ecotourism programs to better environmental conservation and community development, communities can leverage diverse perspectives and skills for more sustainable outcomes (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Broome & Kothari, 2008).

Overcoming Ongoing Hurdles with Holistic Approaches: Despite the benefits of ecotourism, persistent challenges such as unequal benefit distribution, limited knowledge, and a lack of skill development can impede its effectiveness (Aseres & Simane, 2016; Stone & Stone, 2011). To surmount these obstacles, future research should adopt a multifaceted approach that investigates potential adverse effects and devises comprehensive strategies to address these challenges. By prioritizing inclusivity, sustainability, and equitable distribution of benefits in ecotourism initiatives, communities, and the environment can benefit, leading to more equitable and sustainable development paths (Hunt et al., 2015).

Although the systematic review on community participation in ecotourism is informative, it does have some limitations worth noting. The review primarily focuses on ecotourism in Africa and Asia, which may not entirely represent other

regions. Furthermore, differences in research methods among studies can make it challenging to draw direct comparisons, highlighting the importance of standardized approaches in future research. It is also worth considering that the review's timeframe may not fully capture the changing dynamics of ecotourism, and it may overlook negative impacts such as exploitation and environmental harm.

5. Conclusion

The systematic review underscores the immense value of community engagement in ecotourism, featuring diverse global examples that demonstrate both successes and challenges. The economic benefits of ecotourism are exemplified in some regions, underscoring the potential for poverty alleviation and the need for fair benefit-sharing practices to avoid disputes and foster long-term sustainability. It has further played a critical role in environmental management and sociocultural development of the areas where tourism activities are ongoing. In some countries, collaborative partnerships between local communities and external organizations demonstrate the potential of balanced approaches for advancing sustainable ecotourism. In some cases, maintaining community ownership in planning and decision-making is challenging, highlighting the need for a delicate balance to foster meaningful collaboration. The review also highlights the impacts of passive community involvement, where local people cannot enjoy equal benefits. Furthermore, the significant role of women in ecotourism underlines the broader benefits of inclusivity, linking gender equality to enhanced environmental conservation and community development. To address persistent global challenges and maximize the potential of ecotourism for sustainable development, comprehensive strategies that address unequal benefit distribution, limited knowledge, and skill development are essential, calling for more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable ecotourism practices worldwide.

A comprehensive approach must be taken to advance our understanding of community participation in ecotourism. This should include conducting comparative studies across regions, assessing the sustainability of initiatives over time, and delving deeper into power dynamics within communities. It is crucial to investigate potential negative consequences of community involvement, analyze policy and governance implications, and conduct thorough economic assessments to maximize the benefits of ecotourism for community development.

References

- Acharya, B. P., & Halpenny, E. A. (2013). Homestays as an alternative tourism product for sustainable community development: A case study of women-managed tourism product in rural Nepal. *Tourism Planning and Development, 10*(4), 367–387. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.779313>
- Acquah, E., Nsor, C. A., Arthur, E. K., & Boadi, S. (2017). The socio-cultural impact of ecotourism on park-adjacent communities in Ghana. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 6*(2), 1–14.
- Adeleke, B. O., & Nzama, T. (2013). Assessment of community participation in ecotourism and conservation at Hhuhuwe-Umfolozi Park, South Africa. *Journal of Environment and Earth Science, 3*(3), 27–38.
- Afenyo, E. A., & Amuquandoh, F. E. (2014). Who benefits from community-based ecotourism development? Insights from Tafi Atome, Ghana. *Tourism Planning and Development, 11*(2), 179–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.864994>
- Andrews, E., Barbera, N., Mickle, M., & Novik, H. (2013). *Prospects for women's economic empowerment*. Institute for Global and International Studies.
- Appiah-Opoku, S. (2004). Rethinking ecotourism: The case of Kakum National Park in Ghana. *African Geographical Review, 23*(1), 49–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19376812.2004.9756178>
- Aseres, A. S., & Simane, B. (2016). *Development of community-based ecotourism, A case of Choke Mountain and its environs, Ethiopia: Challenges and opportunities*.
- Ashok, S., Tewari, H. R., Behera, M. D., & Majumdar, A. (2017). Development of ecotourism sustainability assessment framework employing Delphi, C&I and participatory methods: A case study of KBR, West Sikkim, India. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 21*, 24–41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2016.10.005>
- Bajracharya, S., Gurung, G. B., & Basnet, K. (2007). Learning from community participation in conservation area management. *Journal of Forest and Livelihood, 6*(2), 54–66. http://forestation.org/app/webroot/js/tinymce/editor/plugins/filemanager/files/images/stories/pdfs/journal_of_forest_and_livelihood/vol6_2/6_Conservation Area -final.pdf
- Bello, F. G., Lovelock, B., & Carr, N. (2016). Constraints of community participation in protected area-based tourism planning: the case of Malawi. *Journal of Ecotourism, 16*(2), 131–151. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2016.1251444>
- Berhanu, B., & Seleshi, Y. (2013). *Surface water and groundwater resources of Ethiopia: Potentials and challenges of water resources development*, 1–718). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02720-3>

- Bhalla, P., Coghlan, A., & Bhattacharya, P. (2016). Homestays' contribution to community-based ecotourism in the Himalayan region of India. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 41(2), 213–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2016.1178474>
- Bhatta, K. D. (2019). Exploring socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism in the Annapurna conservation area, Nepal. *Journal of Engineering Technology and Planning*, 1, 55–74. <https://doi.org/10.3126/joetp.v1i0.38245>
- Bray, D. B., Merino-Pérez, L., Negreros-Castillo, P., Segura-Warnholtz, G., Torres-Rojo, J. M., & Vester, H. F. M. (2003). Mexico's community-managed forests as a global model for sustainable landscapes. *Conservation Biology*, 17(3), 672–677. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1523-1739.2003.01639.x>
- Broome, N. P., & Kothari, A. (2008). *Towards self-rule and forest conservation in Mendha-Lekha, village, Gadchiroli*. 21. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Neema-Pathak-Broome/publication/228439993>
- Butcher, J. (2011). Can ecotourism contribute to tackling poverty? The importance of “symbiosis.” *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(3), 295–307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2011.555526>
- Cobbinah, P. B., Black, R., & Thwaites, R. (2015). Ecotourism implementation in the Kakum Conservation Area, Ghana: Administrative framework and local community experiences. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 14(2–3), 223–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2015.1051536>
- Coria, J., & Calfucura, E. (2012). Ecotourism and the development of indigenous communities: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Ecological Economics*, 73, 47–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2011.10.024>
- Das, M., & Chatterjee, B. (2015). Ecotourism and empowerment: A case analysis of Bhitarkanika wildlife sanctuary, Odisha, India. *IIM Kozhikode Society & Management Review*, 4(2), 136–145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2277975215613175>
- Dowling, R. K., & Moore, S. A. (2012). *Natural area tourism: Ecology, impacts and management*, second edition. In *Natural Area Tourism: Ecology, Impacts and Management, Second Edition (Second Edi)*. Channel View Publication.
- Digun-Aweto, O., Fawole, O. P., & Saayman, M. (2019). The effect of distance on community participation in ecotourism and conservation at Okomu National Park Nigeria. *GeoJournal*, 84(5), 1337–1351. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-018-9922-z>
- Farrelly, T. A. (2011). Indigenous and democratic decision-making: Issues from community-based ecotourism in the boumā National Heritage Park, Fiji. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(7), 817–835. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.553390>
- Fennell, D. A. (2015). *Ecotourism* Fourth edition (Fourth). Routledge.
- Fletcher, R. (2009). Ecotourism discourse: Challenging the stakeholders theory. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 8(3), 269–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040902767245>
- Garrod, B. (2003). Local participation in the planning and management of ecotourism: A revised model approach. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 2(1), 33–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040308668132>
- He, G., Chen, X., Liu, W., Bearer, S., Zhou, S., Cheng, L. Y., Zhang, H., Ouyang, Z., & Liu, J. (2008). Distribution of economic benefits from ecotourism: A case study of Wolong Nature Reserve for Giant Pandas in China. *Environmental Management*, 42(6), 1017–1025. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-008-9214-3>
- Hill, J. L., & Hill, R. A. (2011). Ecotourism in Amazonian Peru: Uniting tourism, conservation and community development. *Geography*, 96(2), 75–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00167487.2011.12094314>
- Hunt, C. A., Durham, W. H., Driscoll, L., & Honey, M. (2015). Can ecotourism deliver real economic, social, and environmental benefits? A study of the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(3), 339–357. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2014.965176>
- Jalani, J. O. (2012). Local people's perception on the impacts and importance of ecotourism in Sabang, Palawan, Philippines. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 57, 247–254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.1182>
- Jamal, T., & Stronza, A. (2009). ‘Dwelling’ with ecotourism in the Peruvian Amazon: Cultural relationships in local”global spaces. *Tourist Studies*, 8(3), 313–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797608100593>
- K.C., A. (2016). *Ecotourism and its role in sustainable development of Nepal*. *Tourism - From Empirical Research Towards Practical Application*. <https://doi.org/10.5772/62308>
- K.C., A., Rijal, K., & Sapkota, R. P. (2015). Role of ecotourism in environmental conservation and socioeconomic development in Annapurna conservation area, Nepal. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology*, 22(3), 251–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2015.1005721>
- Khanal, A., Khanal, A., Basnet, F., Joshi, S., & Giri, S. (2024). Agro-tourism in Nepal: Assessment of economic, cultural, and environmental impact. *Humanities Journal*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.31893/multiscience.2024007>
- Kiper, T., Özdemir, G., & Sağlam, C. (2011). Environmental, socio-cultural and economical effects of ecotourism perceived by the local people in the northwestern Turkey: Kiyiköy case. *Scientific Research and Essays*, 6(19), 4009–4020. <https://doi.org/10.5897/sre10.1059>
- Kunjuraman, V. (2022). Local community participation challenges in community-based ecotourism development in Sabah, Malaysian Borneo. *Community Development Journal*, 57(3), 487–508. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsaa065>

- Lane, M. B. (2005). Public participation in planning: An intellectual history. *Australian Geographer*, 36(3), 283–299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049180500325694>
- Li, Y., Sun, Q., Bandara, Y. M. W. Y., Sharma, K., Hicks, J., & Basu, P. K. (2018). The economic impact of ecotourism on regional China: Further evidence from Yunnan and Sichuan Provinces. *Global Business Review*, 19(3), 533–542. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150917713887>
- Marzuki, A., Hay, I., & James, J. (2012). Public participation shortcomings in tourism planning: The case of the Langkawi Islands, Malaysia. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20(4), 585–602. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.638384>
- Mbaiwa, J. E. (2005). The problems and prospects of sustainable tourism development in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 13(3), 203–227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630508668554>
- Mbaiwa, J. E., & Stronza, A. L. (2010). The effects of tourism development on rural livelihoods in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18(5), 635–656. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669581003653500>
- Mensah, I. (2017). Benefits and challenges of community-based ecotourism in park-fringe communities: The case of mesomagor of Kakum National Park, Ghana. *Tourism Review International*, 21(1), 81–98. <https://doi.org/10.3727/154427217X14866652018947>
- Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. (2016). *Tourism and sustainability: Development, globalization, and new tourism in the third world* (Fourth Edi). Routledge Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315795348-13>
- Murphy, P. E. (2013). *Tourism: A Community Approach (RLE Tourism)*. In *Tourism: A Community Approach (RLE Tourism)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068533>
- Osman, T., Shaw, D., & Kenawy, E. (2018). Examining the extent to which stakeholder collaboration during ecotourism planning processes could be applied within an Egyptian context. *Land Use Policy*, 78(3), 126–137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.06.043>
- Palmer, N. J., & Chuamuangphan, N. (2018). Governance and local participation in ecotourism: community-level ecotourism stakeholders in Chiang Rai province, Thailand. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 17(3), 320–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2018.1502248>
- Picard, D. (2015). Making ecotourism sustainable: refocusing on economic viability. Lessons learnt from the “Regional strategic action plan for coastal ecotourism development in the South Western Indian Ocean.” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(6), 819–837. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2015.1019512>
- Ramos, A. M., & Prideaux, B. (2014). Indigenous ecotourism in the Mayan rainforest of Palenque: empowerment issues in sustainable development. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(3), 461–479. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.828730>
- Rampheri, M. B., & Dube, T. (2021). Local community involvement in nature conservation under the auspices of Community-Based Natural Resource Management: A state of the art review. *African Journal of Ecology*, 59(4), 799–808. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aje.12801>
- Reimer, J. K. K., & Walter, P. (2013). How do you know it when you see it? Community-based ecotourism in the Cardamom Mountains of southwestern Cambodia. *Tourism Management*, 34, 122–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.04.002>
- Rustini, N. K., Sri Budhi, M. K., Wiwin Setyari, N. P., & Setiawina, N. D. (2022). Development of sustainable tourism based on local community participation. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Studies*, 5(11), 3283–3286. <https://doi.org/10.47191/jefms/v5-i11-16>
- Sakata, H., & Prideaux, B. (2013). An alternative approach to community-based ecotourism: A bottom-up locally initiated non-monetised project in Papua New Guinea. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(6), 880–899. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2012.756493>
- Saufi, A., O'Brien, D., & Wilkins, H. (2014). Inhibitors to host community participation in sustainable tourism development in developing countries. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(5), 801–820. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.861468>
- Scheyvens, R. (1999). Ecotourism and the empowerment of local communities. *Tourism Management*, 20, 245–249.
- Scheyvens, R. (2011). The challenge of sustainable tourism development in the Maldives: Understanding the social and political dimensions of sustainability. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 52(2), 148–164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8373.2011.01447.x>
- Snyman, S. (2014). The impact of ecotourism employment on rural household incomes and social welfare in six southern African countries. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 14(2), 37–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1467358414529435>
- Sobhani, P., Esmailzadeh, H., Sadeghi, S. M. M., Wolf, I. D., & Deljouei, A. (2022). Relationship analysis of local community participation in sustainable ecotourism development in protected areas, Iran. *Land*, 11(10), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land11101871>
- Southgate, C. R. J. (2006). Ecotourism in Kenya: The vulnerability of communities. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 5(1–2), 80–96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040608668448>
- Spenceley, A., & Goodwin, H. (2007). Nature-based tourism and poverty alleviation: Impacts of private sector and parastatal enterprises in and around Kruger National Park, South Africa. *Pro-Poor Tourism: Who Benefits?: Perspectives on Tourism and Poverty Reduction*, 10(2–3), 145–167. <https://doi.org/10.2167/cit305.0>

- Stone, L. S., & Stone, T. M. (2011). Community-based tourism enterprises: Challenges and prospects for community participation; Khama Rhino Sanctuary trust, Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(1), 97–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2010.508527>
- Stone, M. T. (2015). *Community-based ecotourism: A collaborative partnerships perspective*, 37–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2015.1023309>
- Stronza, A., & Gordillo, J. (2008). Community views of ecotourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 448–468. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.01.002>
- Stronza, A., & Pêgas, F. (2008). Ecotourism and conservation: Two cases from Brazil and Peru. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 13(4), 263–279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10871200802187097>
- Teressa, D. K. (2015). Development of community based ecotourism in Wenchi Crater Lake, Ethiopia: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism*, 6(4), 39–46. <https://doi.org/10.5897/jhmt2014.0133>
- Tesfaye, S. (2017). Challenges and opportunities for community based ecotourism development in Ethiopia. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 6(3), 24–29.
- Thomas, J., & Harden, A. (2008). Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 8, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-8-45>
- Thomas, Y. (2013). Assessing community participation in selected ecotourism projects in the Brong-Ahafo Region, Ghana. *Journal of Ecology and The Natural Environment*, 5(7), 133–143. <https://doi.org/10.5897/jene2012.0351>
- Timothy, D. J. (1999). Participatory planning: a view of tourism in Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 371–391. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(98\)00104-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00104-2)
- Tosun, C. (2000). Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries. *Tourism Management*, 21(6), 613–633. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(00\)00009-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(00)00009-1)
- Tosun, C. (2006). Expected nature of community participation in tourism development. *Tourism Management*, 27(3), 493–504. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.12.004>
- UNDP. (2012). *Equator initiative case studies Mara river water users association Kenya*.
- Yanes, A., Zielinski, S., Cano, M. D., & Kim, S. II. (2019). Community-based tourism in developing countries: A framework for policy evaluation. *Sustainability*, 11(9), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11092506>
- Zambrano, A. M. A., Broadbent, E. N., & Durham, W. H. (2010). Social and environmental effects of ecotourism in the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica: The Lapa Rios case. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 9(1), 62–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040902953076>.



Copyright retained by the author(s). JOMRA is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.