

Tourism implications and challenges in Musina municipality: a case of the Big tree nature reserve and adjacent tourism ventures; Limpopo

239

Received 24 February 2021
Revised 12 May 2021
Accepted 13 June 2021

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Abstract

Purpose – This study evaluates tourism implications and challenges around the Big Tree Nature Reserve with its adjacent tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality, Limpopo Province, in South Africa.

Design/methodology/approach – Data got compiled by interviews and questionnaires in addition to focus group discussions and physical observation.

Findings – The study revealed many challenges associated with tourism undertakings around the Big Tree Nature Reserve and its nearby tourism entities. The benefits of tourism were not efficiently tapped into by the local communities within and around the study area. The factors contributing to the poor state of tourism running got delineated by the findings of the study. Hence, there was a potential obligation for a turnaround effective tourism strategy to improve tourism enterprises to benefits local communities within the area.

Originality/value – Musina Municipality is one of the remote regions in the North of Limpopo Province, in South Africa. It also has impoverished rural communities akin to many rural areas within the continent. Despite the mentioned, it considerably covers a mostly tourism-orientated area within the Vhembe District.

Keywords Tourism, Sustainable tourism, Community-based tourism (CBT), Ecotourism, Musina, Limpopo province, Sustainability

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Musina, formerly Messina, is a town in the Limpopo province, South Africa. It extends around the Limpopo River, 10 miles (16 km) south of Zimbabwe. Musina is the further north town in South Africa. Established in 1904 as Messina, it authoritatively converted into a Town in 1968. Henceforward, in 1993 the closing of its copper mine was compensated by the opportunity of an adjacent diamond mine. To that end, exist some agriculture along with the river ravine and cattle breeding essentially around the environs. The baobab trees feature of the area got assigned as a national exemplar. The community comprises preponderantly black Africans. The town got renamed as Musina in 2002. Population (2001) city, 28,079; municipality 39,309 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2004). That being so, to this juncture, Musina Municipality boasts of having most of the tourism spots. Tshipise Forever Resort and

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The author essentially acknowledge the editors and the anonymous reviewers of this paper for their precious participation. Accordingly SANSA Earth Observation for backing this study.



Tshipise Sagole Spa both featuring natural hot springs; and, mostly, the World Heritage Site of Mapungubwe National Park. Hence, the Big Tree in Madifha Zwigodini around the Manenzhe area is a contestant within the huge trees paradigm in the world, a potential tourist asset and supposedly amongst the extraordinary trees in Africa; situated in Zwigodini Madifha village (Musina Local Municipality IDP, 2008, 2009; Ramaano, 2008, 2019). The challenge is that the Musina Municipality appears to be not fully tapping into these tourism potentials to achieve sustainability within their areas. The White Paper on the development and promotion of tourism tipped the tourism authority as national precedence. This promoted the betterment of livelihoods (Barkin, 1996; South Africa, 1996; Keyser, 2002). To that end, the 1998 Job Summit noted the potentials of the tourism sector in income generation and job provisions. This alleviated poverty in rural areas (Kirsten and Rogerson, 2002; Ramaano, 2021a, b, c).

Indeed, the behavior and attitudes of tourists and locals are vital for tourism (Akama, 1997). This ensured influx of volumes of tourists within the tourism destination areas. Although in some instances local people themselves may be culprits in terms of detrimental effects and pollution around the tourism areas, dismally operated hotels can contribute to land and water pollution through sewage spillage from their respective hotels. To that end, Buckley (2003) asserted that even though tourism could initially be viewed in a bad light by the local communities; however, in reality, tourism eventually opens ways for new economic platforms, such as beneficial agencies for forestry resources and commodities. That being the case, Mbaiwa (2005) stipulated that the increase in tourist numbers, revenue, tourism actions and facilities at MGR (Moremi Game Reserve) and Khwai community was an epitome of how good tourism facilities can have positive outcomes on tourism enterprises and entrepreneurship. Therefore, the specified demonstrates how wildlife resources are a significant ground for tourism and local community development. Henceforward, Spenceley (2008) argued that a well-operated tourism initiative immediately and directly benefits local communities in destination areas. Thus, he maintained, for example, that once the tourism and hospitality entities improve, their accommodation facilities will also need to get supplied with new infrastructure and services; hence, necessitating the need to source more employees from the local communities. The latter not only generally emphasize the crucial part role of venture owners but also validates the essence of a mutual better association between venture owners, local communities and tourists. Admittedly, Buckley (2010) argued that despite the possible negative impacts of tourism yielded either by entities management, tourists or local communities, maximum exerted efforts and positive attitude ultimately render tourism benefits an upper hand against its counter effects. Likewise, Ryan (2016) further indicated that tourism challenges could be synonymous with environmental degradation. At times these are paralleled with the good prospects of tourism. That being so, Rogerson (2012) acknowledges the positive attitude of the remote local communities as vital to other alternative tourism benefits. The probable emerging of agricultural markets for tourists and hospitality hotel personnel is a decent epitome. The aforesaid is consonant with Barbieri *et al.* (2017) on perceived benefits of agricultural lands contributing agritourism from the two agricultural and cultivated environs, along with their socio-cultural, environmental and economic implications within the milieu of Missouri (US).

The research problem stays on the fact that despite its constructive objective of promoting community tourism and natural resource management, the Big Tree Nature Reserve has to this occasion, struggled to prosper. Hence, the mentioned seems to be running parallel with the deterioration of services offerings within both its newer and older adjacent ventures and entities, such as Beria Madzonga Resort, Nwanedi Nature Reserve, Sagole Spa and Musina Nature Reserve, amid others. The research question is, how can the implication and challenges faced by the Big tree nature reserve and its adjacent ventures and entities be confronted and improved? Thus, it is fundamental to investigate the tourism entities and local

communities on tourism implications and challenges around the Big Tree Nature Reserve, including its adjacent tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). This study argues that by looking at the challenges and implications experienced by the Big Tree Nature Reserve and its adjacent tourism entities, closer augmentations into the significance of advocating for the instigation of valuable changes can be vital. Such augmentations should have liaised with the specific and broadly classic case studies on conservation and tourism and also, mediate with conservation and tourism development policy on local and international implications. Henceforth, all the mentioned should eventually be around the remarkable strides towards instituting appropriate reserve grading, amendments and development initiatives within the local communities and the study area. Thus, supplementing a contribution to academic knowledge from this investigation. Several captions depict the challenges within and around the reserve (Plates 1 and 2). These should further intercede with the envisaged theoretical framework on



Source(s): Author, 2019

Plate 1.
The damaged parts of
the big Baobab tree of
the “Big Tree Nature
Reserve”



Source(s): Author, 2019

Plate 2.
Showing damaged
fence of the “Big Tree
Nature Reserve”

1.1 The point of sustainable tourism, sustainable development and sustainability

This examination so liaises with the conceptions and judgments of sustainable tourism. Sustainability, sustainable tourism and sustainable development got examined with exchangeability in the research ([Myburgh and Saayman, 1999](#); [Liu, 2003](#); [White et al., 2006](#)). Exalted global realization about sustainability has implications on enterprises to amount their assets and actions beyond private earnings and correct the deleterious effects of their activities ([Moscardo and Murphy, 2014](#); [Zamfir et al., 2017](#)).

The policy puzzle of various sustainable tourism activities is fundamental to distinct institutional methods; and policy settings at international, national and local models. Therefore, there is an obligation to visit the tourism operations incorporating sustainable tourism guidelines within several compositions, destination neighborhoods and related countries ([Hall et al., 2015](#); [Pan et al., 2018](#)). That being the case, there is a necessity to permit for the livelihoods of the residents. Likewise, in the scenario of the study area ([Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d](#)). Posited further are the South African classic Community-Based Tourism projects.

1.2 South African exemplary case studies of protected areas and CBT (community based tourism) activities. [The local communities, ventures and entities staff could take inspirations and lessons from these initiatives]

1.2.1 Makuleke tourism development case study. The Makuleke region is between the Luvuvhu and Limpopo Rivers and has a high conservation value with significant tourism potential ([Mahony and Van Zyl, 2001](#); [Kirstein and Rogerson, 2002](#)). Makuleke initiative has been utilized by many observers, including South African National Parks (SANP), as a significant case study to lead collaboration between communities, government and the private sector in promoting conservation and tourism development in South Africa. The Kruger National Park (KNP) is the largest in South Africa and is a significant tourist destination for local and foreign tourists. Thus, being a functionally part of the KNP, the Makuleke area has a wide variety of games, including the generally (Big 5) sought-after animals. The Makuleke tourism initiative arose due to the land restitution process in which the Makuleke won back full ownership of their land. A condition of the restitution process was that the Makuleke community would continue to utilize their land for conservation purposes. The Makuleke tourism initiative refers to all tourism-related activities pursued by the Makuleke community ([Mahony and Van Zyl, 2001](#); [Kirstein and Rogerson, 2002](#)). The tourism projects to date included:

- (1) Development of six or seven high-value game lodges developed as joint ventures between the community and the private sector aimed primarily at upper income foreign and domestic tourists.
- (2) Development of a small rustic camp, owned and managed by the Makuleke CPA.
- (3) Limited trophy hunting.
- (4) Cultural tourism opportunities.
- (5) Village-based tourism opportunities.
- (6) Animal breeding options and others ([Mahony and Van Zyl, 2001](#); [Kirstein and Rogerson, 2002](#); [Ramaano, 2021a, b, c](#)).

Therefore, this case study demonstrated how tourism and wildlife resources could contribute to local economic development within the rural communities of South Africa and, potentially elsewhere within the rural parts of the world. The study area ventures could liaise with this case study in managing the [Big Tree Nature Reserve] and other adjacent entities. As it stands, there are no complementary development and entertainment facilities within the Reserve.

1.2.2 Manyeleti tourism development case study. The Manyeleti Game Reserve (MGR), which means Place of Stars, is located in the Northern [Limpopo] Province. As a Big five Game Reserve, it has an area of 22,750 ha. There is an established infrastructure. They include power and drinking water in the area. It is bordered on three sides by world-famous reserves, the Kruger National Park (KNP), the Sabi Sand and Timbavati. Its entrance is 36 km along the Orpen tar road to the KNP. There is easy access from all the main centers – 485 km from the Johannesburg International Airport (/OR Tambo International Airport) on tarred roads, 70 km from the East gate airport at Hoedspruit, 180 km north of Nelspruit and 160 km southeast of Phalaborwa. Hence, the Orpen Gate is a 5 h drive (519 km) from Johannesburg. Also, a total of 195 km of gravel road and 85 kilometers are accessible by a small vehicle. The commercialization of Manyeleti Game Reserve (MGR) showcases an opportunity for investors, government and communities to collaborate in achieving key policy objectives concerning tourism, job creation, economic empowerment and land reform. The challenge was toward designing partnerships in a manner that is commercially attractive, fair and sustainable. The release and development of state assets for ecotourism investment go on where community involvement, black economic empowerment, land rights, and good environmental management have become standard policy. These policy principles were part of the request for proposal (RFP) in the MGR commercialization (Mahony and Van Zyl, 2001; Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). The [Big five] refers to lion, elephant, leopard, hippo and buffalo. Inside the Big Tree Nature Reserve, there are neither entertainment facilities nor the big five. There lies a need for significant changes in line with other CBNRM (Community-Based Natural Resource Management) and CBT (Community-Based Tourism) in the study area.

2. Study area and methods

2.1 Location and attributes

Musina Municipality is a subdivision of the Vhembe District Municipality. It is set in the far north-eastern part of the Limpopo in South Africa, bordering Zimbabwe in the North and Mozambique in the East through the Kruger National Park. It dwells around Musina Town and adjacent to the Thulamela Municipality on the far north (Musina Municipality, 2019). See Figure 1 for the location map. Hence, Plates (1 and 2) depict the Big Tree Nature Reserve. Thus, also showing the neglecting behaviors towards the Reserve itself. for example, a damaged fence and a Baobab tree.

Transport – The Zimbabwe outpost at Beitbridge, 15 km north of Musina, is open 24 h. There exists a large taxi station on the South African part of the boundary; taxis within the border and Musina cost R50 (20 min). One can take a shared minibus and taxi distant south than Musina, which are many. Greyhound buses operate connecting Johannesburg (R455, seven hours) and Harare (R455, nine hours), stop in Musina and across the outpost in Beitbridge at the Ultra City. Extant Car rental avails with Avis for about R325 a day (lonelyplanet.com). *The closest airport*–Range from Polokwane International Airport to Musina is 109.9 miles/176.9 kilometers. Polokwane International Airport dwells roughly 4.1 miles/6.7 kilometers north of Polokwane and approximately 24.7 miles/39.7 kilometers north of Lebowakgomo. IATA airport code is PTG/(closestairportto.com).

Climatic-topographical implications – The overall temperature in the Musina municipal area is reasonably fixed. It is high across the summer of each year. The mean minimum

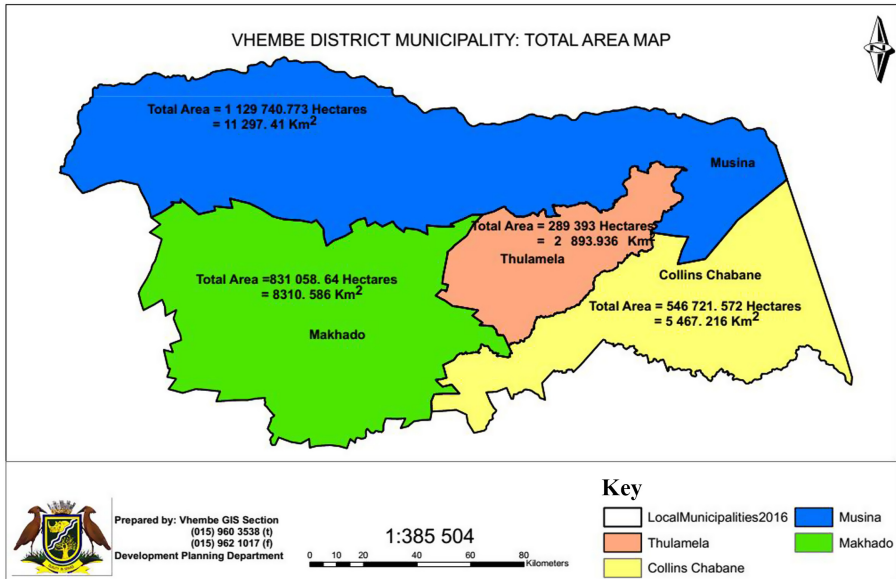
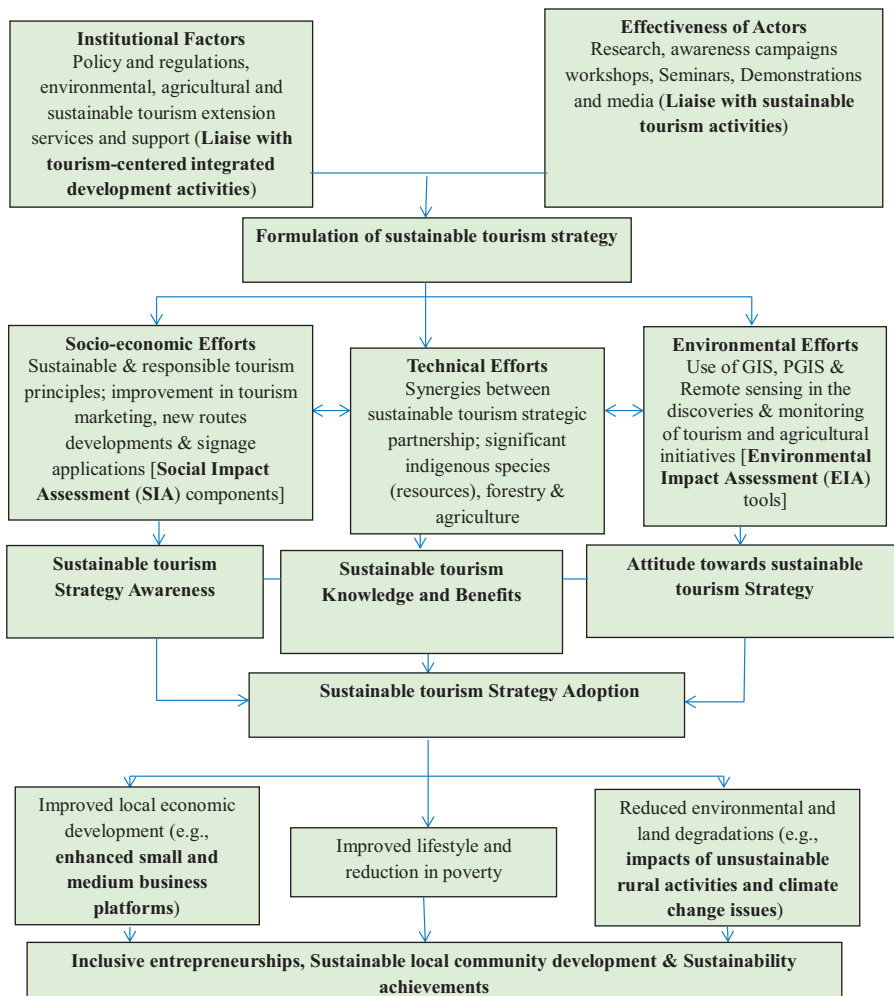


Figure 1.
The location of Musina municipality

Source(s): Vhembe District Municipality, 2017

temperature is 16.1°C, and the maximum mean temperature is 32°C. Ramaano (2021a, b, c) stated that the topographical features play a role in determining the rainfall pattern. Therefore, Musina municipal area relevantly receives 464,1mm rainfall per annum. The Vhembe area and Musina have profound biological diversity of flora and fauna; this biodiversity is about their biogeographical location and diverse topography. The district forms segment of the greater Savanna Biome with an array of ecological niches is occupied by numerous plant and animal species. The area constitutes the Mountain Fynbos, inspirational forests as well as Baobab Trees. There are huge areas within Musina that are natural preservation areas. The Natural Protected areas within the locality include the Kruger National Park Gates. Hence, Musina Municipality has the Big Tree Nature Reserve, Musina and Nwanedi Nature Reserves (Musina Municipality; 2011, 2019). The famous vegetation canopy in Musina municipal area is the Dry Northern Mixed Savanna Bushveld.

2.1.1 The potential for sustainable tourism and community based tourism (CBT) initiatives. Musina Municipality sustainable tourism development potentials and CBT imperatives lie within activities such as in Folovhodwe Tshaluwi fountain and rural campsite and Gumela Mountain and its hidden waterfalls amongst many. Indeed, the Big Tree Nature Reserve (Plate 1) is a fresher inceptioned project with potential when the apt measures manifest. Tourism could therefore mingle advantageously with agricultural activities. Thus, providing a secondary income for farm implements around the area (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d). Therefore, such being mentioned, it is possible that Agro-tourism and sustainable tourism initiatives can afford synergies around each other in roles to improve livelihoods of the local community and eventual sustainability achievements. The particularized could be associated well with Nwanedi agricultural and irrigation schemes alongside the several orchards that rely on the Nwanedi Dam catchment and river in the study area. Musina Municipality ventures and communities could learn from the positives outcomes of the Makuleke tourism initiative. Also, the Manyeleti Game Reserve (MGR) initiative in Limpopo and benchmark with relevant others elsewhere.



Source(s): Author' own, Ramaano, 2019, 2021

Figure 2.
Researcher's envisaged
theme of sustainable
tourism and
sustainable community
livelihoods in the
study area

2.2 Data and methods

The methods utilized in this study aimed at investigating tourism implications and challenges around the big tree nature reserve and its adjacent tourism ventures and entities in the study area. The study employed a mixed-methods survey for the specific obligation, as it offered an ordered informative argument. In the process, all the ethical research procedures got accordingly regarded. The research employed purposive sampling, and interviews were used as the research method. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on the characteristics of a population. This is in accordance with the objective of the study. The reason for choosing this type of sampling was that the researcher believed that he could achieve a representative sample; therefore, using reasonable judgment to save time and expenditures (Patton, 2001; Ramaano, 2021a, b, c).

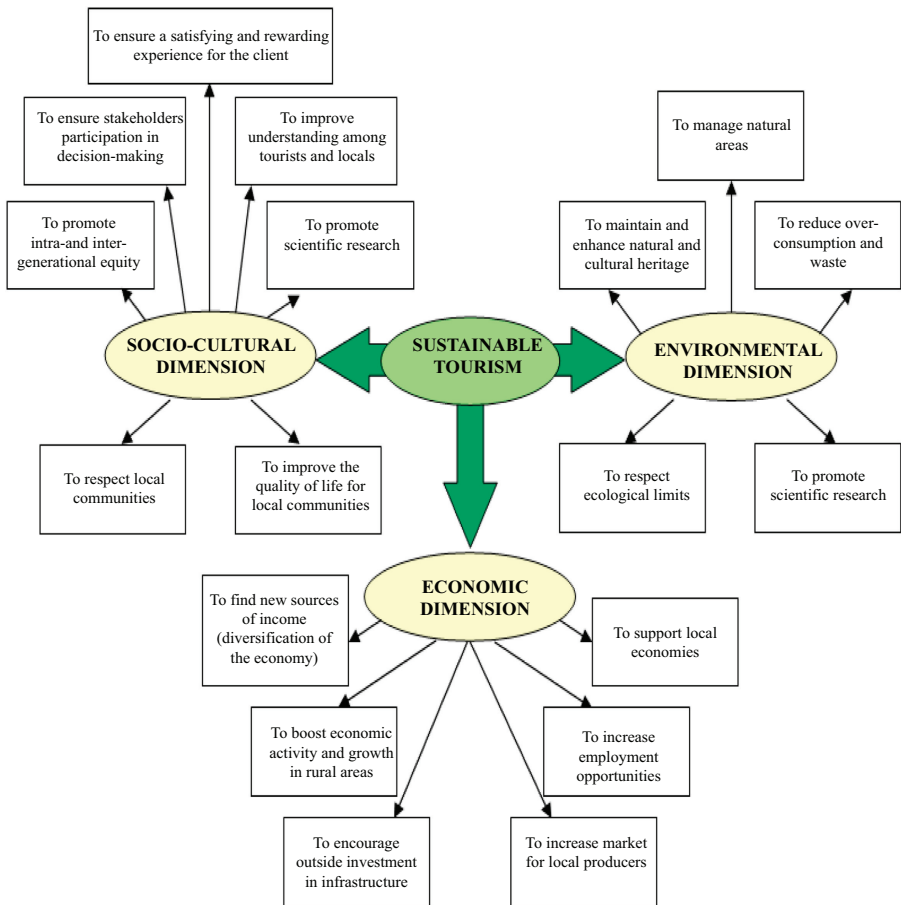


Figure 3.
The sustainable
tourism three
Significant pillars

Source(s): Adopted from Zamfir *et al.*, 2017; White *et al.*, 2006 (p. 4); Ramaano, 2019, 2021

2.2.1 Sample size calculation and justification of the study. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula, $n = N/(1 + Ne^2)$, where n is the sample size, N is the population size and e is the precision level. The sampled village comprises Folovhodwe, Gumela, Tshipise and Zwigodini villages in the study area within Musina Municipality and has a totality of 4,947 populations. The sampling precision got put at 5% (i.e., $e = 0.05$), the sample size of the study area was about 370. Finally, four villages got purposively selected and included Folovhodwe, Gumela, Tshipise and Zwigodini. All are close to various tourism ventures such as the Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort, Luphephe Dam, Sagole Spa (Geothermal Spring) and the Big Tree Nature Reserve (Table 1). The location of tourism ventures and entities around the communities influenced the selection of the study area. Hence the hurdles faced within the area. Table 1 also shows the adjacent tourism ventures and entities interviewed within the study area and Table 2 shows the allocation of a questionnaire survey on the local community.

The study was based primarily on interviews. Data got predominantly extracted using primary methods as per the gist of the study. Accordingly, data got accumulated by

(1) interviews ($n = 30$) (Key informant interviews within the six sampled tourism ventures and entities 8/9/10 April 2019, in the mornings and afternoons), (2) questionnaire surveys ($n = 370$) (Questionnaire survey within the four sampled villages, distributed between the mornings of 1 March to afternoon 30 April and collected between the mornings of 15 May to afternoon 15 June 2019), (3) focus group discussions ($n = 20$) (Focus group discussions within all the sampled villages [mornings and afternoons] 17/18/19/20 March 2019) and (4) field observations (Field survey between 1 March and June 2019). Specified references had mixed systems for contacting extents; some selected morning meetings while others concluded afternoon groups. The range part led to research sessions. As an outcome, shifting data from neighboring tourism enterprises and local communities got acquired. Interviews targeted getting the main content of the study. Questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions and field observations got to support interview data. The Primary data comprised direct inputs (Esterberg, 2002). Therefore, Ramaano (2021a, b, c) indicated that secondary data are recorded information made by other experts for purposes other than the specific research need at hand. Secondary data got linked with the Musina Integrated Development Plan (IDP) document (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). Hence, primary data were sourced from interviews and focus group discussions, whereas field surveys supported both secondary and primary data through recorded and actual pictures. Data got examined by the Spreadsheet, Microsoft Excel, Cross-tabulation analysis and Manual arrangement of data for both Quantitative and Qualitative manifests.

2.2.2 Types of the required data and their purpose. Data from tourism ventures and entities on tourism implications and challenges around the Big tree nature reserve and its adjacent tourism ventures and entities were required. Such data were significant to provide information on how much the current status of tourism implications and challenges affects the communities. The probe was also vital in unleashing the current and potential state of biodiversity maintenance in the study area. The data acquired were for the appraisal of the best strategy

Name of tourism ventures and their activities	Location of the tourism venture (villages/area)	Interviewees per venture/entity
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Luphephe dam)	Gumela (Folovhodwe) villages	5
The big tree holiday accommodation	Zwigodini (Madifha) village	5
Manalani lodge; (Sagole Spa' hot spring)	Tshipise village	5
The big tree nature reserve (big baobab, Mopani and Marula trees)	Zwigodini (Madifha) village	5
Beria Madzonga resort	Zwigodini village	5
Musina LED and tourism info; [Musina nature reserve]	Musina Municipality (Musina town)	5
Total	6	30

Source(s): Musina Municipality, 2008, 2019

Table 1.
Tourism ventures and allocations of interviews from designated questionnaires on tourism ventures personnel

Villages	Population	Calculation formula and percentages	Sample size
Folovhodwe	2,806	$57\% \times 370 = 210.9$ (Rounded to 211) = 211	211
Gumela	383	$8\% \times 370 = 29$	29
Tshipise	1,052	$21\% \times 370 = 77.7$ (Rounded to 78) = 78	78
Zwigodini	706	$14\% \times 370 = 51.8$ (Rounded to 52) = 52	52
Total	4,947	100%	370

Source(s): Musina Municipality, 2008, 2019

Table 2.
Selection of villages and calculation of sample size

envisaged by the researcher. Hence, also intermediating with the review of literature elsewhere. The mentioned could work along with the envisaged model of this study by the researcher. This improved the sustainability of community livelihoods from the benefits of sustainable tourism practices in their area. The next part presents the results and discussions of the study.

3. Results and discussions

3.1 The demographics of the respondents

Women edged with a 56.6% representation amongst the workers and employees within the interviewed ventures and entities. However, somehow supportive of the constitution of the country. It advocates for the empowerment of women and gender equity. The latter could also stand well with females who are favored more for cleaning works for the accommodation facilities. This can be seen by the recent trend and influx of females in security jobs all over the country. One would, therefore, hope for a 50–50% split representation in a futuristic development. This would cause an improvement of livelihoods in the study area through a much better-needed strategy of tourism development. Women can work as anything from policy creators to entertainers. They can also operate as tour guides, game rangers, drivers, guest-house operators and managers. They can be an integral part of sustainable tourism towards better environmental, social and economic efforts (Wickens and Briedenhann, 2004; Holden, 2010; Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). On the other hand, data in Table 3 [Responses on their age group in the study area] indicate that 33.3% was shared amongst the respondents of 20–35 and 45–65 age groups, followed by the middle-aged group of age 36–45 with 30% of respondents.

It is a good indication as the percentage is uniform between the young, active and middle-aged groups showing awareness and responses on activities around tourism, within their tourism ventures and entities. It also indicates that the tourism venture and entities have been balancing their employment profile by employing the latter age group. Thus, same is anticipated for the prospective strategy. Tourism can be a silver bullet in championing the livelihoods of local communities. ($n = 30$) (Key informant interviews within the six sampled tourism ventures and entities 8/9/10 April 2019, in the mornings and afternoons). *However,*

	Interview Q2 (a) under which age group do you belong?	Interview Q2 (a) under which age group do you belong?					Total
		11–19	20–35	36–45	46–65	65+	
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	0	3	0	2	0	5
	%	0.0	60.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	0	1	1	3	0	5
	%	0.0	20.0	20.0	60.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini “Madifha”)	Count	0	1	2	2	0	5
	%	0.0	20.0	40.0	40.0	0.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	0	2	1	2	0	5
	%	0.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	0.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	0	1	2	1	1	5
	%	0.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	20.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates)	Count	0	2	3	0	0	5
	%	0.0	40.0	60.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	Count	0	10	9	10	1	30
	%	0.0	33.3	30.0	33.3	3.3	100.0

Table 3. Respondents’ responses on their age group in the study area (interviews)

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

regarding the local community questionnaire survey, 46% were females and 54% males. The bulk of them was of the 20–46 age group, which made 50.8% against other age groups. Therefore, 35% of the respondents were between the 46 and 65+ age groups (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). Tourism can capacitate people of both genders and age groups via its diverse job opportunities in rural areas.

3.2 Sustainable tourism responses from tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality

3.2.1 Responses on whether their tourism ventures and entities adhere to sustainable tourism in the study area. Data in Table 4 indicate that 76.6% respondents within tourism ventures and entities adhered to sustainable tourism. The remaining (23.3%) did not attest to such an assertion, stating a lack of adherence to sustainable tourism applications and opinions. Sustainable tourism is the pillar of the thriving tourism industry. It ensures conservation, economic and social benefits to the adjacent communities.

Hence, for any prospective strategy that has to utilize tourism as a silver bullet for community livelihoods, it should stick to sustainable tourism and its ideals. Thus, it abides by environmental, economic, and social competencies. As such, a majority of 95.1% of respondents from local questionnaire surveys replied (No), counteracted by 4.5% who said (Yes) to the practice of sustainable tourism (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c).

3.2.2 Information on how their tourism ventures and entities adhere to sustainable tourism in the study area [Interview.Q4 (a) (1) explain to us how it fulfills such activity.]. Of the majority of 23 respondents who replied [yes] to their tourism ventures and entities adhering to sustainable tourism in the study area, all of them per associated entities indicated more related and identical responses. From both, the entities promote environmental conservation and sustainable tourism education to all their visitors through coupons and relevant educational materials. Thus, it can be well expected that it can spread to everyone in that

		Interview Q 4(a) does your tourism venture or entity adhere to sustainable tourism practice?		Total
		No	Yes	
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini “Madifha”)	Count	2	3	5
	%	40.0	60.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	3	2	5
	%	60.0	40.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	Count	7	23	30
	%	23.3	76.6	100.0

Table 4. Responses on whether their tourism ventures and entities adhere to sustainable tourism in the study area

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

manner. Similarly, 90% of respondents from focus group discussions indicated not adhering to sustainable tourism practice within the study area. Physical observation showed pictures of some of the neglected tourism activities.

3.3 Responsible tourism responses from tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality

3.3.1 Responses on whether their tourism venture and entity adheres to responsible tourism in the study area. Data in Table 5 indicate that 70% of interviewed respondents testify to the adherence to responsible tourism by their ventures and entities, as opposed to the remaining (30%) that testify against the adherence to responsible tourism actions and principles. Responsible tourism is a back bone to sustainable tourism initiatives; both concepts are interchangeable. Responsible tourism emanated from the belief that people were not doing enough to abide by the sustainable tourism concept since its invention. That being so, during the subsequent convention, responsible tourism got a necessary invention. Thus, encouraging responsible behavior from an individual perspective to achieve sustainable tourism goals. Therefore, the responsible tourism concept is essential for the actual and prospective tourism activities in the study area in Musina Municipality.

Meanwhile, a preponderance of 95.4% of respondents from local questionnaire surveys replied (No) whereas a more limited number of 4.5% said (Yes) to the specified within the area. Responsible tourism needs everyone to act sound when cooperating with the natural environment to warrant sustainable environmental resources (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). A genuine tourism action ensures a less negative impact on the natural environment and the society, and the economy of local communities. Therefore, it would enhance both environmental and socio-economic values in the communities. A tourism strategy along the ideals and principles of responsible tourism would eventually encourage and guarantee overall sustainability within their area.

		Interview Q 4(b) does your tourism venture or entity adhere to responsible tourism practice?		Total
		No	Yes	
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madiffha Zwigodini)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini "Madiffha")	Count	3	2	5
	%	60.0	40.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	4	1	5
	%	80.0	20.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Polovhodwe villages gates)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	Count	9	21	30
	%	30.0	70.0	100.0

Table 5. Responses on whether their tourism venture and entity adheres to responsible tourism in the study area

Source(s): Interview by the Author, 2019

3.3.2 *Information on how their tourism ventures and entities adhere to responsible tourism in the study area [Interview.Q4 (b) (1) explain to us how it fulfills such activity].* Of the majority, 21 respondents who responded [yes] to their tourism ventures and entities adhering to responsible tourism in the study area, all of them per their attributed ventures showed more comparable responses. From both the ventures and entities, they declared that they advance environmental conservation and responsible tourism education to all their visitors by education and signage materials within and around their bases and assume it to reach others within the communities, locally and abroad. *Similarly, 95% of respondents from focus group discussions stated that the study area and its community do not adhere to responsible tourism applications within the study area. (n = 20) (Focus group discussions within all the sampled villages [mornings and afternoons] 17/18/19/20 March 2019). Physical observation showed pictures of some polluted and land degraded patches of land within and around the protected areas. Pictures got taken by the researcher [Field survey between 1 March and June 2019].*

3.4 Empowerment responses from tourism ventures and entities in Musina municipality

3.4.1 *Responses on knowing if tourism ventures and entities within and around them empower local communities.* Data in Table 6 reveal that 76% of the interviewed respondents within tourism ventures and entities cited that they do not know if other tourism ventures and entities empower the adjacent local communities in their region. The other 23.3% indicated to possess some knowledge about the empowerment of such particular adjacent communities by other ventures and entities. All these could be attributed to the truth that if the specified activities and ventures were quite close and relevant in their nature and contributions, they then held a better possibility of apprehending something about each other. Hence, the reverse could be the predicament.

Furthermore, a majority of 93.5% of respondents from local questionnaire surveys returned (No) and met by only 6.4% who indicated (Yes) to receiving any empowerment from adjacent tourism ventures and entities. [Questionnaire survey within the four sampled villages] [Between

		Interview Q 4(c) (i) do you know if such mentioned entity empowers local communities?		
		No	Yes	Total
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini "Madifha")	Count	3	2	5
	%	60.0	40.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	4	1	5
	%	80.0	20.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Total	Count	23	7	30
	%	76.6	23.3	100.0

Table 6.
Responses on knowing if tourism ventures and entities within and around them empower local communities

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

the mornings of 1 March to afternoon 30 April and collected between the morning of 15 May to afternoon 15 June 2019]. It again tells us that tourism matters are not managed efficiently within the study area. Tourism advancements tend to do less in enabling the livelihoods of the communities. *Similarly, 95% of respondents from focus group discussions showed the same on not getting sufficient profits from tourism, physical observation and literature reviews assisted on the practical and exact affirmation of data, and pictures of some of the overlooked tourism activities were as indicated captured.* Hence, [Plate 3](#) exhibits a particular view of one of the oldest and renowned ventures (Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort). It needs not only rejuvenated infrastructure but also a strategy in marketing and promotion to keep its legacy.

3.4.2 Information on how do such other ventures empower communities [interview Q4 (c) (2) please explain to us how does it empower such communities]. Of the minority of seven respondents who answered (yes) to acknowledging if such other tourism ventures and entities within and around them empower local communities in the study area, all of them per linked entity indicated more equal answers. Respectively, from the Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini [Madifha]), all respondents responded that they recognize that people receive jobs from their associated ventures around them. On the other hand, respondents from the LED and Tourism info center (Musina municipal offices) all also attested that they hold people benefits from the tourism ventures around. Examples are activities such as exchanging their local artifacts with the tourists. Moreover, some of the locals get jobs within the entities. Therefore, in the same strain, the respondents from Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort (Gumela and Folvhodwe villages' gates) hinted at uniform acknowledgments akin to the LED and Tourism info center (Musina municipal offices) about employment and tourism associated entrepreneurship amplifications for the citizens. It was inspiring to remark on the positivity that developed from some of the employees within the tourism ventures. Musina Municipality and the study area have obvious tourism potentials. There lies a requirement to enable conjunctive profits bearing enterprises. Therefore the gains trickle down to the locals.

3.5 Responses from tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality on entity registration

3.5.1 Responses on the entity registration to relevant regulatory authorities within the study area. Data in [Table 7](#) tell that 100% of the interviewed respondents within tourism ventures and entities reported that their ventures and entities got registered to relevant regulatory



Plate 3.
Showing aging
Nwanedi Resort
Infrastructure and a
Relaxation Spot

Source(s): Author, 2019

		Interview Q5 (a) is your tourism venture or entity registered to relevant regulatory authorities?		
		No	Yes	Total
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini "Madifha")	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina municipal offices)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folvhodwe villages gates)	Count	0	5	5
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	Count	0	30	30
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0

Table 7. Responses on the entity registration to relevant regulatory authorities within the study area

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

authorities. It could be due to the case that for any activity, venture or entity to operate within or around the community, it should be understandable and be granted to either nationally, provincially, regionally and locally or traditionally accordingly. Regulatory and affiliating authorities are fundamental for the smooth running of any operations and businesses; hence, the tourism industry is no exception. A good tourism ambition should be controlled, graded and affiliated with the appropriate bodies. It enables the resourceful running of its business. Tourism can prosper for the mutual benefits of all stakeholders. The local communities in the study area and Musina Municipality were included. Hence there is a need for a proper strategy.

3.5.2 Information on which major regulatory authorities got registered to [interview. Q5 (a) (1) tell us which major regulatory authorities got registered to?]. As of the 30 respondents who replied [yes] to their tourism ventures and entities affiliated to certain authorities, all of them confirmed more uniform and parallel responses per their entities. Beria Madzonga Resort (Zwigodini village), Manalani Lodge (Tshipise village) and the Big Tree Holiday Accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini), all asserted and specified traditional and local authorities. Thus, as their principal affiliations entity, whereas Nwanedi Nature Reserve and Resort (Gumela and Folvhodwe villages gates) and LED and Tourism Info Center (Musina municipal offices), both indicated Limpopo tourism alliances as their authority body. Hence, (Plate 4) showing a polluted site on the fence of Musina Nature Reserve adjacent to the area. Such operations and neglecting behavior need to stop.

3.6 Turnaround strategy responses for the improvement of tourism ventures and entities in Musina Municipality

3.6.1 Responses on the turnaround strategy for the overall better management of their entity in the study area. The data in Table 8 reveal that 80% of the interviewed respondents within tourism ventures and entities stated that there were no layouts for any turnaround strategy to



Plate 4.
Showing polluted site
on the fence of Musina
Nature Reserve
adjacent to the area

Source(s): Author, 2019

		Interview Q6 (a) is there any turnaround strategy planned for the overall better management of your venture or entity?		
		No	Yes	Total
Beria Madzonga resort (Zwigodini village)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree holiday accommodation (Madifha Zwigodini)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Big tree nature reserve (Zwigodini “Madifha”)	Count	4	1	5
	%	80.0	20.0	100.0
LED and tourism info center (Musina Municipal offices)	Count	4	1	5
	%	80.0	20.0	100.0
Manalani lodge (Tshipise village)	Count	5	0	5
	%	100.0	0.0	100.0
Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Polovhodwe villages gates)	Count	1	4	5
	%	20.0	80.0	100.0
Total	Count	24	6	30
	%	80.0	20.0	100.0

Table 8.
Responses on the
turnaround strategy
for the overall better
management of their
entity in the study area

Source(s): Interview by the Author (2019)

better their progress. The other (20%) registered a few betterment plans in prospect. The abovementioned could be about the naming of the improvement in the fencing and extension of swimming pools, renovations, selling and extending of various tourism services of the ventures and entities. It is sufficient to note that there was some touch of developing tourism enterprises within establishments in the municipality and the study area. The prospect of using the tourism industry as a strategy to promote livelihoods should aim at advancing the scenario, so far represented by only 20% of the respondents.

3.6.2 *Information on the turnaround strategy for the overall better management of their entity in the study area [Interview.Q6 (a) (1), please explain to us what is it].* Of the minority of six respondents who replied [yes] to their tourism ventures and entities having the turnaround strategy for the overall better administration of their entity in the study area, all of them per associated ventures spelled out more resonating answers. Thus, within the Big Tree Nature Reserve (Zwigodini [Madifha]), overall respondents communicated that they heard of the plan to install another internal fence to shield the tree. The building of a conference center and swimming pool within the Reserve was also included. To that end, from the LED and Tourism info center (Musina municipal offices), all respondents uttered that they have better plans to effectively engage the community within tourism activities by conducting regular functions, joined with sustainable and responsible tourism education. Henceforward, in the Nwanedi nature reserve and resort (Gumela and Folovhodwe villages gates), all respondents designated that the management is planning to repair the road system. Besides, add an extra public swimming pool. The latter is not acceptable and is not up to the expectations of the tourists. It was pleasing to note that the management has some thoughtful and futuristic plans. Thus, hoping for the betterment of their ventures. Therefore, to even render to the benefits of tourists including the locals. With that, [Table 9](#) shows Tourism implications SWOT ANALYSIS for the study area in Musina Municipality consonant with the research examines. *95% of respondents from focus group discussions indicated no knowledge of any turnaround strategy on such quest*

Tourism implication Swot analysis for Musina municipality			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
The diverse natural biodiversity. Along with indigenous, cultural, agritourism, and ecotourism resources, abound in the area. Hence, the existence of Game farms, orchards, and agricultural initiatives (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d)	Remoteness, inadequate transport, and inefficient water services. Insufficient health services, improper biodiversity management, insufficient tourism development and management (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d)	Adjacent to the Mapungubwe international heritage site [National Park]. A variety of indigenous species such as Baobabs, Mopane, and Marulas. South Africa-Zimbabwe Beitbridge border tourism adventure. There exist terraces for hot spring, heritage, and geo-tourisms in the two Tshipise's (and Mapungubwe), abutting Dambale and Domboni settlements and sites. Hence, the Transfrontier Park Project, Pafuri Gate of Kruger National Park, and ecotourism platforms (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d)	Possible land claims ownership disputes and resource conflicts. Potential lack of enough educated tourists' guides. Potential disturbances of conservancies by poachers (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c, d)

Source(s): Author (2019)

Table 9.
Tourism implications
SWOT analysis for
Musina municipality

3.7 Broadview on a turnaround strategy to enhance community livelihoods in the study area

According to Ramaano (2021a, b, c), there is no active strategy directed at improving livelihoods. The study unanimously recorded the non-existence of such plans from all the data-collection methods. This can be noted from interviews and field observation. For example, findings revealed 93.3% respondents within tourism ventures and entities maintained no knowledge or plan about any turnaround strategy directed on the earlier mentioned. The remaining (6.6%) professed some positivity in expressions of such preparations. A turnaround plan is vital to rectify what is going wrong and improve what immediately seems right. The tourism stakeholders in the study area should be aware of this premise. The better running of current tourism affairs and potential decent tourism strategy to advance community livelihoods are crucial.

4. Conclusions

This study presented the findings of the respondents from various adjacent tourism ventures and entities. The sampled ventures such as Beria Madzonga Resort (Zwigodini village) and Big Tree Holiday Accommodation (Madifha village in Zwigodini) got interviewed. The interviews were conducted by up to five interviewees per venture and entity. Hence, up to five adjacent local communities within the sampled villages participated in focus group discussions. A questionnaire survey with local communities on relevant issues got also distributed. The primary data from the interviews were significant in juxtaposing and justifying the findings from other methods. It was evident from the data that the ventures and entities around the Big tree nature reserve, including the Big tree entity itself, are not doing enough to capacitate the local communities around them. Thus, the data suggest no information on turnaround strategies from the managers of the ventures and entities. Therefore accruing lacks in local people benefits (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). Hence, from the focus group discussions conducted with rather the local communities themselves, there appeared to be poor knowledge on tourism development policy, sustainable and responsible tourism applications (Ramaano, 2021a, b, c). The aforesaid got supported by the abuse on the Big tree baobab tree, which seemed to succumb to the scratching of its trunk base by locals and tourists. Likewise, there was no evidence of any turnaround strategy by the locals and local leaders to improve tourism management within their setting. Thus, much as there was no any from the tourism ventures and entities. As mentioned, to improve on the flowing of tourism benefits to adjacent local communities. There is a need to formulate a tourism strategy in the study area. Henceforth, in line with the ideated and potential framework and also sustainable tourism principles. On similar dimensions, related investigations revealed that the study area is rich with significant indigenous species. According to Ramaano (2021a, b, c), it could form synergies with various forms of tourism. As mentioned above, it would help to boost the economic status of the locals.

Ramaano (2021a, b, c) further revealed a combination of local communities, Government, and Non-Governmental Organisations dealing with rural and sustainable tourism as the most preferred by both industry entities and residents respondents. The limitation of this research remains in the original use of only Microsoft Excel and cross-tabulation analysis without any sophisticated software. Despite this, the authenticity of the outcomes never displayed compromise. The theoretical implications are in line with the study by Zamfir *et al.* (2017), emphasizing the role of sustainable tourism development towards sustainability. Hence Pan *et al.* (2018) commented on sustainable tourism, sustainability and a green economy. Its

practical implications provided a dependable basis for the envisaged resource model and tourism strategy by venture owners and local communities. To that point, further research may incorporate tools like Gis (Geographic information systems), and remote sensing. Thus probing rigorously the same; and also use other sophisticated software to analyze data. Figure 2 displays the envisaged sustainable tourism framework of this study, whereas Figure 3 shows significant pillars of sustainable tourism from White *et al.* (2006), Zamfir *et al.* (2017) and Ramaano (2021a, b, c). Thus, Figure 2 describes the proposed theme of sustainable tourism and sustainable community livelihoods in the study area. It supports adherence to sustainable tourism aims in the study area, as embellished by Figure 3. Figure 3 thus expresses that sustainable tourism builds principles for augmentations in socio-cultural, economic and environmental dimensions for people living around conservation areas. As such, Figure 3 pronounces that policies and extension services besides seminars and lessons can increase tourism potentialities and community improvement in rural areas. A tourism strategy should present essential socio-economic, technical and environmental objectives in the study area. Tourism marketing, further direction businesses, gestalt within sustainable tourism imperative partnership, and prioritization of Gis (Geographic information systems), Pgis (Participatory geographic information systems) and remote sensing could be beneficial. Sequentially, establishing and monitoring tourism ambitions could be steady. Put clearer, social, economic, and environmental impact dynamics are indispensable in this regard. Thus, the host residents' regard for a sustainable tourism strategy is including the quality of their information, events, and prospects on sustainable tourism. On the practical view, the strategy's contribution could advance local economic development, demoting poverty and restrict environmental degeneration. Conclusively, there could survive tourism-based sustainable communities' gains and sustainability within the area.

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