

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ECOTOURISM PROJECTS IN GHANA:
AN EVALUATION OF WECHIAU HIPPO SANCTUARY PROJECT, UPPER
WEST REGION.

ERNEST AMOAKO-ATTA



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WEST REGION.

BY

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I hereby declare that this is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere. Due recognition has been given to other works used in this thesis.

Signature..... Date

Name of Student: ERNEST AMOAKO-ATTA

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

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ABSTRACT

Community Based Ecotourism Projects (CBEP's) are concerned with acknowledging economic, social and environmental impacts, catering for the current needs of society without damaging the well-being of future generations. Many researchers in developed and developing nations are of the view that community participation in ecotourism development is a major tool for achieving "sustainability" in ecotourism, of which Ghana is no exception. It is difficult to confidently say that local communities actually benefit from proceeds of CBEP's. Thus, this thesis set out to evaluate the extent to which beneficiary communities participate in the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP) within the context of the Tourism Development Chain Model. The study adopted a cross sectional design with a mixed research approach. Data was collected from 206 respondents in Wechiau, Tokali, Talawona and Tuole. Data was collected through Semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observation. It was revealed that residents in the sanctuary community's yielded numerous economic, social and environmental benefits from the WCHSP based on the roles they individually played. There was, however, an issue of inequitable distribution of project benefits due to the lack of a substantive benefit sharing scheme. It was concluded that the project has the potential of producing ecotourism benefits but if not properly managed, could lead to unequal distribution of project benefits and hence perpetuate poverty. This led to recommending for the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB) to develop a "Benefit Sharing Framework" which will promote equity and project sustainability.



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DEDICATION

To my parents; Mr. & Mrs. Isaac & Iris Amoako-Atta, siblings; Tabitha and
Benedicta and Madam Theodora Nelson of loving memory



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AT	-	Alternative Tourism
ATR	-	African Traditional Religion
CBEP	-	Community-Based Ecotourism Project
CREMA	-	Community Resource Management Areas
CBT	-	Community-Based Tourism
EOS	-	External Organizational Support
EPA	-	Environmental Protection Agency
GDP	-	Gross Development Product
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
IDF	-	International Development Fund
IFAD	-	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IUCN	-	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LDC	-	Less Developed Countries
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
MNE	-	Multinational Enterprises
NBT	-	Nature-Based Tourism



NCRC	-	Nature Conservation Research Centre
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	-	Outcomes and Distributional Analysis
SET	-	Social Exchange Theory
SME	-	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMB	-	Sanctuary Management Board
SMC	-	Sanctuary Management Committee
SNV	-	Netherlands Development Organization (Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers)
TDC	-	Tourism Development Chain
TNC	-	Transnational Cooperation
UNCTAD	-	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCAP	-	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNWTO	-	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USA	-	United States of America
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development



WCHSP	-	Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project
WTO	-	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	-	World Travel and Tourism Council



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Over the past decade, the growth of community-based ecotourism has been the strongest in the global market propelling positive economic impacts on people (United Nations World Tourism Organization-[UNWTO], 2001). Worldwide, ecotourism is viewed as one of the largest and the fastest growing industries (UNCTAD, 2007) promoting effective income and employment generation, particularly in peripheral rural areas when local residents are active land managers, employees, decision-makers, conservators and entrepreneurs (Colvin, 1996; Sharpley, 2002). It is an alternative form of tourism that is consistently gaining grounds in a global scale (UNWTO, 2001) making use of the most innovative opportunities for income generation from natural resources without destroying the environment (Colvin, 1996). Though evidence points to the fact that a developed ecotourism site could exacerbate locals situation ranging from forcing local people to leave their homes, gross violations of fundamental rights of local people, and environmental hazards—far outweigh the medium-term economic benefits, ecotourism could foster greater benefits (Miller, 2007).

Though it is known globally that participatory development approach adopted in ecotourism projects enables the implementation of principles of ‘sustainable tourism development which creates better opportunities for local people to gain a larger and a more balanced benefits from tourism development taking place in their localities, community participation seems to have focused on the political



dimension worldwide ignoring the economic and financial considerations which are often the primary drivers at the local level (Tosun, 2000; Wuleka, 2012; Tosun 1999).

The global impact of ecotourism can only be realized when the rights, roles and responsibilities of the communities are considered critical by officials driving the process. Asia, the Greater Mekrong Sub-region comprising Cambodia, The Peoples' Republic of China, Laos Peoples Democratic Republic, Tanzania, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam among others, have adopted community-based ecotourism as a viable tool for poverty alleviation and the major source of securing the biodiversity in the sub-regions (Leksakundilok 2004; World Tourism Organization-[WTO], 2005).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, ecotourism plays a dual role both in conservation and rural development. Ecotourism activities using natural resource attractions in remote rural areas are important sources of economic diversification and livelihood opportunity (Ashley et al., 2001; UNWTO, 2002), as it stimulates social wellbeing of people and at the same time preserve the natural environment and cultural heritage through awareness creation (Wuleka, 2012). If every individual in the local community is given the chance to participate in tourism development at an early stage, there will be a sufficient consensus on opinion to permit broad based planning objectives (Murphy, 1980).

For instance, in Kenya a number of Community-Based Ecotourism sites were awarded the Equator Initiative Award at the World Summit on Sustainable



Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 due to the economic impacts evicted on their local residents (Manu & Wuleka, 2012). Yet, a bulk investment on ecotourism in some developing countries is concentrated in famous parks to the neglect of others (Nelson, 2004). For instance, in the context of Indonesia, the education of local residents and the involvement of locals in the economic benefits of ecotourism are happening in theory rather than in practice (Timothy, 1999).

In accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, the WTO (2005) has placed ecotourism at the forefront of poverty reduction in African countries, as it generates potential economic and social benefits and the same time protecting the natural resource base of ecotourism project sited communities in Africa (Mulindwa, 2007; Wuleka, 2012). However, many community-based ecotourism sites have received appreciable funding support from donor agencies such as the USAID and Netherland Development Organization (SNV) due to the socioeconomic development they have brought to local people at their sites (Wuleka, 2012).

In Ghana, tourism has received considerable attention in her economic development strategy since the late 1980s. It is based on this, that the Government of Ghana established the Ministry of Tourism in 1993 to underscore its commitment to development. It is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Sub-Saharan Africa, with USA being Ghana's second highest tourist market outside Africa, with over 19 Ecotourists attraction sites in the country (MOT, 2010). The tourism sector places fourth behind gold, cocoa and foreign remittances and earned revenue that is equivalent to 6.2% of Gross Domestic Product (MOT, 2010) of which



community-based ecotourism plays a crucial part (World Travel and Tourism Council-[WTTC], 2004).

Ghana moved up from 17th position in 1985 to 8th in 1998 among the top 20 leading tourism revenue- earners in Africa due to the increase in the number of international tourists in the country (WTO 1999). International tourist arrivals in Ghana increased steadily from nearly 746,500 in 2010 to about 993,600 in 2013, with an annual average growth rate of about 20% (Ministry of Tourism, 2013). Also in 2010 and 2013, the industry in Ghana employed 231,000 and 319,000 people respectively (Ministry of Tourism, 2013).

Many rural communities in Ghana are blessed with various attractive ecotourism sites such as the Sirigu Pottery Site, the Kintampo Waterfalls and the most typical example of all, the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) in the Wa West District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The community has attractive experiences to offer, due to the huge diversity of wildlife. The Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary is a community-based conservation initiative aimed at providing the Wechiau catchment area inhabitants with a source of revenue and improved quality of life while simultaneously offering protection to the flora and fauna found within the designated lands. However, it is marketed as an ecotourism destination made up of the hippopotamus population residing along the Black Volta.



1.2 Problem Statement

Although there exist a growing body of literature regarding ecotourism as a viable economic option for local community development, in the midst of the growing popularity of CBEPs, their successes in practice seem to be rare. The declaration of the year 2002 as International Year of Ecotourism by World Tourism Organization (WTO) reflects the importance of ecotourism in the global industry. It provides better linkages, reduces leakages of benefits out of a country, creates local employments, creates the multiplier effect and fosters sustainable development (Khan, 1997; Belsky, 1999; cited in Wuleka, 2012).

Studies indicated the importance of incorporating the perceptions, values and interest of the local people in the very region where the ecotourism resources are located (Vincent & Thomson, 2002), adding that when people do not receive sufficient benefits as a result of non- participation, they are prone to develop negative attitude towards ecotourism development (Ross & Wall, 1999). Besides, local people whose survival depends heavily upon the exploitation of the natural resources might perceive ecotourism as a threat that deprives them of their livelihood by competing with others over the land and resources (Ross & Wall, 1999).

While the literature recognizes the inclusion of the local community in tourism development, there have since been some debates about the roles, rights and responsibilities of communities with ecotourism sites. More so, there is no empirical findings or information on community participation in ecotourism



projects in the Northern Region of Ghana which is characterized by different cultural dynamics and power play. Therefore the study seeks to bridge this lacuna by unearthing information particularly in ecotourism projects using the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project as a case.

1.3 Research Questions

The main research question is to what extent communities participate in the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP)?

The specific research questions are as follows:

1. What is the nature of local people's participation in the ecotourism project?
2. What are residents' motivation for participating in the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP)?
3. What are the roles of stakeholders in the management of the (WCHSP)?
4. How are the benefits distributed among sanctuary communities?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research mainly seeks to evaluate the extent to which community participate in the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP).

The specific research objectives are as follows:

1. To assess the nature of local people's participation in the ecotourism project;
2. To assess residents' motivation for participating in the WCHSP;
3. To examine the role of stakeholders in the management of the WCHSP; and



4. To examine the distribution of benefits and costs among sanctuary communities.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Academically, this study adds to existing knowledge on the extent to which communities participate in ecotourism management and benefit sharing in the Upper West Region, Ghana and the world at large. This would serve as a reference point to both researchers and readers. The findings of this study would be very relevant in contemporary terms due to the pressing issues surrounding the tourism industry in Ghana. It will serve as a reference point for key players (planners, policy makers and other stakeholders) in the industry whose major concerns are to support the constant development of Community Based Ecotourism Projects (CBEP) in Ghana through the design of ecotourism management policies that affect ecotourism sites in the country.

Also, Non-Governmental Organizations and individual investors would find this document very relevant since it exposes the economic, social and environmental impacts which would guide them in channeling their resources towards project priority areas. Lastly, the findings of this study would help the Sanctuary Management Board and community members to effectively unite in the development of the site by adopting a more diversified management style and enhanced willingness to be involved respectively, thus influencing effective community participation in ecotourism development.



1.6 Scope of the Study

Contextually, the study was embedded on ecotourism projects in Ghana. It seeks to gather information regarding the participation of communities' in ecotourism sites with specific reference to the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project in the Wa West district of Upper West Region of Ghana. The Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) is one of the unique Community-Based Ecotourism Projects (CBEP), which protects and preserves the wildlife and the environment of a 40km stretch of the Black Volta River in Ghana's Upper West Region. The river is home to one of the two remaining hippopotamus populations in Ghana, and was created into a Sanctuary by local chiefs in 1999. Since then, the project has marked success in providing Ghanaian and International tourists with a unique and unusual eco-travel experience. The area has much to offer, both due to the huge diversity of wildlife and the opportunities to become immersed in the local culture and activities.

Geographically, this study is limited to 4 communities out of the 17 member communities that form the WCHS. They include Wechiau, Talawona, Tokali and Tuole.

1.7 Organization of the Work

The study is divided into 5 main chapters. The first chapter is the introductory section to the study, indicating background information to the study, the problem statement, research questions, objectives, justification of the study, and the scope of the study.



The second chapter reviews relevant literature on the subject of community-based ecotourism and related issues. Also, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding this work are also discussed under this chapter.

Chapter three provides detailed information on the methodology adopted for this study. This includes information on the study design, profile of the study area, data sources, sampling procedures, data analysis, and presentations.

A detailed discussion of the results of the data analysis was presented in the fourth chapter. It looks at the nature of community participation, motivations for community participation, cost and benefit distribution and impacts of the Wechiau community Hippo sanctuary.

The fifth and final chapter summarizes the major findings arising from the study, concludes and makes relevant recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter touches on a number of issues related to Community Participation and its impacts on the tourism industry by examining some key points emerging from various studies, reports and other sources of information. It starts with the conceptualization of community and tourism and further looked at community participation and its adoption in tourism development initiatives. It examines various levels of community participation available. The chapter also identifies factors that influence local communities and attract their participation in the tourism industry. It continues with a discussion that provides a linkage between community participation in tourism development, and how the latter is linked to poverty alleviation. The chapter concludes by highlighting key issues raised by the literature that form the basis of this research.

2.2 The Concept of Community

Some literature view 'community' as a small spatial unit, homogenous social structure with shared norms and common interest (Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Olsder & Van der Donk, 2006). However, Hillery (1955) made a major conclusion through his review on some definitions of community that there was no agreement made in relation to the concept, with the exception that all the definitions were related to people. In addition to his review, He adds that there are three main components related to the term community: (i) area, (ii) commonalities and, (iii) social



interaction. Further, Butchers et al. (1993) contended that the term community has a strong relationship with physical and social elements such as location and ethnicity. Jamal and Getz (1995) defined community as a body of people living in the same locality. Aref et al. (2010) referred to a community as a group of individuals living or working within the same geographic area with some shared cultures or common interests. This geographical definition of community is very important in understanding how community development is linked or the ability of a community to improve tourism development (Olsder & Van der Donk, 2006).

A key term used in tourism development is a “sense of community”. “Sense of community” is the feeling of obligation and commitment of an individual towards other members in the community developed over time through understanding of collective values, beliefs and interests among community members. Sense of community also is a feeling of belonging to the community (Bowen et al., 2003).

Notwithstanding the numerous definitions encapsulated above (Aref et al. 2010; Agrawal & Gibson 1999; Olsder & Van der Donk, 2006), Agrawal & Gibson’s (1999) view of a Community is suitable in the context of this study. Agrawal & Gibson (1999) defined community as a set of multiple actors with formal and informal rules and norms that shape their interaction in local level processes - a definition which comprise also of institutions which have much influence on community development activities (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). This definition of a community is most suitable because most local development initiatives are governed by norms and bye-laws.



2.3 The Concept of Tourism

The concept tourism is widely viewed differently by different actors. However, these view's center on travelling or human movement. This human movement is psychologically driven. For instance, while the WTO, (1999) defined tourism as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (WTO, 1999). Foster (1985) sees tourism as an activity involving a complex mixture of material and psychological elements. The material may include accommodation, transportation, attractions and entertainment available at the destination. Psychological factors include a wide range of attitudes and expectations ranging from pure escapism to fulfillment of a dream or fantasy, rest, recreation, educational or other social interest (Foster, 1985).

That apart, tourism is further defined as an art and business of attracting visitors, transporting them, accommodating them and graciously catering for their needs and wants (Goeldner, 2000). Tourism can also be viewed as the temporal movement to a destination outside the normal home and workplace, the activities undertaken during the stay and the facilities created to cater for the needs of the tourists (Matthieson & Wall, 1982:1).

The accommodation includes hotels, lodges, guest houses and other related services and facilities where tourists lodge overnight. Attraction on the other hand, form the supply side of tourism, they provide the 'pull factor' which if matched well to the 'push factor' will bring people to an area (Gartner, 1996). Attraction 'power' the tourism industry. People's taste for attractions vary, so they travel to more varied



and exciting places. Without attraction there will be no tourism (Gunn, 1972). Tourism is a growing market and is showing tremendous growth in this current scenario by spreading its effects all over the world.

Tourism makes an enormous contribution to local economies, job creation and sustainable development, and can play a lead role in the transformation to the Green Economy, although it has not enjoyed the recognition it deserves at the tables of policymakers and world leaders (WTTC, 2008). Tourism is generating positive and productive results in the development of heritage, destinations, culture and economies and on the other side it is also creating challenges in the existence of destinations and other tourism products like culture, ecology and the like. Because of these emerging challenges, a need to develop a safer approach towards tourism was raised, which leads to the emergence of 'Sustainable tourism'.

On the other hand, tourism is also invisible to many planners, so tourism development is often left to private developers and leisure service providers (Harrill & Potts, 2003). Tourism also is the sum of the phenomena and links arising from the interaction of tourists, governments, and local communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors. Tourism research has also recently come to be a favorite research subject in community development researches (Galston & Baehler, 1995).

Undoubtedly, Tourism is important at the local, national, and international levels. Thus, it should not form the core element of a community's economy, rather should



be suitable to play a supplementary role in helping diversify community economic activities (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000).

2.4 Ecotourism as an Alternative Form of Tourism

Ecotourism has been viewed differently by several schools of thought (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987; Wallace & Pierce, 1996; Godwin, 1996; Honey, 2008). Some used the term to describe the complex relationship between travelers, the environments and the cultures with which they converge. However, Fennell (2003) contended that ecotourism is an Alternative Tourism (AT) which evolved due to the change in the public's perception of the tourism-environment relationship rigorously brought forth by 'sustainable development'.

Sustainable development appeared to coordinate a prototype shift that exposed this relationship for one mutual benefit. As a corollary, Ecotourism/Alternative Tourism (AT) materialized as a viable option to conventional mass tourism. Instead of emphasizing on the economic and technical tourism issues, Ecotourism/Alternative Tourism focuses on natural and cultural resources while keeping the well-being of local people at the forefront (Fennell, 2003). Alternative Tourism (AT) as an umbrella term encompasses different niche markets including, 'responsible', 'appropriate', 'soft', 'pro poor', and 'eco' tourism strategies. Initially, ecotourism, as a subset of AT, was merely a term to describe the phenomenon of nature-based tourism in the 1980s (Wallace & Pierce, 1996) and was often vaguely defined as adventure tourism within a natural setting (Honey, 2008).



2.5 Conceptualizing Ecotourism

Ceballos-Lascurain (1987) provided one of the first formal definitions of ecotourism, which was later adopted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as their official definition in 1996, as:

Traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas (as cited in Fennell, 2001: p.18).

Laarman & Durst (1987), who were colleagues of Ceballos-Lascurain, brought up a similar definition of ecotourism as a subset of nature-based tourism (NBT) where the “traveler is drawn to a destination because of his or her interest in one or more features of that destination’s natural history. In that visit, he/she combines education, recreation, and often adventure”.

Others also argue that the concept of ecotourism materialized under the guise of Miller’s (1994) notion of eco-development via tourism and the potential for national parks in Latin America to contribute both sustainable development and biological conservation (Honey, 2008). Miller (1994) argue that biological conservation efforts must consider ecological, social, economic, and political factors equally “in ways that are equitable and sustainable, as well as providing materially to human welfare” (p.464). Goodwin (1996) echoes Miller’s inclusion of sustainability as a whole with his definition of ecotourism as a;



“low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value, and therefore protect, their wildlife heritage area as a source of income” (p. 288).

The complex and often debated context under which ecotourism was conceived has continued to plague the concept through time. It is rare to find a definition that does not include at least one trademark of ecotourism vernacular. For example, the most commonly used definition of ecotourism today is from The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) who define ecotourism as, “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people” (TIES, 2010). To some extent ecotourism is seen as a cooperative relationship involving tourists, host communities and the various stakeholders interested in ecotouristic activities. The ecotourism experience is more enriching where tourists are more sincere, open minded, and approach their visits as learning and enjoyable experiences. Genuine and active community participation and control from the inception phase through implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an ecotourism project is a must if the concept is to be successfully put into practice

2.6 Principles of Ecotourism

The discourse of ecotourism does not end only with the debates by scholars seeking to define the concept but extends to the guiding principles for ecotourism and its fundamental target. In this light, there are different authors who have proposed



different principles for ecotourism development (Pedersen, 1991; Buckley, 1994, Wallace & Piece, 1996). For the purpose of the study, it would be necessary to review the principles of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 1990). They proposed that ecotourism development should:

- ❖ Minimize the negative impacts on nature and culture that can damage a destination;
- ❖ Educate the traveller/tourist on the importance of conservation;
- ❖ Stress the importance of responsible business, which works cooperatively with local authorities and people to meet local needs and deliver conservation benefits;
- ❖ Direct revenues to the conservation and management of natural and protected areas;
- ❖ Emphasize the need for regional tourism zoning and for visitor management plans designed for either regions or natural areas that are slated to become ecotourism destinations;
- ❖ Emphasize use of environmental and social baseline studies, as well as long term monitoring programmes, to assess and minimize impacts;
- ❖ Strive to maximize economic benefit for the host country, local business and communities, particularly people living in and adjacent to natural and protected areas;
- ❖ Seek to ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental limits of acceptable change as determined by researchers in cooperation with local residents; and



- ❖ Rely on infrastructure that has been developed in harmony with the environment, minimizing use of fossil fuels, conserving local plants and wildlife, and blending with the natural and cultural environment.

On the other hand, the fundamental goal of ecotourism is to influence tourists to actively contribute to the health and viability of the natural environment they visit, rather than mitigating their adverse environmental impact (Orams, 1995). Furthermore, Scheyvens (1999) claims that the main goal of ecotourism should be the empowerment of host communities. Therefore, regardless of what the major goal of ecotourism development should be, it must be skewed towards the enhancement of the situation at the destination and not deteriorate it. Since the focus of this study is on the host community, the study adopts Goodwin (1996)'s definition of ecotourism which stresses ecotourism's conservation abilities as well as its contribution to improving the socio-economic lives of local communities engaged in its development. It also adopts Scheyvens (1999)'s perspective of ecotourism's goal which is geared towards the empowerment of host communities.

2.7 Community Participation in Tourism Development

Community participation has become a common element in many development initiatives, such as community-based programmes, which assume participatory methods and has been promoted by development organizations, notably the World Bank, to address the inefficiency of highly centralized development approaches particularly in the developing world (Baral & Heinen, 2007).



This approach has long been promoted as an integral part of sustainable tourism development. It is envisaged that the approach can increase a community's carrying capacity by reducing tourism's negative impacts while enhancing its positive effects (Haywood, 1988; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Murphy, 1985). According to Connell (1997), participation is not only about achieving the more efficient and more equitable distribution of material resources; it is also about the sharing of knowledge and the transformation of the process of learning itself in the service of people's self-development. Arnstein (1969) states that the purpose of participation is power redistribution, thereby enabling society to fairly redistribute benefits and costs. In the context of tourism planning, Haywood (1988) defines community participation as a process of involving all stakeholders (local government officials, local citizens, architects, developers, business people and planners) in such a way that decision-making is shared. Many researchers, however, have doubted the possibility of implementing community participation. Taylor (1995) criticizes 'communitarianism' as romanticism that is not rooted in reality. In addition, a participatory approach is time-consuming.

Today, many development initiatives solicit the participation of all concerned stakeholders, at the relevant level, not only for the sake of efficiency and equity of the programmes, leverage of donors and demands of local communities, but also for sustainability of these initiatives (Ribot, 2004). Consequently, the real outcome for soliciting such community participation is to create and produce an enabling environment needed by these stakeholders, especially local communities who have been vulnerable to the negative impacts of tourism attributed partly to the fact that



many tourism resources occur in their areas, thus the need for their involvement in development activities (Havel, 1996; Songorwa, 1999). This requires involving local communities in decision-making and strengthening their ability to act for themselves. One approach to achieve this is “through investments in human capital, such as education and health, investments in social capital such as local-level institutions and participatory processes, and support for community based development efforts planned and implemented from bottom up” (Havel, 1996, p.145). However, given the fact that the central point underlying people’s participation may be the degree of power distribution, these efforts are less likely to succeed unless responsive institutions and the legal and policy framework that facilitate and support local participation are in place (Havel, 1996; Tosun, 2004; Wang & Wall, 2005).

Numerous studies have examined the involvement of community participation in the tourism development process (Tosun, 2000; Tosun, 2006; Li, 2005; Li, 2004; Timothy, 1999). The process of tourism development as pointed out in the works of Doxey (1975); Butler (1980) and Tosun (2000), appears to suggest that there is a high degree of dependence on residents for their acceptance of the industry before it starts in a particular destination. This is to say, initial adequate involvement of local communities is fundamental to enable the initial stage of tourism development (Simmons, 1994; Tosun, 2000), which Butler (1980) called the exploration stage. Implicitly, the above argument about the relationship between tourism development and community participation indicates that community participation is, indeed,



crucial in order to avoid more likely uncertainties and misunderstandings about tourism development in the area (Simmons, 1994).

While community participation in the tourism development process is highly desirable as an element of development, it is important to note that active participation of the local community in tourism, especially at the exploration stage is crucial because at this initial stage of tourism development there is normally little or no tourism infrastructure in the area and, therefore, local people, after accepting the idea of introduction of tourism in their area, usually start, own and operate small scale guesthouses, economy class hotels or souvenir shops and supply the workforce for the industry, especially in many developing countries (Tosun, 2000). More importantly, providing local communities with the opportunities to own and operate tourism facilities is thought to increase their tolerance to tourist activities in the area (D'Amore, 1983) and eventually creates a sense of ownership, feeling of responsibility and practical involvement in tourism.

The literature seems to acknowledge the fact that local community participation is vital in the tourism development process. However, Tosun (2000) while exploring limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries, further observed that “opportunities for local communities to participate may vary over time with the type and scale of tourism developed, thresholds of entry, and the market served” (p.627). His study viewed the relationship between local community participation and tourism development process in the context of Butler’s tourist area cycle of evolution model. According to him, such variations are due to the reality that as the destination becomes more popular and attractive



after considerable development (or as a result of growing commercialized tourism), more investors, especially large capital owners, are attracted to the destination, making competition keener than before. In this regard, local communities are likely to lose control over tourism development since they often have limited financial resources (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007) and therefore it gradually becomes more difficult for them to open large scale businesses (Tosun, 2000). To avoid this situation, Tosun (2000) suggests that there is a deliberate need to empower local communities at the initial stages of tourism development to enable them to keep control over tourism development in their area. One way to achieve this is through removing barriers that hinder local communities' effective participation in markets (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). For the purpose of this study, community participation is the active involvement of people from the initiation of development projects to its implementation and having a fair share of its outcome.

2.8 Nature of Community Participation in Ecotourism Development

This section looks at the theorization of some schools (Pretty, 1995; Arnstein, 1969; Tosun, 1999) in relation to the types of community participation and the nature of local people's participation. The type shown on (Table 1) has seven levels of participation which ranges from passive participation to self-mobilization. Each level shows the changing power relationship which could exist between the local community and external organizations.



Table 1: Pretty's Typology of Community Participation in Tourism Development

Typology	Comments
1. Passive Participation	People participation is limited to be told what is going to happen. Their responses are not taken into account while information is only to belong to external professionals.
2. Participation in information giving	People participation is limited to provision of information in response to questionnaires, surveys among others designed by external agents. Findings of the research are not shared with the people.
3. Participation by consulting	Here, participation involves consultation with the people by project management team. The management team may take into account people's





	views during this process, but are not obliged to do so.
4. Participation for material incentives	People participate by contributing resources (e.g. labour) in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Farmers may provide fields and labour but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning. This is often called participation, but people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
5. Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to meet specific objectives related to the project. Their involvement may be interactive but tends to arise later in the project cycle after major decisions have been made. Groups formed tend to depend on external facilitators, but may become self-dependent.



<p>6. Interactive Participation</p>	<p>People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and creation or strengthening of local associations, groups or institutions. Participation is seen as a right and not only as a means of achieving projects goals. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. Local groups take control of local decision making and determine how resources are to be used giving them a stake in maintaining structures or practices.</p>
<p>7. Self-mobilization</p>	<p>People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions or change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for advice and resources, but retain control of the use of resources. Self-mobilization and collective action may</p>

	or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.
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Source: Pretty, (1995)

Other types of community participation have been summarized in (Table 2) below. It projects Arnstein’s (1969) and Tosun’s (1999) idea as to their varying models of participation typologies.

Table 2: Arnstein’s and Tosun’s Typologies of Community Participation

Arnstein’s Typology		Relation	Tosun’s Typology
Degree of citizen power	1 Citizen control 2 Delegated power 3 Partnership	➔	<u>Spontaneous Participation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottom-up; • Active & Direct Participation • Participation in Decision Making • Authentic Participation • Self-Planning
Degree of Citizens Tokenism	4 Placation 5 Consultation 6 Informing	➔	<u>Induced Participation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down; Passive; Formal • Indirect; Degree of Tokenism • Manipulation; Pseudo-participation • Participation in Implementation and sharing benefits; choice between proposed alternatives and feedback.



Non- Participati on	7 Therapy 8 Manipulat ion	➔	<u>Coercive Participation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down; Passive; Indirect; Formal • Participation in Implementation but not necessarily sharing benefits • Choice between proposed alternatives or no choice; Paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation
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Source: Arnstein, (1969); Tosun, (1999).

Although the types of participation differ between authors (Pretty, 1995; Arnstein, 1969), the main aspects which differentiate the stages within the typologies are the same. They share common ideas regarding the extent or the degree to which community members have the chance or are given the chance to decide for themselves. (Table 1) shows the main typology of participation which had been done by Pretty (1995). He proposed a type of participation that reflects the unequal power distribution among tourism stakeholders.

In Table 2, spontaneous community participation as stated in Tosun's (1999) model, emphasizes the provision of full managerial responsibility and authority to the host community, suggesting an ideal mode of community participation in tourism development which is similar to degrees of citizen power in Arnstein's, (1969) model and to self-mobilization and interactive participation in Pretty's (1995) model. Induced community participation in Tosun's, (1999) model, in which the host community has a voice regarding tourism development process through an opportunity to hear and to be heard, is similar to the degree of citizen



tokenism in Arnstein's (1969) model and to functional participation by consultation or participation for material incentives in Pretty's typology. In this type of participation, the community is often involved partly in the decision-making process and has no power to ensure that their views are considered for implementation, especially by other powerful interest groups such as government bodies, multinational companies, and international tour operators, among others, thereby enforcing a certain level of degree of tokenism as identified in Arnstein's (1969) typology. It is a top-down approach, a passive and indirect form of community participation most commonly found in developing countries in which host communities only endorse and may participate in implementation of tourism development issues or decisions made for them rather than by them.

In coercive community participation the host community is not as fully involved in the decision-making process as it is in induced participation. However, some decisions are made specifically "to meet basic needs of host communities so as to avoid potential socio-political risks for tourists and tourism development" (Tosun, 2006, p.495). While this kind of participation is viewed by many people as a substitute for genuine participation and an approach to enable power holders to foster tourism development primarily to meet the desire of decision makers, tourism operators and tourists, it is similar to manipulation and therapy in Arnstein's model and passive and manipulative in Pretty's typology (Tosun, 2006).

While the literature tends to suggest that community tourism has evolved from various models of community participation in development, arguably, coercive community participation probably refers to what Kibicho (2003) found when



examining the extent to which local communities participate in Kenya's coastal tourism. His study, among other things, identified that there is a linkage between local community involvement in tourism activities and their support for its development. It is probably important to insist from here that a key consideration in tourism development is sustainability, which cannot be achieved without community support (Vincent & Thompson, 2002). This implies that community participation, a Western ideology which emerged after the failures of social and political theories about how societies should be organized and how development should take place (Li, 2005; Tosun, 2000), seeks to address sustainability for tourism industry development, among other things. While sustainability is the core objective of community participation (Vincent & Thompson, 2002; Johannesen & Skonhoft, 2005), proponents of community tourism further argue that community participation seeks to improve the welfare of the local community and, perhaps most importantly, win their support in conservation of tourism resources (Songorwa, 1999). This means community participation is inevitable and imperative for tourism development because most tourist attractions lie within local communities or in their vicinities and in most cases co-exist side by side with the communities, for instance, in wildlife areas.

In addition, tourism happens in local communities and they are the ones who often bear the tourism damage and in most cases they form part of the tourist products and experience that visitors seek (Kibicho, 2003; Havel, 1996; Wolfensohn, 1996; Blank, 1989; Scheyvens, 2002; Beeton, 2006; Li, 2005; Tosun, 2000). It is for these reasons that community involvement and participation in the tourism industry serve



to ensure the protection of these tourist products and services through effective collaborative management of the industry centred towards a more community-driven planning approach that guarantees strong community support for successful tourism development. It is probably within this context that sustainable tourism and community participation are being increasingly linked.

2.9 Barriers to Community Participation in Tourism Development

Arguably, community participation can thus be enhanced by addressing barriers to participation while at the same time taking the necessary steps to promote the principles of sustainable participation (Theron, 2005). Many researchers have doubted the likelihood of implementing community participation. Taylor (1995) criticizes ‘communitarianism’ as ‘fantasy’ that is not rooted in reality, adding that, participatory approach is time-consuming. Other barriers (i.e. lack of education, business inexperience, insufficient financial assistance and conflicting vested interests) also have to be overcome before public involvement can be embraced (Addison, 1996). Tourism in many less-developed regions has been developed and controlled by large multinational tour companies who have little regard for local socio-cultural and economic conditions (Timothy & Ioannidas, 2002). This is because most developing destinations and microstates lack the wealth and political power, which make them parties to unfavorable decisions that is beyond their control (Timothy & Ioannidas, 2002). Autocratic power systems have kept grassroots involvement from flourishing in some parts of the world where representation of democracy has been discouraged (Timothy, 1999). As a result,



tourism developments shaped by local entrepreneurs have less possibility to survive in the long term.

Tosun (2000), in his study of limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries pointed out that it is important to involve local communities in tourism development process. The main aim of the research was to examine the limitations to public participation in the decision-making process of tourism development in developing countries though public participation in the benefits of tourism was not totally ignored.

Tosun (2000) categorized all the barriers to community participation into three, namely; Operational, Structural and Cultural. In his view, Operational limitations include centralization of public administration of tourism; this connotes non decentralization of tourism administration from the national level, preventing those at the bottom from making valuable contributions to it. Also, under this limitation, there is lack of co-ordination and lack of information.

Structural limitations as raised by Tosun (2000) also include attributes of professionals, lack of expertise, elite domination, lack of appropriate legal system, lack of trained human resources and relatively high cost of community participation and lack of financial resources.

Finally under Tosun's, (2000) barriers, Cultural Limitations were reviewed. This limitation indicates limited capacity of poor people in getting actively involved in tourism development. Also, most local communities have apathy and low level of awareness in the local community. Tosun, (2000) accepted that these limitations



may be an extension of the prevailing social, political and economic structure in developing countries, which have prevented them from achieving a higher level of development.

2.10 Motivations for Community Participation

There are various ways through which communities are motivated to participate effectively in the tourism industry. Some major schools of thought are of the view that allowing communities to play leading roles in tourism development triggers their interest in the participation process (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007; Li, 2005; Li, 2004; Tosun, 2000; Aref, 2011). Major issues that emerged throughout the course of their discourse were: communities as partners in the tourism decision-making process, home pride, social capital, monetary gains and sense of community as motivating factors that influences participation.

A major way to involve and attract community participation and ultimately local peoples support in tourism development is through local job creation (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). Since tourism offers better labour-intensive and small scale opportunities (Chok and Macbeth, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007) and since it happens in the community, arguably, it is thought to be one of the best placed potential sources of employment opportunities for local communities, inclusive of women and the informal sector (Blank, 1989; Li, 2005; Johannesen & Skonhøft, 2005; Scheyvens, 2007). Community participation via employment opportunities, as workers or as small business operators, can be a catalyst to the development of tourism products and services, arts, crafts and cultural values, especially through taking advantage of



abundant natural and cultural assets available in communities in developing countries (Scheyvens, 2007). Tosun (2000) stressed that community participation through working in the tourism industry has been recognized to help local communities not only to support development of the industry but also to receive more than economic benefits.

According to Zhao & Ritchie, (2007) socio-economic benefits derived from the tourism industry triggers local communities participation. They added that communities, as a way of participation, may pursue tourism-related economic activities as paid or self-employed workers. While participating through employment they get direct impacts on their lives and eventually curb poverty at the household level since it diverts the economic benefits tourism brings directly to the family level (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007)

Community participation via decision-making is a crucial determinant to ensure that the benefits local communities get from tourism are guaranteed, and their lifestyles and values are respected. However, this approach is rarely found in developing countries (Tosun, 2000; Li, 2005). Building on the same argument, Kibicho (2003) in his study about community tourism in Kenya, further noted that local communities had the feeling that they were not fully involved in their country's coastal tourism, especially in decisions regarding its development, despite the fact that the industry has impacts on their well-being, this he said, could be a preventive factor on their interest in participating. Tosun (2006) observed that the local community needs to be part and parcel of the decision making body through consultation by elected and appointed local government agencies or by a



committee elected by the public specifically for developing and managing tourism issues.

It is, however, important to note that community participation in decision making is not only desirable but also necessary so as to maximize the socio-economic benefits of tourism for the community. It is perhaps one of the most important elements of tourism management to enable communities who often serve as tourist destinations and for that matter suffer from the negative impacts of tourism, to get involved and eventually participate in planning decisions regarding tourism development. This is important in order to create better handling of the negative impacts of tourism development (Li, 2004; Tosun, 2000). Much of the literature seem to support the idea that if local communities want to benefit from tourism they must be integrated into the decision-making process.

However, Li (2003), while studying community decision-making participation in tourism development in Sichuan Province, China, pointed out that there was weak local participation in the decision-making process yet local communities received satisfactory benefits from tourism. It is equally important to note, therefore, that integration of local communities into the decision-making process is “not a final goal itself” but only one of the many ways through which community participation can be achieved (Li, 2005:133).

Apart from participation in the decision making process, or simply, apart from the high need by local people to be consulted about local tourism development issues, Kibicho (2003) further identified that 88.6% of the 236 members of the local



community who participated in his study stated that encouraging local people to invest in, operate small scale businesses, and work for the tourism industry is a suitable means for community participation. This is in line with Tosun's (2000) conclusion that, in many developing countries, community participation through employment as workers in the industry or through encouraging them to operate small scale business, "has been recognized to help local communities get more economic benefits rather than creating opportunities for them to have a say in decision making process of tourism development" (p. 626).

Aref, (2011) also in his study in Shiraz, Iran, brought up another dimension of motivation. He stated that "sense of community" is a motivating factor for local people's participation. Brown et al defined "Sense of community" as the feeling of obligation and commitment of an individual towards other members in the "community developed" over time through understanding of collective values, beliefs and interests among community members. Aref's (2011) argument elaborated that local people participate just to achieve "community development" due to the sense of belonging they feel in terms of their shared values, norms, culture, beliefs and interests among others.

Lastly, one other approach that could motivate local people's participation is "through investments in human capital, such as education and health, investments in social capital such as local-level institutions and participatory processes, and support for community based development efforts planned and implemented from bottom up" (Havel, 1996, p.145). However, given the fact that the central point underlying people's participation may be the degree of power distribution, these



efforts are less likely to succeed unless responsive institutions and the legal and policy framework that facilitate and support local participation are in place (Havel, 1996; Tosun, 2004; Wang & Wall, 2005).

2.11 Stakeholders and Ecotourism Development

Arguably, community ecotourism planning is critical due to the interdependencies among multiple stakeholders in a community tourism destination. Stakeholders are the actors with an interest in a common problem or issue and include all individuals, groups, or organizations “directly” influenced by the actions others take to solve a problem (Gray, 1989). Though decisions are made jointly on a consensus basis, these stakeholders are autonomous since they retain their independent decision-making powers while abiding by shared rules within the collaborative alliance (Wood & Gray, 1991).

There are different actors involved in the ecotourism industry all over the world. Some of which are; private sector, government, donor agencies, civil societies and local people (communities) themselves. Local communities are regarded as important asset in tourism development as it is within their premises that these activities take place. Local communities are also regarded as legitimate and moral stakeholders in tourism development (Haukeland, 2011; Jamal & Stronza 2009) because their interests affect and are affected by decisions of key policy makers. Mayers (2005) divides stakeholders into two categories: the first are the stakeholders who affect decisions and the second category are those stakeholders who are affected by decisions. The degree of involvement of local communities in



various decision making and policy issues are determined by the extent to which they affect or are affected by these decisions and policies.

In the same vein, Pongponrat (2011) noted that “local tourism development requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans. This ensures that development meet the perceived needs of the local community”. If development decisions are made in a particular region without the knowledge or without any consultation with the particular community during the planning stage, it would be impossible for them to be involved during implementation, thus, offering little support for tourism activities (Niezgoda & Czernek, 2008). Whichever way, it is very crucial to identify and involve key stakeholders right from the planning stage. Failure to do so can bring about project failure and possibly conflicts. On the other hand, enabling wide participation of various stakeholders including local communities would promote knowledge sharing, acquisition of new skills and the attainment of new knowledge, which in turn, fosters understanding of regional problems and allows for generation of new and innovative solutions (Niezgoda & Czernek, 2008).

2.12 Impacts of Ecotourism Development

Akama (1996) clearly indicated that ecotourism initiatives are intended to empower local people in order to maximize their benefits and exercise some control over ecotourism in their region. Several schools of thought relating to ecotourism’s impacts points out that ecotourism development have both positive and negative impacts (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Weaver, 1998; Belsky, 1999; Jones, 2005;



Stronza & Godillo, 2008). The positive impacts in this discourse refer to the good things that accrue from ecotourism development; the negative impacts are the harm caused as a result of ecotourism development.

Sustainable benefits can be produced to local communities through ecotourism if only they are carefully planned, developed and managed (Mametja, 2001). The World Tourism Organization has indicated some potential benefits local communities could derive as a result of ecotourism development. They are as follows;

- The provision of new markets for local products such as agriculture, arts and handicrafts,
- The establishment of small, medium and micro local tourism enterprises,
- The empowerment of young people, women and the ethnic majority groups, and
- The generation of new jobs for and by the local community (WTO, 1998).

Also, some other schools of thought perceived ecotourism to promote the following; environmental conservation, local employment creation, income generation, infrastructural development and sustainable development (Belsky, 1999; Jones, 2005). Jenkins & Wearing (2003) were also of the view that, due to the complex nature of the natural and cultural resources for ecotourism development, negative impacts can emerge in rural communities especially; the socio-cultural, environmental and economic costs are severe. The following are global reflections of the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts associated with ecotourism development:



2.12.1 Economic Impacts

There is clear indication suggesting that ecotourism does create employment for local people in their communities. Wallace and Pierce (1996) observed that in Amazonas, Brazil, the provision of eco-lodges in the area had created employment opportunities for local residents. For many of these residents, this had been the first income job they have ever had. Similarly, West (2006)'s study in Maimafu in Papua New Guinea revealed that employment opportunities emerged for many women in handicraft production for tourists.

Most countries embark on ecotourism development due to the economic gains that are derived from this sector (Page et al., 2001; Cooper et al., 2008). The development of ecotourism as believed by most people can deal with the issues of socio-economic problems in countries that depend on natural resources (Afenyo, 2011). Ecotourism generated much income and hence increased personal and household incomes in the Amazonas community in Brazil and also, the Posada Amazonas eco-lodge in Peru made a profit of \$182,583 in 2004 and \$208,328 in 2005. Much (60%) of the profits were used in community development while the 40% was distributed among the families in the community and this increased the average household income by 25% in 2006 (Wallace & Pierce, 1996; Stronza, 2007).

Bogani and Tangkoko communities near protected areas in Indonesia enjoyed improvement in their transportation communication infrastructures due to the ecotourism projects (Ross & Wall, 1999). Epler Wood (1998) as cited in Afenyo, (2011) also postulated that ecotourism generated huge sum of revenue in Cuyabeno



which became a direct source of income for the people and also supported infrastructural development for the local community. Despite the economic benefits derived from ecotourism development, the negative aspects such as leakages of profits, inflation, seasonality, menial job opportunities, and opportunity cost to development (Afenyo, 2011) cannot be forgotten. The job opportunities which are created through ecotourism are sometimes unable to achieve the expected economic outcomes because, some are mostly insufficient to that needed incentive and this makes them unsustainable and hence makes people to return to their previous jobs. This observation was affirmed with the case of Mexican Monarch Butterfly Reserve where most of the people went back to logging because; the reserve could not achieve much of the expected economic gains (Jacobson & Robles, 1992; Barkin, 2003).

2.12.2 Socio-Cultural Impacts

Some schools of thought are of the view that, ecotourism development affects the quality of social lives of local communities engaged in it. It is able to sustain rural livelihoods, renew the cultural pride of a people, empower local communities, and promote traditional art forms (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Weaver, 1998; Scheyvens, 1999). A study in relation to the socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism development in the Santa Elena rainforest project in Australia revealed that opportunities have opened for the community to share their traditions with visitors, establish friendships, learn new languages and receive donations from tourists or conservation organizations who visit the area (Wearing & Larsen, 1996).



Wolf (1977) viewed this impact in simple terms as the “people’s impact”. Here, he threw more light on the fact that socio-cultural impacts occur in the life of the host community due to their direct or indirect interactions with tourists. Among all the impacts of ecotourism, it is the socio-cultural impacts that have the longest lasting effect on the local community.

Ecotourism development has led to the displacement of local communities on whose lands the development took place. This, Honey (2008) claims often happens to poor communities who most of the times have no rights to own lands and have limited or no access to any legal representation. Citing the Maasai Mara in Kenya and Tanzania as an example to support his claim, he indicated that, the Maasai people were evicted from their lands in the 1970’s to make way for the establishment of the Amboseli National Park.

The displacement of local people for ecotourism development in Kenya and Tanzania are not isolated cases. In Nepal, the establishment of the Chitwan National Game Reserve in the Terai area saw the displacement of the local communities who were occupying that land. Also in the case of the Island of Langkawi in Malaysia, tourism development led to the disintegration of communities and a loss of livelihood for many (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Closely related to the issue of displacement is the restrictions placed on local communities on access to resources on those lands. In the early 1990s when the national parks in Kenya were established, the Maasai people were not permitted to



allow their livestock to graze in the Maasai Mara and Samburu reserves (Zeppel, 2006).

Additional negative socio-cultural impacts associated with ecotourism development include commoditization of culture, gambling, prostitution; reduce reverence for local customs, traditions and religion, migration, less use of local languages, increased crime and drug use, and changes in social structures. The tribal dance of the Kuma tribe in Panama for example is losing its authenticity as it is now performed to coincide with the tourist season (Mowforth & Munt, 1998).

2.12.3 Environmental Impacts

Environmental concerns have been at the core of alternative tourism (Cooper et al, 2008). Ecotourism has contributed so enormously to conservation of natural areas, plant and animal species (Mathieson & Wall, 1982) and economic development (Cooper et al, 2008) and hence the positive impacts of ecotourism biological diversity can bring about economic incentive for environmental protection and education for stakeholders in the sector development (Ross and Wall, 1999). More than 207, 200 km² of forest land, having been set in East and South Africa to conserve and protect one of the largest wildlife populations in the world (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Several plant and animal species conservations like the on-going sea turtle conservation in Brazil (Stronza & Pêgas, 2008) and Seychelles' whale shark conservation (Rowat & Engelhardt, 2007) have been of great significance to the environment. Some fauna conservations in Ghana including the Wechiau



hippopotamus, the Mona monkeys, the Western sitatunga, white-necked rockfowl, the manatee conservations (NCRC, 2006) do not only boost ecotourism, but help to sustain the environment.

On the other hand, tourism development can lead to the deterioration of the environment. There are evidences of tourism damaging the natural and built environment, increasing pollution levels among many others. In the attempt to protect the environment through ecotourism, inappropriate development strategies are used which negatively affect the environment. Page et al (2001) pointed out loss of natural habitat of animals and its consequences on wildlife, pollution, overcrowding, and traffic congestion as some of the negative environmental costs of ecotourism development.

Li's (2003) study on environmental management indicators for ecotourism in the Tianmushan area, China, revealed that the attraction of tourists to this protected forested area for over a period of 10 years has led to trail widening and excessive root exposure along the trails causing vegetation damage. Ahmed (1999) also cited the example of Brunei's Merimbun Heritage Park where the problem of littering, noise pollution and intentional destruction of park properties by tourists existed.

2.13 Tourism and Poverty Alleviation

To be able to demonstrate systematically the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction, it is undoubtedly crucial to show how the industry is linked to the wider context of poverty reduction. However, in order to realize the linkage between tourism and poverty alleviation it is important to first understand the dimensions of



poverty. This will then shed light on specific key points in the vicious circle of poverty that may determine and reflect the relationship between tourism development and poverty reduction. The World Bank through its document, World Development Report 2000/2001, views poverty primarily as an outcome of economic, social, and political processes that interact with and reinforce each other in deprived ways that can be easily reflected in people's life. Poverty is lack of income and assets to attain basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clothing and acceptable levels of health and education.

Jamieson et al (2004) describes this lack of assets as lack of good health, skills necessary for employment, land/housing, and access to basic infrastructure, savings or access to credit, social assets such as network of contacts and reciprocal obligations, which can be called on in times of need. Poverty is a sense of being voiceless (unheard) and powerless in various institutions of state and society (p.8). These concerns include unfair sociological conditions where the poor are faced with inhuman treatment, lack of protection against violence, intimidation and lack of civility and predictability in their interactions with public officials (Jamieson et al, 2004; Havel, 1996). Poverty is vulnerability to adverse shocks, linked to an inability to cope with them (p.9). The poor are susceptible to various risks of health, natural or human made hazards and are incapable of recovering speedily from these shocks economically, socially, physically and emotionally (Jamieson et al, 2004).

It is, however, important to note that these are just primary causes of poverty, which are often realized at community and individual levels. There are more causes, which can be observed at national and regional levels, in issues such as economic growth,



inequality of income distribution and instability in governance. While at the national level poverty can be measured in terms of GDP, at the local level poverty manifests itself in the income, informal employment, lack of freedom to choose a desired quality of life, lack of land tenure for housing, lack of basic infrastructure, and so forth.

While the root causes of poverty have been clearly underlined in previous paragraphs, a framework for action is certainly needed to effectively alleviate poverty in all its dimensions. The World Bank (2001) emphasized the framework for action, which, among other things, declares that national economic development is central to success in poverty alleviation, and therefore, a fundamental focus in all efforts by the destinations to attain sustainable poverty reduction. This is based on the notion that as destinations grow richer, it is more likely that overall incomes of people in those countries also increase and consequently poverty falls, particularly income poverty (World Bank, 2001; Jamieson et al, 2004). The reverse is therefore true, that with economic deterioration, income poverty rises. This means the effectiveness of economic growth to alleviate poverty highly depends on good governance and on the initial level of inequality in the distribution of income and how that distribution changes over time (Blake et al, 2008).

To ensure poor people gain a substantial share from that growth, mechanisms to fight against socio-economic inequalities and establishing sound institutional framework need to be in place. While economic growth is consistently associated with poverty reduction, it is imperative to remember that poverty is an outcome of more than economic processes. This implies that economic growth alone is not



enough to guarantee economic achievements accruing to the nations to ‘trickle down’ to the poor (Jamieson et al, 2004). This is especially true if there is limited opportunity, empowerment and security to the poor (Jamieson et al, 2004; Van der Duim et al, 2006). It also follows that attacking poverty requires promoting opportunity, facilitating empowerment, and enhancing security alongside actions at local, national, and global levels (World Bank, 2001; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007).

Therefore, with the poverty framework for actions in place, the challenge that remains is to see how and where tourism can intervene in providing better opportunities, empowerment and security to the poor at the local level and boost economic growth at national and regional levels. Tourism is theoretically linked to poverty reduction because of its contribution to the economic development of the destinations (Blake et al, 2008; Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003). Its contribution to the economic growth of a particular destination is usually reflected in three major points of view:

First, as tourists (consumers) arrive at the destination, they provide local communities, including the poor, with the opportunities for producing and selling additional goods and services for their visitors, the tourists. This means tourism may raise local production of additional goods and services such as agricultural products (fruits and vegetables), livestock (beef, lamb, and pork), poultry (chicken and eggs), fisheries (fish and seafood), manufacturing (equipment and furniture), non-perishable foods and dry goods (flour, rice, sugar etc), ground transport (tour operator transfers and packages, and local taxis), dairy and handicrafts (Honeck, 2008; Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003). The obvious outcomes from such activities are



income and employment opportunities. The accrued income and the generated employment can be essential tools that may help to mitigate poverty levels, particularly income poverty among locals, including the poor. This can be realized if the earnings from tourism are wisely spent to support their well-being and capabilities, and improve key poverty indicators such as health and education services, among others.

Second, tourism is an important opportunity to diversify local economies. This is attributed to the fact that tourism can develop in poor and marginal areas with limited export and diversification options (Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003). Particularly, remote areas attract tourists because of their naturalness, culture, wildlife and landscape value. This means tourism can create employment opportunities and income generating projects in poor and marginal areas in the same way it does in other areas. In turn, earnings from tourism can be used to establish or improve social service facilities and infrastructure in those particular areas. The outcomes from such facilities are not only improved incomes for the poor but also their social well-being and capabilities (Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003).

Third, tourism offers labour-intensive and small-scale opportunities compared to other non-agricultural activities (Chok & Macbeth, 2007; Scheyens, 2007; UNCTAD, 2007; Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003). It employs a high proportion of women, semi-skilled labour, and values natural resources and culture, which may feature among the few assets belonging to the poor (Blank, 1989; Li, 2005; Johannesen & Skonhoft, 2005; Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003; UNCTAD, 2007). This means, tourism, through employment creation and income generation, offers a



relatively wider range of poverty reduction opportunities to many members of the society, including vulnerable groups such as women. Tourism arguably contributes to poverty alleviation if it creates new jobs and provides incomes. This is probably one of the factors that makes many people believe that tourism is better placed to contribute towards poverty alleviation, with many of them expecting tourism-related jobs in developing countries to target the poor rather than local elites, international and expatriate companies (Blake et al, 2008; Scheyvens, 2007; Tosun, 2000; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). Other factors that make the tourism industry a better placed sector for poverty reduction include its capacity to absorb a wide diversity of players ranging from multinational enterprises (MNEs) to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including extremely small-scale domestic entrepreneurship.

Tourism is theoretically seen as a useful tool that, if properly managed, can improve the well-being of the poor. However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the industry is often driven by the private sector, often by Transnational Corporations (TNCs) that may have little or no interest in ensuring that poverty is reduced among locals. In addition, the influence of globalization, information technology, and leakages may also impact negatively on tourism's potential as a means of achieving poverty alleviation (Jamieson et al, 2004; Luvanga and Shitundu, 2003). Therefore, what remains important from the poverty point of view is how long do visitors (tourists) stay in a particular destination and whether they spend much on the goods and services provided by the poor.

These points have been regarded as some of the key aspects of tourism that often give some indication of how much (in terms of revenue) remains in the destinations,



and eventually how much could potentially be a means of poverty reduction (Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003).

2.14 Theories and Models of Community Participation and Ecotourism

Several schools of thought have propounded diverse models and theories that better explain the relationship that exists between community participation and ecotourism development. This section considers two models (*Social Exchange Process Model and Tourism Development Chain Model*) from which our conceptual framework was developed.

2.14.1 Social Exchange Process Model

The social exchange model was developed by Ap in 1992. The argument underpinning this model is that social behavior is the result of an exchange process. Meaning that, “Human behaviour or social interaction is an exchange of activity, tangible and intangible, particularly towards rewards and cost” (Homans, 1961). According to this theory, people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships - in that, when the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship (Emerson, 1972).

A summary of the main concepts and assumptions of SET are that there are actors who are engaged in exchanges. The resources which are being exchanged between the actors are either tangible or intangible. These exchanges take place within social structures and through processes.

“Power” is one key concept which is fundamental to the Social Exchange Theory. Power is defined in social exchange as the potential of an actor to influence the

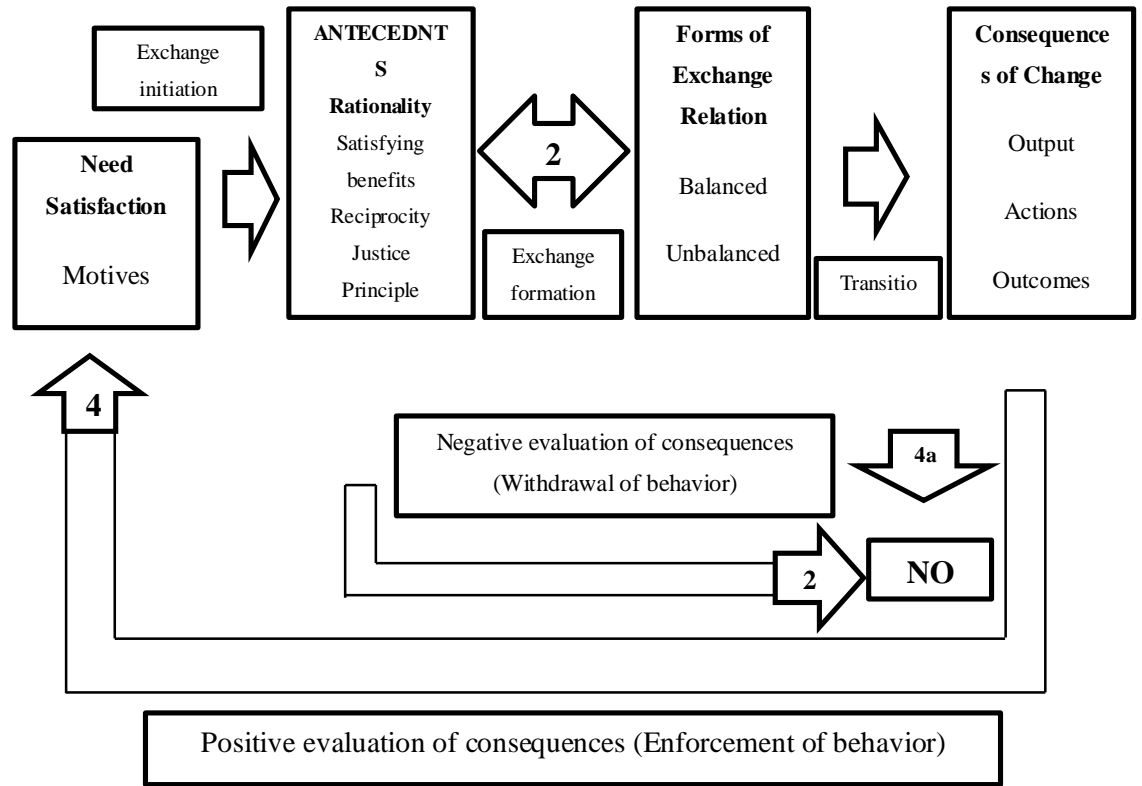


action of another actor in the social relation. Through social exchange, some form of dependence occurs between actors but there can be imbalances in these dependences creating inequalities in power. Hence actors that are less dependent in the relation would have more advantage over those who are more dependent on the relation. How power is composed in a relation determines how much power actors in that relation can impose on each other (Emerson, 1972).

Ap's (1992) model is very important due to the fact that it assists in providing an understanding of residents' participation in ecotourism development. Its main assumption is that people engage in exchange processes because of what they would get out of it and in the case of local communities involved in tourism development; their motivation is to see an improvement in their socio-economic status. The model reflects the processes that host communities go through when they get involve in tourism exchanges. The processes that link the components are; (1) Initiation of exchange; (2) Exchange formation; (3) Exchange transaction evaluation; (4) Positive evaluation of exchange consequences (reinforcement of behaviour) and (4a) Negative evaluation of exchange consequences (withdrawal in exchange behaviour), which will result in no-exchange. (Fig. 1) below shows the main components of the Social Exchange Process Model (SEPM);



Figure 1: Social Exchange Process Model



Source: Ap (1992)

2.14.2 Tourism Development Chain Model (TDC)

The Tourism Development Chain model was developed by Phillips & Pittman (2008). The model captured community participation as a central element that influences all other positive factors of tourism development to emerge. The model posits that Community participation in tourism development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill, and create pride in community heritage. Aref (2011) adapted the Tourism Development Chain Model in his study (Sense of Community Participation for tourism development) and captioned it as participation of community as an involvement of local people in

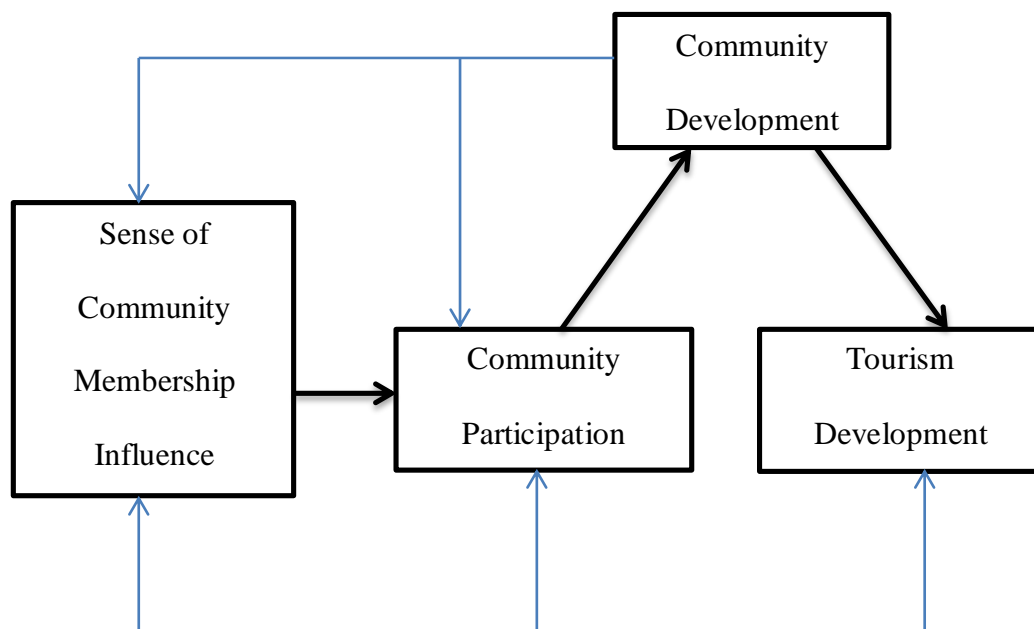


tourism development. Aref (2011) further explained that without participation, there would obviously be no partnership, no development and no programme.

Aref (2011) added further that Community participation increases people's sense of control over issues that affect their lives and also promotes self-confidence, self-awareness and as well creates a democratic system and procedure to enable community members to become actively involved. Therefore, the overall argument of the tourism development chain model indicates that community participation provides a sense of community to take responsibility of oneself and others, and readiness to share and interact (Aref, 2011). Figure 2 is a diagrammatic presentation of the tourism development model. It shows that progress in the outcome of community development also contributed to a sense of community and tourism development. It also emphasized on community participation as important key for tourism development.



Figure 2: Tourism Development Chain Model:



Source: Phillips & Pittman (2008), in Aref (2011)

2.15 Conceptual Framework for the Study

The Tourism Development Chain Model (Figure 3) was adapted to develop the conceptual framework (Figure 4) for the study, after a thorough reviewing of both models discussed above. This model was chosen based on the premise that it best fits in the explanation of the objectives of the study and can also be easily expanded to examine various groups under different conditions within the context of the study. It therefore provides a useful framework within which the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP) can be evaluated.

The new framework (Figure 4) has gone through major modifications to make it suitable for the study. It is made up of 8 components as compared to the original model that has only 4 components (Sense of community, community participation,



community development and tourism development). The new framework exempted the inclusion of the sense of community since it is not related to the study. The variables/components of the new model comprises *External organizational support, Traits of the local community, the WCHS project (ecotourism development), Tourist arrivals and income generation, Outcomes and distributional analysis, Community development and poverty alleviation, Feedback and community participation at the center.*

External Organizational Support (EOS) is a key component of ecotourism development yet ignored (Phillips & Pittman 2008; Aref, 2011). EOS in context, looks at what kind of support (*Logistical support, Human resource development and Training, Financial support and many others*) may be needed to transform the tourism potential into a well-developed attraction. It is very obvious that the emergence of external support for any development is as a result of a peculiar trait which serves as a “pull factor” for their emergence.

Also, Traits of local community holistically looks at the characteristics of the local community considering some core factors (*Socio-cultural, Environmental, Economical & Political*) that gives green light for further investment and development. It would as well be prudent to assess the inflows of revenue through the patronage of Tourists Arrivals both within the community and those from outside. In this light, the framework throws more light on the extent to which tourists frequent the WCHS and as well analyse how income is generated.



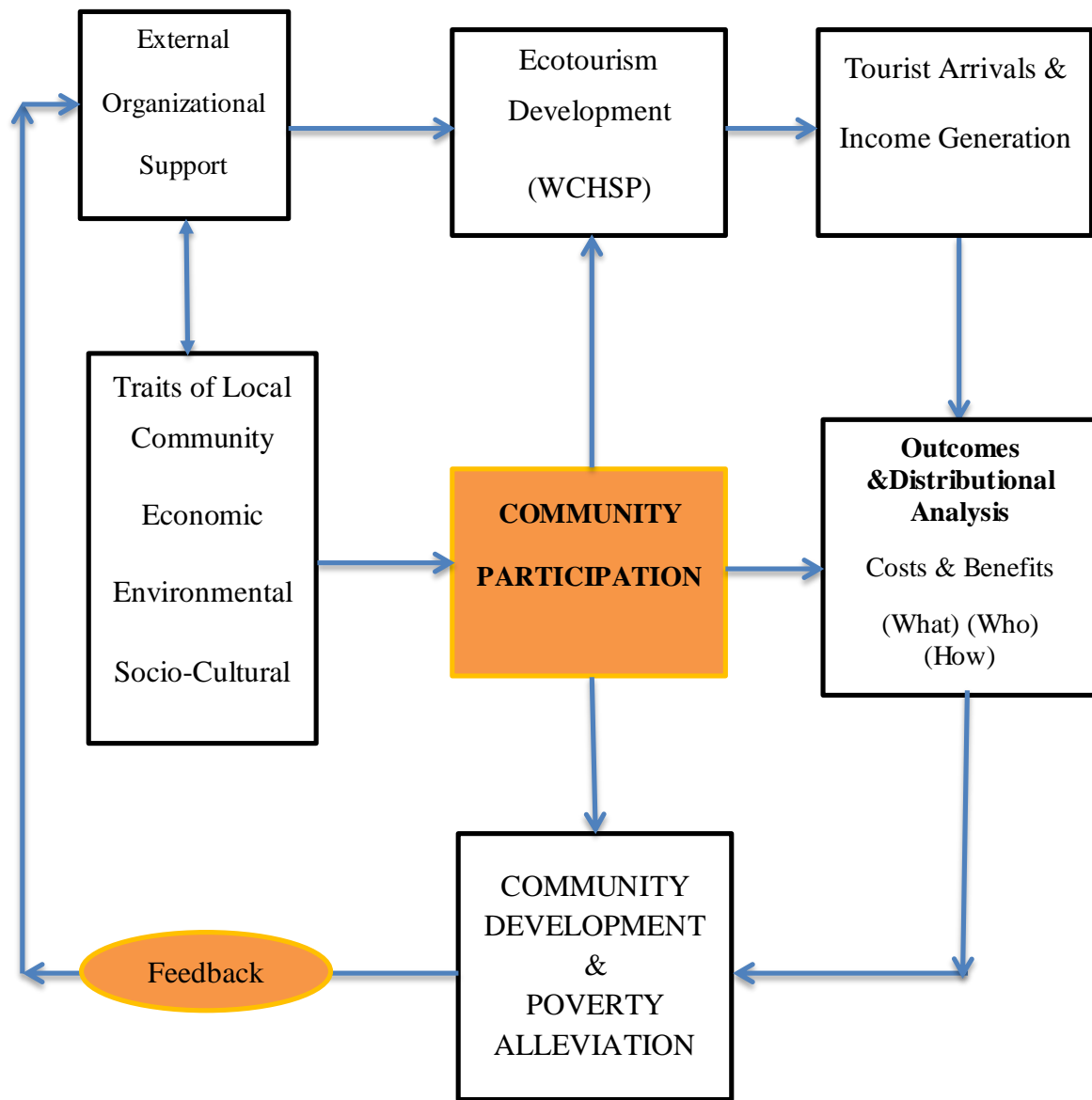
Furthermore, the Outcome and Distributional Analysis (ODA) talks about the costs and benefits associated with the project; as to “who” gets “what” and “how”. Community participation is central to this study since it shows a linkage with all other variables/components within the framework- further reinforcing (Phillips & Pittman’s, 2008; Aref’s 2011) the idea that, “without participation, there would obviously be no partnership, no development and no programme”. The framework would enable us assess the various forms of participation within the tourism development process and as well identify if its apparently influencing Community Development and Poverty Alleviation.

At the tail end, feedback comes in to feed project implementers and other stakeholders with vital information in relation to the progress of the project. The feedback loop in the framework indicates an opportunity for project stakeholders (implementers’, external organizations and Community) to make changes to the project’s objectives when deemed necessary in order to make them more effective; thus making it a cyclical process.

Therefore the framework would also give us the opportunity to test the strengths and weaknesses for further adjustments. Thus, all these add-ups are very essential in this evaluation. More so, Phillips & Pittman’s (2008) contribution is not sufficient for the study hence the adaption and modification.



Figure 4: Conceptual framework for the study



Source: Adapted from Phillips & Pittman (2008), Aref (2011)

Generally, this framework (Figure 4) looks at the Economic, Environmental and socio-cultural issues relating to the community that might have influenced the support of external organizations and also the engagement of the community in this project (WCHSP). Figure 4 explains that progress in the outcome of ecotourism development also contributed to community development and poverty alleviation.



It also emphasized on community participation as important key for ecotourism development.

Thus, the development of a successful community based ecotourism strategy will require a sound institutional framework based on a partnership between the local community, state, the private sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). In reality, however, participation is a continuum based on the degree of people's involvement in deciding or influencing the decision making process concerning the tourism development programme, in its implementation and in the sharing of benefits and costs.

2.16 Summary

This chapter unfilled a number of issues related to Community Participation and Tourism. It examined some key points on the concept of community, tourism, community participation and its adoption in today's development initiatives. It reviewed various levels of community participation available and identified factors which influence local community's participation in the tourism industry. It continued with a discussion that provides a linkage between community participation in tourism development, and how the latter is linked to poverty alleviation. The chapter concluded by highlighting key issues raised in the literature that formed the basis of this research. Therefore the next chapter delves into issues relating to how the study was conducted (Methodology). It looks at issues on the study area, study design and approach, sampling procedures, data collection, processing and analysis.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used in conducting this study. It gives a description of the study design, study area and the target population. It also explains the sampling procedures, the research instruments used and the procedures followed in the data collection, processing, analysis and presentation.

3.2 Study Area

The Wa West District (Wechiau District) was carved out of Wa District in 2004 by legislative instrument (LI 1751) under the Local Government Act 463, 1993. Wechiau is the capital of the district. The District is located in the Western part of the Upper West Region, approximately between Longitudes 9° 40" N and 10° 10" N and also between Latitudes 2° 20' W and 2° 50" W (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). With reference to (Figure 5) it shares borders to the South with Northern Region, North-West with Nadowli District, East with Wa Municipal and to the West with Burkina Faso. The total land area of the district is approximately 1,856 square km, representing about 10% of the region's total land area (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The District capital is about 15.0 km away from Wa Municipal by road.

The district is predominantly of Pre-Cambrian, granite and metamorphic rock types which have experienced less weathering than similar rocks elsewhere in the country due to low rainfall, high evaporate-transpiration and less vegetation. Nevertheless,



water harvesting from boreholes has been successful in the district because of well charged aquifers for water storage. The district has two marked seasons namely, the wet (between April and August) and dry seasons (November and March respectively).

The District Assembly is the highest political, administrative and planning authority in the district with deliberative, legislative and executive functions. Alongside the decentralized governance system is a parallel traditional governance system which appears to be at variance with the district assembly system. Even though the two governance systems seek the development of the area, they are not able to coordinate among each other as a team towards achieving the common goal of development in the district. This may be traced to the subtle power dynamics and competition for control of resources between the two systems. The District is dominated mainly by Mole-Dagbani group, which comprises of the Waalas who are the indigenous people, Dagaabas and Sissalas. Other minority groups are the Akans, Ga-Dangme, Ewes, and Guans. Traditionalists are the largest religion representing 29.5% of the people. Islam is the second dominant religion with 23.5% followed by Christianity (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). Considering the educational sector of the district, there are a total of 108 public schools in the district comprising 68 Primary Schools, 40 Junior High Schools and 1 Senior High School (SHC). The major economic activities in the district include agriculture, commerce rural industry, tourism and social services. Agriculture accounts for 86% of district's economy (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The predominant agriculture



activity is farming. Most farmers undertake a combination of crops and animal production.

The Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) is the main tourism attraction within the study area. It is a unique community-based project, protecting and preserving the wildlife and the environment of a 40km stretch of the Black Volta River in Ghana's Upper West Region. The river is home to one of the two remaining hippopotamus populations in Ghana, and was created into a Sanctuary by local chiefs in 1999. Since then, the project has marked success in providing Ghanaian and International tourists with a unique and unusual eco-travel experience. The area has much to offer, both due to the huge diversity of wildlife and the opportunities to become immersed in the local culture and activities, which can be experienced through the local Wala and Birifor (Lobi) Tribal life and customs.

The consideration of Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP) as a study area was because it's one of the many ecotourism projects in Ghana that has enjoyed a lot of support from both Government and Non-Governmental Organizations. Also, based on the key requirement of Community Based Ecotourism Projects CBEPs in relation to their management; the project is under the management of the local people themselves. This provides a good reason that the supposed potentials of Community Based Ecotourism Projects can be evaluated (TIES, 1990).



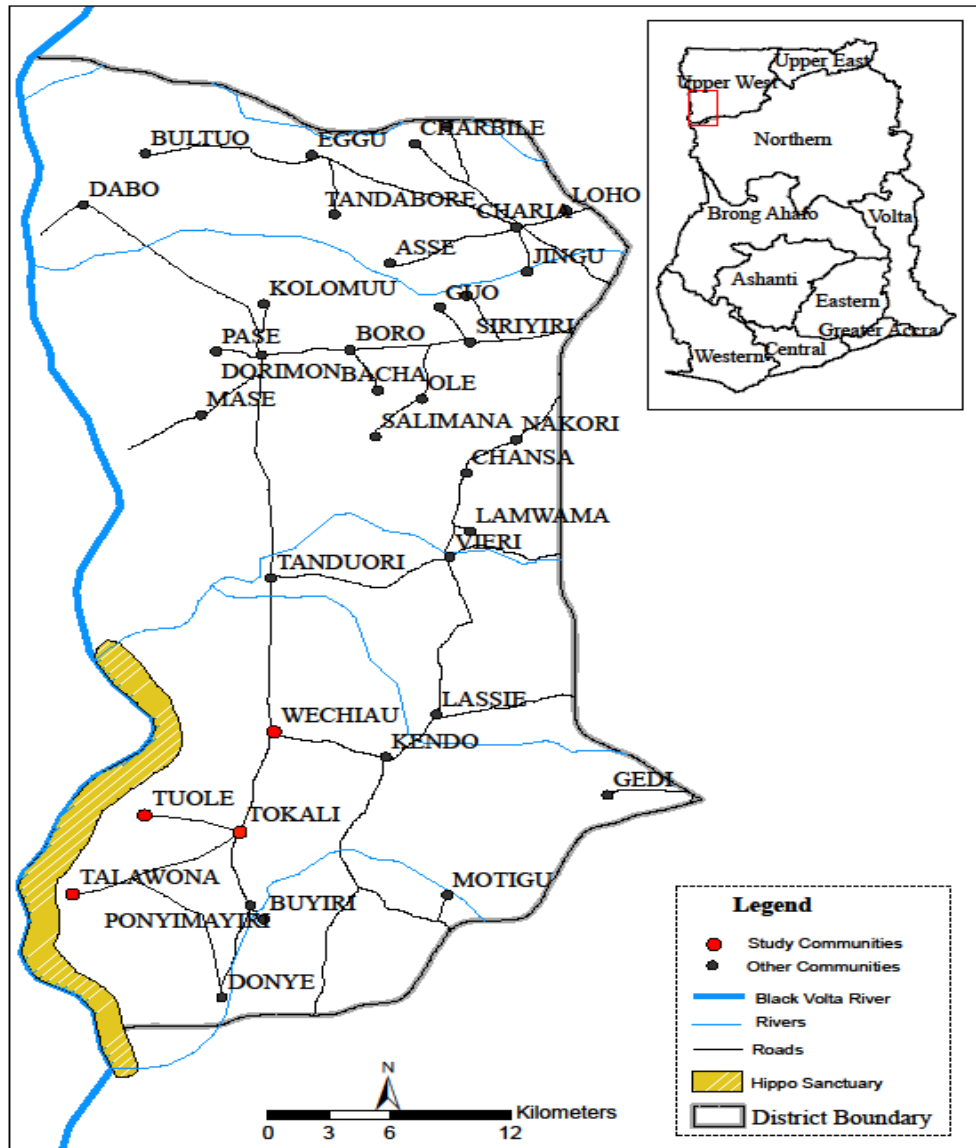


Figure 5: Map of Wa West Showing Study Communities

SOURCE: Adapted from Wa Municipal Assembly.

3.3 Research Design

A cross-sectional design was employed for the study. This approach is non-sequential hence gives opportunity for single time examination of phenomenon.

Kumar (2011) endorsed the usefulness of this design; stating that it is very useful

in obtaining an overall picture as it stands at the time of the study. It is less time consuming as compared to the longitudinal, and thus, suitable for this study and also simple in nature. Above all, this approach was useful for the study due to the fact that it is bounded to a specific duration.

Coupled with the above the mixed research approach was adopted. The mixed research method is an approach to inquiry that combines both qualitative and quantitative traditions of research. This type of design according to Creswell & Clark (2007) creates the emphasis that it is not only just the application of the qualitative and quantitative method but it is more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data. As Trochim (2002) puts it “... any kind of polarized debate has become less than productive. This obscures the fact that qualitative and quantitative data are intimately related to each other. In that, all quantitative data are based on qualitative judgments; and all qualitative data can be described and manipulated numerically” (Trochim, 2002) hence the choice of the mixed approach.

3.4 Data and Sources

Primary data for the study were sourced from a survey, observations, focus group discussions and In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). Thus, data was collected from four beneficiary communities in the Wa West District (Wechiau, Tokali, Tuole and Talawona) as well as development partners (Government and Non-Governmental Organizations). On the other hand, secondary sources, such as relevant books, journals, magazine, and newspapers were reviewed for the study. Also documented



information on the study area in relation to figures on tourist arrivals and revenue generated and population figures and district profile were sourced from WCHSP and the district assembly respectively.

3.5 Target Population

The target population for the study were both male and female residents of Wechiau, Talawona, Tokali and Tuole who were aged 18 years and above. This is due to the fact that, age 18 is the age of maturity in Ghana (Constitution, 1992). Aside, they are the active group that can participate in tourism development and could give relevant and discerning information about the site. Also, the role of stakeholders in the development of Community-Based Ecotourism Projects, is very critical as they help in the identification of prospects, implementation of planned projects and co-management of ecotourism sites (Haukeland, 2011; Jamal & Stronza, 2009). Stakeholders and institutions, such as the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB), NCRC, District Assembly, Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Sanctuary Management Committee (SMC), Community members, Chief and elders were interviewed.

3.6 Sampling and Sample Procedures

The Ghana Statistical Service (2010) survey report presented the study with the most current population figures of the 4 selected communities. Table 3 provides information about the population figures of the selected communities.



Table 3: Population Figures of Study Sites by Sex

Name of Communities	Males	Females	Total
1. Wechiau	1,341	1,474	2,815
2. Talawona	362	339	701
3. Tokali	477	463	940
4. Tuole	353	326	679
Total	2,533	2,602	5,135

Data source: Ghana Statistical Service (2010): Population and Housing Census

Therefore, the sample size for the study was drawn from the sum (5,135) of these communities as indicated in Table 3, which also constituted the sampling frame.

The study employed the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) (2009)'s sample size determination formula to derive the sample size for the study.

It is as follows:

$$n = \frac{t^2 \times p(1-p)}{m^2}$$

Where:

n - Desired sample size

t - Confidence level set at 95% (standard value = 1.96)



p - Estimated proportion of the target population with similar characteristics

m – Margin of error set at 5% (standard value = 0.05)

The sample size calculated is:

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.85 (1-0.85)}{0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.85 (1-0.85)}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 195.9$$

In order to cater for non-responses, 5% was added to the sample size calculated; this is equivalent to 10, making a total survey sample size of 206.

The study adopted both probability and non-probability sampling techniques in selecting the study communities. Wechiau community was purposively selected because it is the seat of the paramountcy where tourists establishes their first contact with the management of the site. Also, Tokali and Talawona, being the divisional area and the host community of the WCHSP respectively, were purposively selected due to their constant interaction with tourists. Additionally, the purposive selection of Tuole was as a result of the fact that it was one of the isolated and impoverished communities along the Black Volta due to the direct bearing the Hippo Sanctuary activities has on them.



Due to the differences that exists in the various communities in terms of population and ecotourism experiences, a proportionate technique was used to draw a sample from each of the communities as shown in (Table 4).

Table 4: Population figures of the various communities

Name of Communities	Males	Females	Total	Sample Size
1. Wechiau	1,341	1,474	2,815	82
2. Tokali	477	463	940	62
3. Talawona	362	339	701	41
4. Tuole	353	326	679	21
Total	2533	2,602	5,135	206

Fieldwork, 2015

As shown in (Table 4) above, the sample size was allocated among the four communities based on the total population of each. Using a ratio of N1:N2:N3:N4, where the figure (Wechiau, N1 = 4) refers to the community with the highest population; (Tokali, N2 = 3), community with the second highest; (Talawona, N3 = 2), community with the third highest and (Tuole, N4 = 1), community with the lowest population figure. Thus, based on the ratio given, the sample for the various communities was determined using (Kothari, 2004; p.63) proportionate allocation formula as follows;



$$n = \frac{N_1 \times N}{TR}$$

Where;

$$N_1 = 4$$

$$\text{Total Ratio (TR)} = 4:3:2:1 = 10$$

$$\text{Total sample size (N)} = 206$$

$$\text{Therefore } n = 4/10 \times 206$$

$$n = 82.4$$

Therefore sample size for wechiau = 82

The sample from the various strata are Wechiau (82), Tokali (62), Talawona (41) and Tuole (21) respectively.

Therefore, to arrive at the individual respondents, various households in each community, were serially numbered and randomly selected, using the Simple Random Sampling technique until the sample sizes proportionately allocated to each community were exhausted. One respondent each was purposively selected from each household based on the age range (18 years and above) and the individuals willingness to share information about his or her experience with the WCHSP.

Other stakeholders and institutions, such as the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB), NCRC, District Assembly, Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Sanctuary



Management Committee (SMC), EPA, Community members, Chief and elders were purposively selected.

3.7 Data collection Instruments

The data triangulation technique was used to strengthen research credibility and promote objectivity in findings (Flick, 2002). Thus, the methods used to gather data for the study include Semi-Structured Interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions, In-Depth Interviews (IDI) and observations. In line with the above, the research instruments used for data collection in the study included Interview schedule, Focus Group Discussions guides, In-Depth Interview guide and Observation checklist.

3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interview

Due to the low level of literacy of respondents in the selected communities, the Semi-structured interview method was used in the survey. This was chosen due to its ability to facilitate the researcher to conduct a two-way communication with the respondents (Flick, 2002). The flexibility of such a form of interview, which is guided by less strictly formulated questions (open and close ended), can provide the participants with a more relaxed atmosphere to express their thoughts (Flick, 2002). In this way, the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to explore the participants' views, attitudes and the meanings of their activities in more depth (Gray, 2004).

Basically, this type of interview was conducted with 206 respondents from Wechiau, Tokali, Talawona and Tuole, who include business owners, some



volunteer's (tour guides, sanctuary rangers, tree planters within the buffer zone) of the sanctuary and other permanent residents were also targeted as the participants of the semi-structured interviews. All targeted respondents mentioned above were asked similar questions (both open and close ended) relating to their knowledge about ecotourism, tourism experiences, nature of participation and (economic, socio-cultural and environmental) ecotourism impacts (see Appendix 1). However, the facial and body expressions of participants were observed, in order to obtain deeper understanding of their experiences and responses.

The interview schedule (Appendix 1) was divided into 6 main sections and contained both closed and open-ended questions. With the close-ended questions, respondents had options to choose from while room was given to respondents to give their own responses to open-ended questions. The first section (A) addressed issues in relation to demographic characteristics. The second section (B) assessed respondents on their general knowledge about ecotourism and its related negatives and positives. The role of stakeholders most especially that of community members were looked at in the third section (C). The fourth section (D) looked at the nature of local people's participation. Then issues of Motivation and impacts were addressed in sections (E) and (F) respectively.

3.7.2 In-depth Interviews

Aside this, in-depth interview involving key informants were also conducted. This was very useful in situations where further probing was required for the attainment of in-depth information (Flick, 2002). This method was therefore targeted at respondents with vast wealth of information regarding the subject matter. Thus,



respondents such as the Chief of Tokali (Chairman, SMB), the manager of the SMC and representatives of Ghana Tourism Authority, Game and wildlife and Environmental Protection Agency were targeted.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focused Group Discussions were also conducted to solicit views from opinion leaders such as sectional leaders, women groups and Youth groups regarding what they perceived as impacts driven from the project, the major forms and barriers of participation and their respective roles in terms of tourism development. According to Berg (2007) and Bouma (1996), focus group discussions are useful techniques for getting a wide range of views within a short period of time, and they also allow the emergence of unanticipated issues during the discussion. Indeed, the method of interviewing participants within groups is quite rewarding. The interviews were conducted in a more natural and relaxed atmosphere than the one to one interview. Interviewees were all local residents, and from the same social class (working class). Thus as a result, this helped to encourage the participants to express their ideas.

3.7.4 Observation

This method which involves gathering data through vision, was used throughout the entire data collection process physical benefits such as buildings and other infrastructure projects such as road, schools, tourist lodge that the communities derived from the tourism projects were observed. The advantage of this method is that it provides data that respondents might otherwise feel reluctant to provide (Sarantakos, 2005)



3.8 Recruitment of Field Assistants

Four field assistants, who fluently spoke Dagari, Wala and Brifor were recruited for the study. Two of them were National Service personnel, one a final year student of UDS and the last one, a postgraduate student. They were taken through a one day training for the fieldwork. The training looked at the purpose of the study, the translation of instruments into Dagari, Wala and Brifor and mock administration of the instruments among the assistants. The recruited assistants found it easy translating the instrument since they had similar experiences in collecting data in local communities.

3.9 Preliminary Field Visits

Preliminary field visits were conducted in November, 2014 to find out about the state of the project. In March, 2015, an introductory letter was used to seek for permission from the paramount chief (chief of Wechiau) to enter the community to undertake a study. Also permission was sought from the chiefs of Tokali, Talawona and Tuole. Fortunately, upon our arrival in Tokali (The sub-Division) there was an ongoing meeting of chiefs of that division, therefore the platform was given to the research team to brief them on who was conducting the study, the purpose of the study and the likely questions that would be posed to respondents. The divisional chief (Tokali Naa) then appealed to the chiefs of the communities in question (Talawona and Tuole) to inform their members to make themselves available when approached to partake in the study over the stipulated period of time. This was replicated in Wechiau and Tokali as well.



3.10 Field Work and Challenges

Data collection lasted for two weeks (from 15th April to 28th April, 2015). The field assistants helped by administering the questionnaires while the researcher conducted all the in-depth interviews and observations. Respondents were asked questions in Dagari, Wala or Brifor depending on their dialect and their responses were written in English. On the other hand, conversations from the IDIs were recorded with the help of a recorder and was later transcribed. On a whole, there was a 100% participation from community members since they were very well aware of the exercise through the efforts of the chiefs and elders of the selected communities.

One very challenging area of the study was getting access to some very important development partners (Calgary Zoo – Canada, NCRC) to seek their views on the WCHSP. Also, respondents were insisting on the protection of their identity, thus it took the team some time convincing them that their identity would be protected. More so, most women were reluctant to give us information since they felt their husbands were those in the best position to give out such information. To solve this we allocated a female field assistant to interview only women within the communities. This made them feel comfortable to give out information.

3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied in analyzing the data collected. A total number of 206 questionnaires were used for the analysis. These questionnaires first went through a process of editing. After editing, all the 206



questionnaires were found useful for the analysis. Qualitative data were categorized into common themes and assigned numerical values while trends in quantitative data were established and described with the help of the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 20. The chi-square statistic was used to test the statistical relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and participation. Descriptive statistics were also used to reveal respondents' sentiments about the current situation relating to the forms and barriers of community participation, motivation for participation, and the distribution of benefits and cost. Therefore, the above were presented using Tables (SPSS generated) and were explained by the use of narratives.

On the other hand, data derived from In-Depth Interview's and focus Group Discussions (qualitative data) were recorded, transcribed and were manually analyzed. This data was basically presented using narrations.

Lastly, throughout the entire data collection physical benefits (observed data) such as boreholes, roads, grinding mills, shea butter processing factory and some others, just to mention a few, were presented using pictures and narrations.

3.12 Summary

This chapter was devoted to provide information about the context within which the study was carried out. It discussed the research design adopted, the study area, sampling procedures followed, tools and methods for data collection and analysis. It also examined issues relating to recruitment of field assistants, fieldwork and



challenges encountered on the field. The next chapter presents the findings and discussions of the data analyzed.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study in the light of the objectives. Section 4.2 examines the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and their participation in the management of the hippo sanctuary. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents considered include place of origin, age, gender, educational level, ethnicity, marital status, occupation and religion.

Furthermore, the study also reports on the management of the hippo sanctuary, the nature of community participation in the WCHSP which looks at the forms of community participation embedded in the management of the sanctuary, barriers and effects of community participation in the management. Also it looks at the motivations for local people participation in the management of the sanctuary, roles of stakeholders involved in the management of the hippo sanctuary, reported on both positive and negative economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts and lastly looked at how these costs and benefits were distributed among beneficiary communities.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondent

The socio-demographic characteristics considered for this study included the native status of respondents, sex, age, marital status, religion, ethnicity, occupation and their educational levels. Of all the respondents interviewed, a higher number of



them (90.3%) were natives in their various communities implying the likelihood of exercising power over reserves within their communities. However, though equal chance was given to both sex groups, the males were the dominant (55.8%) respondents from whom views regarding the study were sought (Table 5). This domination could be due to the fact that males are mostly head of households who will power and most likely to influence decisions at their households' levels. Aside this, (Gyekye, 1996; Adomako-Ampofo, 1999; Igboin, 2011) notions that in most African societies, males are generally older than their wives and as a result are more likely to influence decisions in the mist of their counterparts by virtue of seniority is evident in this context. On age wise, those who were aged between 25 and 31 constituted the highest (30.6%) of the respondents' population. On the marital status, religion and ethnicity, the highest (68.0%) were married men and women who belief in Islam (68.0%) by religion and Walas (68.4%) by ethnicity. The Briefors were the second highest (27.2%) ethnic group in the study area. This consent with the 2010 PHC report that the Wa West District is dominated by Walas who belief in the Islamic religion. (GSS, 2010). Apart from the above mentioned, a higher number (52.2%) of the respondents interviewed had no formal education and thus engage in farming (48.1%) and petty trading (32.0%) as their main occupations. Table 5 below shows the background characteristics of the respondents interviewed.



Table 5. Background Characteristics of the Respondents

Background Characteristics	N	Percentage (%)
<i>Place of origin</i>		
Indigene	186	90.3
Non-indigene	20	9.7
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	115	55.8
Female	91	44.2
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	34	16.5
25-31	63	30.6
32-38	27	13.1
39-45	30	14.6
45-52	29	14.1
53-59	16	7.8
60+	7	3.4
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Married	157	76.2
Unmarried	49	23.8
<i>Religion</i>		
Islam	140	68.0
Christianity	30	14.6
Traditionalist	35	17.0
None	1	0.5
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Wala	141	68.4
Briefer	56	27.2
Dagaabas	7	3.4
Hausa	2	1.0
<i>Educational Level</i>		
No Formal Education	108	52.4
Primary	53	25.7
Sec/Voc/Tec	26	12.6
Tertiary	19	9.2
<i>Main occupation</i>		
Farmer	99	48.1
Petty Trader	66	25.7
Civil Servant	13	12.6
Student	22	9.2

Source: Field Survey, 2015



4.3 Nature of Community Participation in the Management of WCHSP

Several schools of thought were reviewed in order to thoroughly assess the nature of community participation used under the establishment of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project. (Tosun's, 1999; Tosun's, 2000; Theron's, 2005 and Pongonrat's, 2011). Views were sought in order to ascertain two major issues that could be used in this assessment, namely, the forms of community participation and the barriers of community participation in the WCHSP.

4.3.1 Forms of Community Participation in the WCHSP

The study assessed the application of Tosun's (1999) three forms of community participation (spontaneous, induced and coercive participation) in the management of the hippo sanctuary. Under each form of participation, community members were asked to confirm or disagree with a range of fundamental characteristics, which were framed in the form of statements.

With regard to the forms of participation, coercive participation was ranked by the respondents as the major form through which their participation in the management of the Wiechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary project can best be described. To determine this, four key characteristics of coercive participation were adapted and framed as statements for respondents to indicate whether they agree or not. These were; (a) community members are told about tourism development decisions after they are made by top management, (b) community members have no say in the tourism development agenda of the community, (c) external organizations and business men take the leading role of providing goods and services to tourists and visitors and (d) decisions taken on the use of revenue generated is done by the



Wechiau District Assembly. Out of the 206 respondents interviewed, 65% of them agreed to this form of participation (Table 6). To throw more light on the above, an informant indicated the following;

“Our leaders often tell us about tourism development decisions in this community after they are made by the SMB. Sometimes too, they come and discuss some of these development issues with us but at the end of the day our views are not taken. I can boldly say that we have no say in the tourism development agenda of the community. It is in the hands of the white men, the chiefs and elders and the sanctuary manager. So my son, because of this, we cannot tap any proper benefit from the resource...” (40 years old indigene, Tokali)

Spontaneous participation was ranked as the second form in which their participation in the project can be classified. To ascertain this, four main characteristics of spontaneous participation were adapted and examined. They included, (a) the project management team is made up of representatives of all groups in the community (b) management decisions on project is in total control of the community, (c) community is directly involved in providing goods/services to tourists and (d) the entire community is consulted before key decisions are taken. Of all the respondents interviewed, 59.2% of them asserted to it (Table 6). According to them, project management team is made up of representatives of all groups in the community. Invariably, the entire community is consulted before key decisions are taken. Though the entire community is directly involved in providing



goods/services to tourists, management wills decisions over the entire communities involved in the management of the sanctuary.

The third form of community participation which was assessed in the context of management of the Hippo sanctuary is induced participation. Three major tenets of this form of participation were coined in the form of statements for respondents (community members) to indicate their agreement or disagreement. They include; (a) alternative decisions are made available to the community but there is no room for feedback, (b) people will have the chance to participate if only they belonged to certain groups and (c) people participate because of the material and financial benefits they will get in return. However, only 40.3% of the respondents agreed that these characteristics are deep rooted in the management of the hippo sanctuary (Table 6).

Table 6: Forms of Community Participation

Forms of Participation	Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank	
1. Coercive	N	206	134	17	55	1
	%	100	(65)	(8.3)	(26.7)	
2. Spontaneous	N	206	122	14	70	2
	%	100	(59.2)	(6.8)	(34.0)	
3. Induced	N	206	83	10	113	3
	%	100	(40.3)	(4.9)	(54.8)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015



The above (Table 6) findings confirmed Tosun's (1999) Top-down passive participation approach (Coercive Participation) as the major form/nature in which the participation of the respondents in the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary Project development can best be described. To give further explanation, Table 9 below, indicates that majority of the respondents abide by the by-laws of the sanctuary and restrictions within the core zone. This strict adherence to rules and restriction they explained, were due to the expensive nature of fines given out whenever they are flouted (Discussants, Talawona and Tuole). It also was clear that very few people were involved in the management of the attraction.

This finding is in contrast with Pongponrat's (2011) view that "local tourism development requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans.

4.3.2 Barriers of Community Participation in the WCHSP

In order to ascertain the barriers to community participation in the management of the Hippo Sanctuary project, the study first reviewed literature on barriers of community participation (Tosun 2000 and Theron, 2005).

The barriers were broadly grouped into three - operational, structural and cultural barriers. Under each broad category, specific features of these barriers were adapted and assessed in the context of management of the hippo sanctuary. Table 7 contains the barriers to community participation in the management of the hippo sanctuary and the proportion of respondents that either agree or disagree. Though all respondents agreed that operational, structural and cultural issues curtail their participation in the management of the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary, the level of



interference of these barriers vary. Operational barriers were discovered as the major barrier representing 71.4% of all the barriers that limits their participation in the management of the Wiechau Hippo Sanctuary. Besides, a similar view was shared by a 52 year woman in a Focus Group Discussion (FDG) session held in Toule as follows;

“It seems all the activities are carried out in the Wechiau community. To be frank with you my son, we don’t take part in the decision making process. They just come to tell us what they have decided on. Now, our farm lands are far away from where we live and it is because we were not represented. It is Tokali Naa, Wechiau Naa and the Sanctuary Manager who take all the decisions...” (52 year old, indigene, Tuole).

Also, a 52 year old man in Wiechiau also shared his view as follows;

“So far we don’t know the amount of money generated from the WCHSP and what it has been used for. At the same time this manager has been the manager for so many years and he is even contesting in the Assembly elections. They need to tell us how our monies are being used...” (52 years old Indigene, Wachiau)

Another respondent (40 years old man) in Tokali expressed this in an in-depth interview session;

“I have no idea at all about ecotourism activities in this community. What I have observed is that the white men always pass through our community



with their cars to Talawona. I really suspect that our leaders have sold the sanctuary to the white people...” (40 years old indigene, Tokali)

The above finding implies that the management of the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary is centralized in nature, lacks coordination between the project management and as well has very little information on tourism related activities.

That apart, structural barriers were ranked second, constituting 27% (Table 7) of the total barriers curtailing the participation of community members in the management of the sanctuary. These group of respondents were of the view that the timing for community meeting in relation to the sanctuary are often not favorable. Either the meeting is organized in the dry season when all the active men and women have migrated to the southern part of the country or in the rainy season when we are actively engaged in farming. This according to them often breeds conflict because views are sometimes taken and imposed on households that were present to participate. Other structural issues such as limited meetings of the committee of the sanctuary, elite dominance in the management of the sanctuary and lack of formal education to adequately contribute in decision-making in meetings. These they enumerated interfere in their desire to actively participate in the management of the sanctuary.



Table 7: Barriers to Community Participation in the Management of the Hippo Sanctuary

Barriers	Total		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
1. Operational	N	206	147	12	47	1
	%	100	(71.4)	(5.8)	(22.8)	
2. Structural	N	206	56	27	123	2
	%	100	(27)	(13)	(59.2)	
3. Cultural	N	206	11	1	194	3
	%	100	(5.3)	(0.5)	(94.2)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The last barrier discovered in the course of this study was the cultural barrier. Very few respondents (5.3%) are curtailed by the cultural issues in their desire to participate in the management of the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary as shown in (Table 7). Proponent of this idea are of the view that poor household heads cannot afford the cost of travelling to and from their communities to participate in sanctuary meetings in the Wiechiau Township. Culturally, their limitation to participating in sanctuary management meetings according to them are further compounded by age and prescribed gender roles and responsibilities such as cooking, fetching of water and feeding of chickens at home particularly in the dry season. These cannot be abandoned in order to participate in sanctuary management meetings elsewhere.

4.4 Motivation for Local Peoples Participation in the WCHSP

A review of the works of Selin & Chavez (1995), Tosun (2000), Li (2003), Chok & Macbeth (2007) and Zhao and Ritchie (2007) revealed four major drivers of



community participation in development projects. These include home pride, monetary gains, social capital and community development. These four drivers were assessed in the context of community participation in the management of the Hippo sanctuary.

First, a majority (70.9%) of community members indicated that they participate in the management of the hippo sanctuary for the sake of community development (Table 8). Some community members were of the view that they will remain very committed to the project due to the numerous communal benefits emerging as a result of the WCHSP. A respondent remarked that;

“I am very happy about the sanctuary because it has taken a great burden away from me and many women in the community. At first we had to walk long distances to fetch water from the river side for our families, but now we have a borehole (Plate 1) at the centre of the community which makes our burden reduced...” (37 years old woman, Talawona)



Plate 1: Boreholes Constructed from Tourism Revenue



Source: Fieldwork, 2015

One other communal benefit revealed by most community members include the levelling and widening of major roads networks (Plate 2), from Wechiau community to Tokali community, through to the host community (Talawona) of the WCHSP. As narrated by an informant;

“The sanctuary project has brought about many communal developments and this is why I will always take part in it development. Many years before the inception of the sanctuary, it was very difficult to go to the neighbouring communities because of the bushy and rough nature of the roads at that time. But since after the introduction of the sanctuary, the road from my community to Tokali through to Talawona has been levelled and widened, this has made movement very comfortable and faster...” (57 years old man, Wechiau)



Plate 2: Road network from wechiau to Talawona improved

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Also, other respondents expressed satisfaction about the construction of school buildings and provision of teaching and learning materials. Other benefits such as electricity (Grid and Solar), medical supplies and job opportunities among others were mentioned by some respondents. The chairman of the SMB remarked that:

“We (SMB) are equally passionate about the holistic development of the sanctuary communities. We are happy about the numerous community development initiatives that have been implemented and those that are yet to be carried out. Based on the external support we are receiving, we would work relentlessly to promote the development of the ecotourism project and the community at large. I would rest peacefully after my long service with the sanctuary, with all these achievements in mind...” (64 years old, Chairman-SMB)

Table 8: Motivation for Local People’s Participation

Reasons why people participate	Responses	
	Frequency	Percent (%)
Home pride	125	60.7
Monetary gains	63	30.6
Social capital	70	34.0
Community development	146	70.9

*Frequency is more (374) due to multiple responses.

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Secondly, 60.7% of the community members in the survey said that they participate for home pride (Table 8). Respondents, particularly those from Talawona, the host community of the sanctuary were very excited about the existence of the ecotourism



site in their community. The majority indicated that just the presence of the site brings them so much popularity and self-gratification. Many respondents opined that but for the Hippo sanctuary project, many people would not have heard of the community name Wechiau not to talk of visiting it. In a focus group discussion with women in Wechiau, a discussant had this to say;

“I am very happy about the Hippo Sanctuary Project. Just within a period of some few years, our community’s name (Wechiau) is all over the world and I even have friends in other parts of the world, because of these and many more benefits I will support the sanctuary’s development...” (32 years indigene, Wechiau)

Thirdly, 34% of the respondents in the survey indicated that they participated for social capital gains (Table 8). It was reported that through the WCHSP, some form of livelihood have been provided to project communities. These include but not limited to the construction of the organic shea processing plant, remuneration for shea pickers, educational support through scholarship for needy students, etc. This was what a discussant had to say;

“We are very happy about the presence of the sanctuary, especially the students in this community. The student scholarship fund has led to an increase in the number of elites in the communities since majority of the qualified senior high school students are benefiting from the fund. After their schooling too, they are employed by the sanctuary as tour guides and they make money out of it. I will also learn hard so that when I am done with school, I can get employment in the sanctuary...” (18 years old, Tokali)



Furthermore, the project has done very well by educating project communities on environmental conservation, community-tourist relationship and many others. Moreover, some community members revealed that through their interaction with visitors/tourists, they have gained more insight in new ways of doing things therefore making them more knowledgeable in their agriculture and family life. These important social benefits have encouraged some community members to remain very committed to the WCHSP.

Lastly, 30.6% said they participate for monetary gains (Table 8). Community participation as a result of monetary gains is not a new phenomenon in ecotourism. Participation through monetary gains is arguably a useful way to curb poverty at the household level since it diverts economic benefits directly to the family level.

One of the farmers interviewed stated that;

“Our farm lands have been taken away from us and we have to go to very distant locations to farm so what most of us do now is to paddle the boats for tourists to see the hippos, sell most of our sculptures and even sometimes leave our accommodations for the white people to have the local housing experience. And we do this for the financial benefits...” (33 years old indigene, Talawona)

Throughout the sentiments shared by community members in relation to what moves them to take part in the management of the WCHSP, the suggestions of the above mentioned authors were well represented and Community Development stood out. This indicate that the collective values, beliefs, experiences and interests among others have made them patriotic in the participation process towards



ecotourism development. This finding affirms Aref's (2011) conclusion in his study that, the "sense of community" is a motivating factor for local people's participation.

4.5 Roles of Stakeholders in Ecotourism Management

Stakeholders include all actors or groups who affect and/or are affected by the policies, decisions and actions of a project (Groenendijk, 2003). From this definition, two categories of stakeholders were identified – those who affect policies, decisions and actions of project (also known as secondary stakeholders) and those who are affected by policies, decisions and actions taken on a project (also known as primary stakeholders).

With regard to the Wechiau Hippo sanctuary project, the primary stakeholders include the Chiefs and elders and individual members in project communities whereas the secondary stakeholders include the SMB, District Assembly, EPA, NCRC, the Ghana Tourist Authority, Tourists and NGOs. Secondary stakeholders are key when it comes to promoting the interest of those with 'no voice' particularly the vulnerable and future generation (Groenendijk, 2003). The roles of the aforementioned stakeholders in the management of the Hippo sanctuary are discussed in the next section.

4.5.1 Roles of the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB)

The Sanctuary Management Board (SMB) is the highest body in charge of the management of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) since its establishment in 1998. The board consists of Tokali *Naa*, Wechiau *Naa* (Paramount



Chief), two other representatives (male and female) from each community and one representative each from the District Assembly, NCRC, EPA and the Ghana Tourist Authority. During an interview with the former chairman of the SMB, he indicated that the main goal of the SMB is to promote the development and sustainability of the Hippo Sanctuary including natural resource so as to make the Hippo sanctuary attractive to tourists. The chairman further opined that, the more the sanctuary attracts tourists, the more revenue it generates to the communities. Here is an introductory remark from the Chairman on the rationale behind the setting up of the SMB;

“After the resource was discovered, there was a need for a board to be formed to oversee the activities and I became the first Chairman of the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB). Of the 17 communities, each was to produce a man and a woman to represent the community on the board. We educated the sanctuary communities on the need for the establishment of the sanctuary. We ensure that the sanctuary communities see to the welfare of the sanctuary by abiding by the bye-laws enacted and regularly attending the board meetings...”

The chairman added that the major roles of the SMB include the following;

- Take decisions regarding the day to day administration of the sanctuary
- Take decisions on behalf of sanctuary communities on the management and utilization of revenues.



- Enact and implement bye-laws to ensure the effective management of the Hippo sanctuary. For instance, the board is to ensure that no one farms or hunts within the 42 square/km perimeter of the hippo sanctuary.
- The board serves as a platform through which the grievances of the various communities on management of the Hippo sanctuary are addressed as well as settling conflict among members on issues that has to do with the hippo sanctuary.
- Ensuring tourists welfare including provision of accommodation and health services

4.5.2 Roles of the Administrative Unit (Sanctuary Management Committee)

The administrative unit is in charge of the day to day running of the sanctuary. It act as an intermediary between the board, tourists and community members. The SMC consists of the Manager, secretary, tour guides and rangers. The leadership of the administrative unit are members of the SMB. An interview with the Manager of the sanctuary disclosed the following as roles of the Administrative Unit;

- They are the implementing machinery of the board.
- They manage all the sanctuary properties (Tourist Lodge, Organic shea factory, canoes and other aesthetic structures).
- They plan, implement and monitor progress of projects.
- They give feedback to the board, development partners and community members.
- They are the first point of call.



Again, the administrative unit is to enforce the bylaws enacted by the SMB to protect the flora and fauna of the sanctuary and also to secure one of the two remaining hippo species in Ghana. Thus, the following bylaws are to be observed by all member communities:

1. No bush burning
2. No hunting of hippos
3. No general hunting within the core zone
4. No cutting down of trees for firewood
5. No fishing
6. No picking of oysters
7. No littering/dumping of refuse in the water body and within the communities (Manager, WCHSP)

4.5.3 Roles of Chiefs and Elders

The chiefs and elders of the Sanctuary Communities are the key indigenous/primary stakeholders in the development of the Wechiau Community Hippos Sanctuary. In total, 144 (69.9%) out of the 206 respondents interviewed revealed that these chiefs and elders have played leading roles since the discovery of the Hippo Sanctuary. To affirm the above, an interview with the chairman of the SMB who doubles as the Sub divisional chief of the Tokali Traditional Area and the Chief of Tokali community, disclosed the following as roles of the chiefs and elders (council of chiefs);



- The chiefs and elders at the various communities ensure that bye-laws enacted by the Sanctuary Management Board are duly adhered to by community members.
- They furnish their subjects (community members) with decisions taken at the board level.
- The chiefs and elders also collate grievances from their people for onward submission to the board
- Ensure that two representatives (male and a female) represent the community on the Sanctuary Management Board and regularly attend the meetings organize by the board.

4.5.4 Roles of Community Members

Aside the roles of the chiefs and elders of the various communities, the roles of the sanctuary communities' members cannot be undermined. All the respondents interviewed revealed that they had played one or two roles towards the management of the community-based eco-tourist site. However, among the many roles they play abiding by the laws of the sanctuary (47.9%) such as refraining from harvesting oysters, hunting, fishing, cutting of trees, accessing economic trees amongst others was discovered as the major role they play towards the management of the sanctuary (Table 9). In a Focus group discussion session, a 38 year old man confirmed their adherence to the by-laws as follows;

“We have nothing doing in the reserve. Even if your cattle is missing and you go there to look for it and the tour guides get you they will arrest and fine you. They normally think we are going there to cut firewood, so because



of that we don't go there. We no longer farm there, fish, tap economic trees, hunt nor cut trees for firewood..." (38 year old man in Tuole)

Respondents disclosed that they have adopted alternatives measures to sustain their cultural values and minimize the cost they incur (*loss of cultural values and loss of some farmlands*) in exercising their roles for the development of the sanctuary.

A 47 year old women in *Toule* confirmed this as follows;

"Abiding by the by-laws have prevented us from our cultural practices. We used to harvest oysters from the river to mourn our dead as a sign of farewell ceremonies for the departed soul to get to our ancestors, but because of the by-laws in place, we no longer harvest oyster from the river. We now travel to Burkina Faso to buy for our ceremony whenever there is funeral..."

That apart, 77 (18.1%) of the respondents disclosed that they had participated in communal labour, thus the building of the tourist lodge in *Talawona* to accommodate distant tourists. Entertaining tourists (9.6%) by teaching them local language, selling of local items such as sachet water and wild fruits was also discovered as a role played by the community members. Besides, 6.9% of the respondents disclosed that they have been providing security to tourists as tour guides, while 34.0% percent disclosed that they invite distant friends to visit the tourist site as a strategy to promoting the name of the eco-tourist site. Table 9 shows the various roles community members play in the development of the sanctuary.



Table 9: The Roles of the Communities Members in the WCHSP Development

Roles	N	Percentage (%)
Abide by the laws of the Sanctuary	204	47.9
Engage communal Labour	77	18.1
Sell goods to tourist/Visitors	41	9.6
Provide tour guide services	29	6.8
Provide Security to Visitors/tourist	24	5.6
Invite distant friends to visit	17	4.0
Involved in managing the attraction	15	3.5
Provide entertainments to tourists/visitors	13	3.1
Host tourists/Visitors	6	1.4
Total	426*	100

Source; Field Survey, 2015

NB. Sample size exceeded 206 because of multiple responses

4.5.5 Roles of Tourists (Friends of Wechiau)

The core component of every eco-tourist site are the tourists. A reserve can only be successfully sustained if only it has the capacity to attract distant and nearby tourists. It is through the tourists that the sanctuary communities derive the benefits (monetary and non-monetary) to compensate the cost (lack of access to previously accessible economic trees, farmlands and other livelihood sources) they incur as a



results of the development of the ecotourism site. The chairman of the SMB stated this to project the roles of tourists, most especially foreign tourists;

“In the case of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS), “Friends of Wechiau” is a group formed by tourists from different parts of the world to provide monetary and non-monetary support to needy but brilliant students and the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB) for the development of the Sanctuary. They contribute funds for the SMB for the payments of tour guides/rangers, the canoe operators and the women involved in the watering of seedlings within the Core zone to enable them see the need for the conservation of their natural environment...” (64 years old, SMB Chairman)

The above finding affirms Orams (1995)’s discussion on the fundamental goal of ecotourism that tourists are very influential in the contribution towards the environmental, socio-cultural and economic developments of communities.

4.5.6 Roles of the District Assembly

Though the District Assembly is the authority mandated to tap the potentials from its environs to carry out a holistic and people-centered development, findings gathered revealed that the Wechiau District Assembly played a dormant role in the development of the Hippo Sanctuary in recent times. The Chief of Tokali in an in-depth interview session described the roles played by leaders of the district in the past as enormous, whiles condemning the efforts of the present leadership in the management of the sanctuary. According to him, the past leadership constructed the road from the Wechiau Township through Tokali to Talawona where the Hippos



are conserved as a strategy to promote tourist arrivals for income generation. The former Chairman of the Sanctuary Management Board (SMB) justified this as follows;

“The development of the reserves is purely a sacrificial job. Since the establishment of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary, only one DCE (the immediate predecessor of the current DCE) who supported us in the development of the sanctuary. He gave the board a lot of money to support the payment of the tourist guides/rangers and the canoe operators who normally carry the tourists to the site where the hippos are. Also, the then WA district did a lot for us. They constructed the Road from Wechiau through Tokali to Talawoma, but currently the District Assembly is a reluctant partner but they ought to play a better role towards the development of the sanctuary than they are doing...” [64 year man, Chief of Tokali]

This finding is therefore inconsistent with Gunn’s (1994) argument that the public sector is more involved in planning, enforcing laws related to tourism destinations and managing the construction of infrastructure as well as public tourism appeal. The lukewarm attitude of the present Assembly in the development of the sanctuary as portrayed by the Chairman of the Sanctuary Board actually confirmed by an official at the District Assembly. It was revealed by an informant as follows,

“The Assembly has not really earmarked resources in their budget for the development of the sanctuary. In fact, apart from having a representative at the SMB, the assembly for the past 4 years, has not made any direct



contribution in the development of the sanctuary...” (37 years old worker, Wechiau District Assembly)

The lukewarm attitude of the District Assembly in the development of the sanctuary affirms Harrill and Potts (2003, p. 233) proclamation that “tourism is also invisible to many planners, so tourism development is often left to private developers and leisure service providers” .

4.5.7 Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) and Private Operators

The roles of Non-Governmental Organizations and private operators in the development of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHP) cannot be undermined. The Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) and Private Operators According to the discussants, each of these organizations play one or two roles in the development of the site. They described their roles as follows;

“When you forgo certain things you gain certain things. We have Development Partners who are interested in the Hippos, the Calgary Zoo, NCRC, the SFC and the IUCN-PASCO did a lot for us. They were our source of fund, they pumped in a lot of money into the development of the site and now, the tour guides have started getting money small, small. They made sure that people do not cut wood within the reserve areas. Calgary Zoo have provided each of the sanctuary communities with a borehole, a grinding mill for women in Tokali and a Nursery School in Talawona (the host community), raised money to build the tourist lodge in Talawona through which we generate money from tourist. The SFC also ensure that



women from the sanctuary communities pick shea-nuts from the reserve for them to buy at higher prices. The NCRC built schools and constructed dugouts for communities to go into irrigation. Scholarships were provided for brilliant but needy students' from the SHS to the tertiary, and currently we have relatives and other community members benefitting from the scholarship..."

These findings affirmed Gunn's (1994) assertion that the private sector plays an important role in the preparation of space, activities and products towards the development of natural reserves.

4.5.8 Roles of EPA, Game and Wildlife and Ghana Tourist Authority

The Ghana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Game and Wildlife division and the Ghana Tourist Authority have played intertwining roles in the discovery and subsequently in the development of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary.

As narrated by a discussant;

"The Game and Wildlife Department was called upon to conduct a scientific research when the fishermen reported that the frequent destruction of their fishing nets by unknown animals in the water led to their indebtedness. The scientific research conducted resulted in the discovery of Hippos in the water. The zone was immediately declared a Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) by the Game and Wildlife Department..." (64 years old, Tokali Chief)

Thus, to affirm the above, an interview conducted with the division in relation to their role as far as the WCHSP is concerned, disclosed the following;



“Our outfit is responsible for the development and protection of wildlife all over the country. At the beginning of the WCHSP, we collaborated with the GTA and the Traditional Authorities to confirm the site as a Community Resource Management Area (CREMA). Implying that, the community would have total control of the resource and the benefits that come in thereof; whereas in the establishment of National Parks, the government has a greater percentage (60%), while the District Assembly and the Community are also entitled to 20% each of the total revenue generated. Also in collaboration with the GTA we have linked the WCHS with international Organizations (NCRC, Calgary Zoo, IUCN-PACO and some others) whose activities have had a positive impact on survival of the limited hippo species. On the issue of sustainability, we have run series of workshops and training sections geared towards promoting public awareness on wildlife management issues. We have since been in touch with the SMB to give our continuous assistance to them...” (Informant, Wildlife Division)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) immediately called for the need for the conservation of the site (Hippos) hence forestry rangers were appointed to ensure that no one kills the Hippos in the water. That apart, the Environmental Protection Agency provided seedlings and insisted that they were planted around the site. All human activities were banned from the sites where the Hippos were found. Different portion was allocated for fishermen to carry out their fishing activities. However, further discussion held with the Assistant Director of the EPA



confirmed that their contributions to the development and management of the WCHS as follows;

“Our functional responsibility as an institution is to protect the environment, so in the case of the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary, we ensured that the natural resource was well managed. We helped them in the protection of the buffer zone from fire by organizing sensitization Programmes to educate them on the need to protect their natural resource from fire. As part of this, we also contributed in the procurement of boats, hoes and cutlasses to enable them protect the buffer zone. However, to ensure that they adhere to these measures, we provided a corn Mill in Tokali for shea-butter processing and soap making as income generating activities to enable them reduce the pressure they exert on the natural environment. We have also provided livestock to women. To ensure that they sustain and benefit from these measures, we trained volunteers in Talawona (host community) on how to protect the Buffer zone from fire, so the vegetation cover is increasing day in and day out around the buffer zone” (Assistant Director of EPA, Wa, 2015).

The discussants added further that the Ghana Tourist Authority sought the consent of the communities involved before the development of the site. The consent for the development of the site was arrived at when the feasibility results showed that 98% of the community members assented to the conversion of the site to a tourist site. To facilitate movement to and from the Hippo site, the respondents revealed that the EPA provided three (3) canoes to the Sanctuary Management Board and



trained the tourist guides. Also in an interview with a representative of GTA in the region, he added by saying that they support through the provision of technical support, promotion and marketing and also regulating the activities of supporting/external organizations. The Upper West Regional Manager of the Ghana Tourism Authority confirmed the other roles played as follows;

“We have been very instrumental from inception towards its development. We were called by the “Tokali Naa” at the earlier stage of the sanctuary to advise them on the suitable management strategy to adapt to be able to operate the sanctuary successfully. We suggested that they can either operate as a Community Based Ecotourism or a National Park. We were able to initiate a discussion with the NCRC to provide support technically in the sitting of the sanctuary at the early stage. The NCRC brought on board the Calgari Zoo and Friends of Wiechiaux, who are now supporting in the development of the place. We have tried to resolve the disagreement between the Wiechiaux District Assembly and the SMB, by ensuring that there is representation of the DA on the Sanctuary Management Board”
(Upper West GTA Manager, 2015).

On the whole, various stakeholders were involved by playing numerous roles in relation to the development of the WCHSP. The contributions of external organization was duly registered and cannot be underestimated. Also traditional authorities and community members enumerated their contributions. These united efforts from the various stakeholders, I would say, worked together in the current level of development of the sanctuary. This goes to affirm the view of (Niezgoda



& Czernek, 2008) that whichever way, it is very crucial to identify and involve key stakeholders right from the planning stage. They further stated that failure to do so, can bring about project failure and possibly conflicts. On the other hand, enabling wide participation of various stakeholders including local communities would promote knowledge sharing, acquisition of new skills and the attainment of new knowledge, which in turn, fosters understanding of regional problems and allows for the generation of new and innovative solutions (Niezgoda & Czernek, 2008). This I would say is reflected in the WCHSP.

4.6 Assessment of the Positive Impacts (Benefits) of the WCHSP

The desire for positive benefits is the main aim for which developmental projects are often initiated. In the context of ecotourism projects, the mode of “management” has associated effect on the benefits communities can derive. However, several works on ecotourism projects postulated that ecotourism projects when properly managed can exert positive benefits with limited cost to the localities in which they are situated (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Weaver, 1998; Belsky, 1999; Jones, 2005; Stronza & Godillo, 2008). To ascertain the above, a range of positive effects of ecotourism projects were identified and presented to community members to indicate whether those effects equally manifest in the case of the Wechaiu Hippo Sanctuary Project. Respondents were expected to assess by either agreeing or disagreeing with each of the positive effects presented in Tables 9, 10 & 11 below. Thus, economic, cultural and the environmental benefits have accrued



to the sanctuary communities through the management of the Wiechiau Hippos Sanctuary.

4.6.1 Positive Economic Impacts

To begin with, the study revealed that, the sanctuary is patronized by both domestic and international tourists with greater portion of revenue coming from the foreign visitors. Thus, to assess the Sanctuary's financial capacity, the study obtained fiscal records from the Sanctuary Management Committee (SMC). Since the inception of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project in 1999, there has been gradual increase in tourist arrivals and revenue generated. Between 2008 and 2013 alone, the sanctuary generated a gross revenue of GHC127, 402.50 (NCRC, 2014). Revenue generated from the WCHSP was from entrance fees paid by both domestic/international visitors, accommodation and safari charges. In an interview with the Chair of the SMB, he indicated that;

“International visitors to the sanctuary usually include foreign students, volunteers and expatriates residing in the country. These international visitors come from a host of countries but mostly from USA, Canada, Burkina Faso, Netherlands and Germany. Also domestic visitors are mostly student groups and local clubs. Sometimes too, some adults in smaller groups or on individual basis visit the sanctuary for sightseeing particularly during picnics and Christmas seasons. So I believe that if the sanctuary is well developed to an international standard, it will attract a lot of tourists which will eventually lead to an increase in revenue...” (64 years old man, Chairman – SMB)



On the other hand, all respondents' in individual sanctuary communities revealed that they had derived one or two economic benefits from the ecotourism project. For instance, 91.7% (Table 10) of the respondents strongly agreed that the major economic benefit has been social amenities ranging from improved roads networks, class room blocks, health centers and electricity. A 50 year man further confirmed the above in a Focus Group Discussion held with men in Talawona the Host community as follows;

“Our road network from Wiechiau town to here was not good at all, Cars could not pass through it and anytime someone was sick, it took us many hours to carry the person to the Wiechiau Health Centre. When they realized the difficulty we were facing, they came and built a CHIP compound for us and that is what you are seeing over there, and finally they started opening up the roads from Wiechiau and now we those in “Talawona” “Dodoma” and “Tokali” can move frequently with our bicycles and motors to Wiechiau anytime we want...” (50 years old man, Security man of the CHIP Compound, Talawona).

Similar revelations were made by a 45 year old woman from Toule in a Focus Group Discussion;

“Though we have lost something's through the sanctuary, we have also gained something. As you can see we are isolated from the rest of the communities in Wiechiau. Ahead of us is the sanctuary that prevents us from moving forward freely and behind us is a river that also gets full during the raining season. Our children could hardly be enrolled and retained in



school in neighboring communities like Wechiau and Kpanfa particularly in the raining season. We could barely access clean water for our domestic activities, it was the dirty water from the rivers that we depended on. When the White people (Calgary Zoo) came here and saw our situation, they decided to build a basic school for us and provided us borehole so it is not something we have benefitted...?” (45 year old woman in Tuole).

Apart from the social amenities, 81% (Table 10) of the respondents agreed that the development of the sanctuary has created employment through which they earn income for their daily up keep. According to them, the authorities have provided a grinding mill (Plate 3&4) in Wechiau and Tokali for the processing of shea-butter for sale in order to prevent them from destructing the vegetation cover around the core zone of the sanctuary. Besides, women who are into the watering of the seedling around the core zone of the sanctuary are paid monthly stipends of 50 Ghana cedis, others such as the tours guides and the canoe peddlers are also paid monthly for their services.



Table 10: Respondents' Sentiments about Positive Economic Impacts

Economic (Positive)		Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
Improved amenities	N	206	189	3	14	1
	%	100	(91.7)	(1.5)	(6.8)	
Increased employment opportunities of community members	N	206	167	4	35	2
	%	100	(81)	(1.9)	(17.1)	
Contributes to personal income levels	N	206	146	3	57	3
	%	100	(70.9)	(1.5)	(27.6)	
Improved transport infrastructure	N	206	135	4	67	4
	%	100	(65.5)	(1.9)	(32.6)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Also, 70.9% (Table 10) of the respondents agreed that the ecotourism project has contributed to their personal income levels, whilst (65.5%) of them agreed that the development of the sanctuary has helped improved upon the transport infrastructure of their communities (Table 10). The pictures below shows evidence of some economic benefits of the WCHSP.



Plate 3: Organic Shea Processing Factory

Source: Fieldwork, 2015



Plate 4: Women Employed at the Organic Shea Factory

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The above finding affirms Mathieson & Wall, (1982); Weaver, (1998); Belsky, (1999); Jones, (2005) and Stronza & Godillo, (2008) assertion that ecotourism project exert positives benefits in the form of employment and income generation to their localities when properly managed.

4.6.2 Positive Socio-Cultural Impacts

Communities are social systems, structured by belief systems, norms and values. In the mist of the structured systems are ecotourism activities. The activities of tourists can bring to bear an increased interaction between the communities involved and the tourists which may leads to the sharing of social and cultural lives or an improvement upon the existing social and cultural lives they have lived with over



time (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Weaver, 1998; Scheyvens, 1999; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007).

This section therefore looks at the socio-cultural positives the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary has exerted on communities involved in its management. To ascertain this, the views of communities involved in the management of the sanctuary were sought regarding their agreement, uncertainty and disagreement with some socio-cultural positives as shown in Table 11. All respondents shared one view or the other. However, the highest number of respondents (80.1%) strongly agreed that the development of the Wechiau Hippo Community Sanctuary has fostered unity among the beneficiary communities, though the sanctuary management meetings which are not frequently organized. The few occasions they meet with one another often gives them the opportunity to interact. This has strengthen their collective efforts in maintaining a clean environment and an increased effort in the preservation of their environment. However, discussants confirmed this in a Focus Group Discussion in Tokali as follows;

“The sanctuary has made us not to see the need to quarrel amongst ourselves over land boundary and economic trees. Who owns which portion of the land or which shea-tree or dawadawa trees does not come to our minds at all, because all of us involved have our lands encroached on by the sanctuary. So what we are doing is managing to get the little benefits that comes out from it...”



Table 11: Respondents’ Sentiments about Positive Socio-cultural Impacts

Socio-Cultural (Positives)		Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
Unity among residents	N	206	165	12	29	1
	%	100	(80.1)	(5.8)	(14.1)	
Increased community sense of Pride	N	206	155	11	40	2
	%	100	(75.2)	(5.3)	(19.5)	
Increased demand for local artifacts	N	206	98	24	84	3
	%	100	(47.6)	(11.7)	(40.7)	
Cultural diffusion	N	206	88	23	95	4
	%	100	(42.8)	(11.2)	(46.0)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

That apart, 75.2% of the respondents interviewed also agreed that the development of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary has increased the community’s sense of pride. According to them, the sanctuary has promoted the name of Wechiau from the national level to the international level. An in-depth discussion held with a respondent confirmed this as follows;

“Wechiau’s name is higher now just because of the sanctuary, even our chief went to Canada and came back, so Wechiau’s name is in Canada now, because of that people come from all parts of the world just to see the hippos. Those days we never knew who the Whiteman was, but through the sanctuary we now see them and interact with them freely...” (27 years native, Wechiau)

Others socio-cultural benefits discovered included, the increased demand for local artifacts (47.6%) and cultural diffusion (42.8%).



4.6.3 Positive Environmental Impacts

The development of an ecotourism site does not only profit the community involved economically, socially and culturally, but also environmentally (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). To establish this, a category of environmental positives were assessed in relation to the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project. A proportion of respondents agreed and disagreed and or were uncertain regarding the environmental benefits brought by the sanctuary. From the findings gathered, 95.1% (Table 12) of the respondents agreed that the sanctuary has led to an increase in their efforts to maintain a clean environment in the community. This could be largely driven by the frequent movement of visitors from all walks of life to their communities, calling for the need to project a positive image (cleanliness) of themselves.

That apart, 93.2% (Table 12) of the respondents interviewed strongly agreed that the development of the sanctuary has increased their efforts in the preservation of their natural environment. Though hunting, farming and picking of dawadawa and shea-nuts around the core zone of the sanctuary were activities that earned them a living prior to the development of the sanctuary, respondents disclosed that the restrictions placed on these activities has led to the development of more shea and dawadawa tree species around the sanctuary which they are benefiting than before. This has made them more conscious in environmental conservation than before.

A 35 year old woman in Tokali confirmed this in the course of the interview:

“It is not easy conserving the things that you earn money from for a living.

It was not easy refraining from harvesting shea-fruits and dawadawa



around the sanctuary, but now we can see that we are benefiting from them even than before, because the Savanna Fruit Company now comes here every year to ensure that we the women go into the sanctuary to pick up the shea-fruits and process for them to buy. So we are now seeing the importance of conserving our environment...” (35 year old woman, Tokali).

Table 12: Respondents’ Sentiments about Positives Environmental Impacts

Environmental Positives		Total	Agree (%)	Uncertain (%)	Disagree (%)	Rank
Increased efforts to preserve natural environment	N	206	192	5	9	1
	%	100	(93.2)	(2.4)	(4.4)	
Increased awareness on issues of conservation	N	206	161	33	12	2
	%	100	(78.1)	(16.1)	(5.8)	
Increased efforts to maintain a clean environment in the community	N	206	196	3	7	3
	%	100	(95.1)	(1.5)	(3.4)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Aside, the last group of respondents (78.1%) asserted that the development of the sanctuary has brought about an increase in their level of awareness of issues regarding environmental conservation, owing to the monetary they derive. This implies that the benefits of trees and water bodies are now perceived beyond the mere fruiting and serving as sources of water to a source of income.

4.7 Assessment of the Negative Impacts (Cost) of the WCHSP

From the review of literature, there exist an unequal balance of literature between the positive impacts (benefits) and the negative impacts (cost) of ecotourism



projects. It is worth saying that voluminous literature prevails on the positive impacts (benefits) of ecotourism project as compared to the negatives (cost). As a corollary, this aspect of the study tries to look at the negative economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts (cost) of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary project (WCHSP) to the communities involved in the management of the sanctuary.

4.7.1 Negative Economic Impacts

In determining the negative economic impacts of the sanctuary, a list of economic cost were adapted and presented to respondents to indicate their agreement, disagreement and uncertainty. A higher number of the respondents disagreed with the various economic cost presented regarding the sanctuary.

As shown in Table 13, 72.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion that the development of the sanctuary had increased the cost of land and housing in their communities. This implies that the activities of tourist have little impact on land and housing cost. This may be due to the fact that the major activity of tourists at the site is the attraction, hence very few tourist may stay in tourist sites for a long period of time. Besides, 72.2% of the respondents also disagreed that ecotourism activities leads to an increase in the prices of goods and services in their localities. This may be due to the fact that tourists may not have continuous interaction with host communities' members, therefore less likely to influence processes of goods and services of the host community.



Table 13: Respondents’ Sentiments about Negative Economic Impacts

Economic (Negatives)		Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
Increased cost of land and housing	N	206	34	23	149	1
	%	100	(16.5)	(11.2)	(72.3)	
Increase in prices of goods/services	N	206	42	15	149	2
	%	100	(30.5)	(7.3)	(72.2)	
Reduced concentration on farming	N	206	78	8	120	3
	%	100	(37.9)	(3.9)	(58.2)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

That apart, ecotourism activities have little influence on the main livelihood activities of beneficiary communities. As shown above, Table 13 indicates that, 58.2% of the respondents interviewed disagrees with the assertion that ecotourism activities can reduce the engagement of the host communities on their major livelihood source which is agriculture (crop farming and livestock rearing). This may be due to the minimal economic benefits ecotourism project exerts on the communities involved as opined by (Afenyo, 2011).

4.7.2 Negative Socio-cultural Impacts

The socio-cultural cost discovered in the study are less aversive. Majority of the respondents strongly disagreed with the assertion that the development of the sanctuary has led to an increase in alcoholism/addiction (92.3%) and criminality/robbery/vandalism (92.3%). However, the remaining respondents also disagreed with the increase in prostitution (87.9%) and loss of cultural values (77.7%) as cost brought to bear in their communities due to the development of the ecotourism (Table 14).



Table 14: Respondent’s sentiments about Negative Socio-cultural Impacts

Socio-cultural (Negatives)		Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
Increased alcoholism/drug addiction	N	206	10	6	190	1
	%	100	(4.9)	(2.9)	(92.3)	
Increased crime/robberies/vandalism	N	206	11	5	190	2
	%	100	(5.3)	(2.4)	(92.3)	
Increased prostitution	N	206	14	11	181	3
	%	100	(6.8)	(5.3)	(87.9)	
Loss of cultural value	N	206	35	11	160	4
	%	100	(17)	(5.3)	(77.7)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015.

This implies that ecotourism development has less influence on the cultural values of beneficiary communities. Even if it does happen, in the case of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary (WCHS) the socio-cultural cost associated with the sanctuary development is less significant. This could be due to the level of interaction between tourists and members of the communities involved in the management of the sanctuary.

4.7.3 Negative Environmental Impacts

Quite similar to the economic and the socio-cultural cost, respondents denied existence of the various environmental costs in their community as shown in Table 15. Out of the 206 respondents whose views were sought on the various environmental costs, 98.5% of them strongly disagreed with the view that the ecotourism project had brought about an increase in hunting of hippos. Also, 98% strongly disagreed with an increase in pollution as a result of the ecotourism project,



increased bush burning and tree cutting (97.1%) and an increase in noise making (89.3%).

Table 15: Respondents' Sentiments about Negative Environmental Impacts

Environmental (Negatives)		Total	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Rank
Increased bush burning and tree cutting	N	206	4	2	200	1
	%	100	(1.9)	(1.0)	(97.1)	
Increased hunting of hippos	N	206	0	3	203	2
	%	100	(0.0)	(1.5)	(98.5)	
Increased pollution	N	206	1	3	202	3
	%	100	(0.5)	(1.5)	(98)	
Increased noise making	N	206	20	2	184	4
	%	100	(9.7)	(1.0)	(89.3)	

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

This implies that ecotourism projects have the tendency of promoting conservation. This based on the fact that it can alter local lifestyles towards positive gains when local people are well-informed of the consequences of the negative lifestyles and are re-oriented towards other options. This eventually changes and becomes part and parcel of the management process.

4.8 Distribution of Benefits and Costs in the WCHSP

4.8.1 Distribution of Benefits

The study also sought to find out whether the benefits of the hippo sanctuary are evenly distributed among project communities: Wechiau, Talawona, Takali and Tuole. In each community, respondents were asked to write down at most four major positive things the hippo sanctuary project has brought to their community.



In all, ten different specific benefits were mentioned. These include electricity (hydro/solar), employment opportunities, educational support, community pride, medical support, improvement of road networks, water supply, increased economic activities, organic shea production and sports development.

The survey revealed that all four communities' benefit from the hippo sanctuary project. However, Wechiau, Talawona and Tokali seem to have benefited more than Tuole. For instance, whereas Wechiau, Talawona and Tokali have benefited from medical supplies, provision of roads and sports projects, same cannot be said of Tuole. Even with other development projects, not many respondents mentioned them as benefits of the hippo sanctuary project in Tuole. Giving a clear indication that aside Wechiau, Talawona and Tokali, Tuole seems disadvantaged when it comes to distribution of benefits generated from the Hippo sanctuary project. This suggests that the benefits of the hippo sanctuary project is not evenly distributed. This can be attributed to the lack of an official document on benefit sharing among sanctuary communities. Thus benefits distribution have since been done on ad hoc basis.

Wechiau, Talawona and Tokali have benefited most from the project because of their strategic locations. Wechiau as the district capital could be seen as a growth pole for the concentration of development projects. Also, Wechiau is a stopover for many tourist. Some projects in Wechiau which can be linked to the hippo sanctuary as reported by community members include electricity (hydro/solar), employment, educational support, medical supplies, community pride, improved road networks, water supply, increased economic activities, organic shea production and sports



development. With the exception of sports development and community pride, all other benefits were also reported in Tokali community. Tokali is also on the road to the hippo sanctuary (Host community – Talawoma) after Wechiau. It is the next biggest community among the 17 other communities. Some tourists do stop in Tokali to patronize goods and services. Also, the Tokali Chief is the founder of the Hippo sanctuary and currently the chair of the SMB, hence one would expect that Tokali would always get its fair share of the benefits of the hippo sanctuary. In the case of Talawona, it is the host community. Respondents in Talawona community indicated that the project has brought about increased employment, community pride, increased economic activities, good road, electricity, water supply and medical care (Table 16).

At the community level, the majority (63%) of respondents shared the view that members of the Sanctuary Management Board are the ones who benefit most from the project. They claimed that, members of the Sanctuary Management Board who are in charge of the management and utilization of revenue sometimes part away with some of the revenues. About 20 % of respondents also think that it is the chiefs and elders who benefit most from the hippo sanctuary project. They also claim that chiefs and elders connive with members of the SMB to embezzle fund.



Table 16: Distribution of Benefits among Beneficiary Communities

Benefits		Surveyed Communities				Total
		Wechiau	Talawona	Tokali	Tuole	
Electricity (Grid /Solar)	N %	28 (31.8)	22 (25.0)	37 (42.0)	1 (1.1)	88 100
Employment	N %	34 (75.6)	2 (4.4)	7 (15.6)	2 (4.4)	45 100
Educational support (scholarship, school buildings, TLM)	N %	68 (44.2)	36 (23.4)	44 (28.6)	6 (3.9)	154 100
Medical care	N %	10 (31.2)	19 (59.4)	3 (9.4)	0 (0.0)	32 100
Community pride	N %	4 (30.8)	7 (53.8)	0 (0.0)	2 (15.4)	13 100
Roads	N %	11 (26.2)	17 (40.5)	14 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	42 100
Water supply	N %	24 (23.8)	30 (29.7)	46 (45.5)	1 (1.0)	101 100
Increase in economic activities	N %	9 (27.3)	10 (30.3)	10 (30.3)	4 (12.1)	33 100
Organic Shea Production	N %	14 (50.0)	4 (14.3)	6 (21.4)	4 (14.3)	28 100
Sports development	N %	20 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	20 100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

4.8.2 Distribution of costs

In each of the surveyed communities, community members were asked to mention four costs that the hippo sanctuary project has brought to them. About 45.1% of the total number of respondents (206) mentioned limitations on livelihood as a cost. The majority of respondents (43%) who mentioned limitation of livelihood as a cost were from Talawona, followed by Tuole (22.6%), Tokali (18.3%) and lastly Wechiau (16.1%) (Table 17). According to respondents, their livelihood is limited because the SMB has banned them from fishing and picking oysters at the river



side. Moreover, they are not allowed to farm, hunt or harvest economic trees within the inner perimeter of the sanctuary area.

Table 17: Distribution of Cost among Beneficiary Communities

COSTS		Surveyed communities				Total
		Wechiau	Talawona	Tokali	Tuole	
Limitation on livelihood sources	N	15	40	17	21	93
	%	(16.1)	(43.0)	(18.3)	(22.6)	100
High youth out-migration	N	0	0	0	4	4
	%	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(100.0)	100
Loss of cultural values	N	0	1	1	3	5
	%	(0.0)	(20.0)	(20.0)	(60.0)	100
Conflict between some leaders of SMB and community members	N	3	0	0	0	3
	%	(100)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	100

Source: Fieldwork 2015

Whereas limitation on livelihood was reported as a cost across all four communities, same cannot be said of other costs. Youth out-migration as a cost was reported in Tuole only. This according to respondents has been engineered by the limitation on livelihood. Moreover, conflict as a cost of the hippo sanctuary is peculiar to only Wechiau. This is because all three respondents who reported of conflict between SMB members and community members were from Wechiau. According to respondents, some community members always accused SMB members of embezzling fund resulting in an unhealthy relationship between them. It was also reported by one respondent each in Talawona and Tokali, and three respondents in Tuole that they have lost their culture due to the development of the



hippo sanctuary project. According to respondents, they need oysters as part of their funeral rites to successfully send off the spirit of the dead to the ancestors. However, they are not allowed to pick oysters (Plate 5) at project site to perform such rites.

In a focus group discussion with Chief and elders in Tuole, a discussant said:

“we are prevented from picking oysters at river site to mourn our dead as a sign of farewell ceremonies for their departed soul to get to our ancestors, but because of the by-laws in place, we no longer harvest oyster from the river. We now travel to Burkina Faso to buy for such a ceremony whenever there is funeral...” (37 years indigene, Tuole)



Plate 5: Respondents Sentiments about the essence of oysters

Source Fieldwork, 2015

Generally, the findings stated clearly that the WCHSP has yielded several benefits both at the communal and individual levels within the 17 member communities. However most of these benefits identified were tangible and easily identified by



community members. These I would say were communal in nature. Some of them include the construction of schools, provision of medical supplies, provision of electricity, water supply among others. That notwithstanding, it was also notable that some personal/individual benefits were as well observed, some of which include social networks, scholarships for students, improved personal income, employment opportunities among others. Thus, these findings affirm the WTO's (1998) enumerated potential benefits local communities could derive as a result of ecotourism development.

Therefore the major constraint in relation to benefits had to do with the lack of a framework for benefit distribution. Blake et al., (2008) are of the view that, in order for a conservation to promote effective economic growth leading to poverty alleviation, there must be good governance and zero tolerance for inequality. This finding contravenes the principle of ecotourism on equality as stated by TIES, (1990) and as well contradicts the view of Blake et al.'s (2008).

4.9 Summary

This chapter focused on an assessment of the Wechiau community sanctuary project. It looked at the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and their level of participation in the WCHSP. It also looked at management issues of the project. The nature of local people's participation was assessed. Under that, both the forms and barriers to community participation were assessed. Also, factors motivating local people's participation were looked at. It also examined the roles of the following stakeholders in the management of the project; SMB, SMC, Chiefs



and elders, community members, Tourists, District Assembly, NGO's (SFC, Calgary Zoo...) and Governmental organizations (EPA, GTA...). And lastly, the project benefits and costs were equally examined. There was strong community support for the project due to the strict adherence to bylaws. Numerous benefits have emerged as a result of the project but management lacked an appropriate benefit sharing scheme. Finally, the project is faced with several challenges which are detrimental to its sustainability. The next chapter summarizes the key findings of the project, concludes and gives recommendations for the way forward.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Subsequent to analysis of the research data in the previous chapter, this chapter presents a snapshot of the entire research work. It begins with a summary of key findings and the emerging issues from the study. Then on the basis of these findings conclusion were drawn and recommendation of possible actions were made to support the sustainability of the Wechiau Community Sanctuary Project (WCHSP). Lastly, suggestions for further research were made.

5.2 Summery of Key Findings

Based on the contextual scope and specific objectives of the study, the key findings are as follows:

5.2.1 Nature of Community Participation

Under this objective, two broad themes were discussed; the form of participation and the barriers to community participation. The following findings were gathered;

- i. The study assessed the application of Tosun's (1999) three forms of community participation (spontaneous, induced and coercive participation) in the management of the hippo sanctuary. Findings gathered confirmed Tosun's (1999) Top-down passive participation approach (Coercive Participation - [65%]) as the major form/nature in which the participation of the respondents in the Wiechiau Hippo Sanctuary Project development can best be described. Spontaneous



(59.2%) and induced (40.3%) were ranked second and third respectively. This finding is in contrast to Pongponrat's (2011) conclusion that "local tourism development requires people who are affected by tourism to be involved in both the planning process and the implementation of policies and action plans.

Tosun (2000) and Theron (2005) broadly grouped the barriers into three - operational, structural and cultural barriers. Though all respondents agreed that operational, structural and cultural issues curtail their participation in the management of the WCHSP, the level of interference of these barriers vary. Operational barriers was ranked as the major barrier representing 71.4% of all the barriers that limits their participation in the management of the Wiechau Hippo Sanctuary. The major reasons given for their opinion was the centralized nature of tourism management and limited access to information on tourism related activities.

5.2.2 Motivation for Community Participation

The study raised four major motivating factors for local community participation in ecotourism development in the WCHSP. These include home pride, monetary gains, social capital and community development. These four drivers were assessed in the context of community participation in the management of the Hippo sanctuary. Majority (70.9%) of community members indicated that they participate in the management of the hippo sanctuary for the sake of community development, mentioning (improved road networks, water supply, improved medical and educational infrastructure, electricity (grid/sola) and many others as evident



communal benefits which are accessible to all. This show how patriotic respondents are toward community and ecotourism development despite their low involvement in the decision making process. This finding affirms Arefs' (2011) conclusion that "sense of community" is a motivating factor for local people's participation.

5.2.3 Roles of Stakeholders in Ecotourism Development

Based on the findings gathered, it was observed that there were several stakeholders involved right from the inception till date. Two broad categories (Primary and secondary) of stakeholders were found to have been involved in the project since its inception. Primary stakeholders include the Chiefs and elders and individual members in project communities whereas the secondary stakeholders include the SMB, District Assembly, EPA, NCRC, the Ghana Tourist Authority, Tourists and NGOs. The following roles were identified to be played by the above mentioned stakeholders;

- i. The SMB was found to be the governing body of the WCHSP. The board consist of representatives of all identifiable groups as stated above. The main role played by this stakeholder is to take all decisions regarding the day to day administration and development of the sanctuary.
- ii. The SMC is the administrative unit of the sanctuary. It consist of the Manager Secretary, tour guides and rangers. Its major role is to carry out all decisions made by the board and also act as an intermediary between the board, tourists and community members.



- iii. The chiefs and elders are key primary stakeholders in the leadership and communication chain of the WCHSP. Their major role is to relay to community members the by-laws, ensure they adhere to them and when necessary sanction flouters. They also act as intermediaries between the community members and the SMB.
- iv. The roles of community members are very critical to the sustainability of the site. It was revealed that the majority (47.9%) of respondents indicated they abide by the laws governing resource use and management at sanctuary. Other roles mentioned were, communal labour (18.1%), sale of goods (9.6%) and 6.8% indicated that they provide tour guide services, just to mention a few. On the contrary, none of the respondents indicated that they had taken part in tourism management decisions process.
- v. Tourists are also very important stakeholders of the WCHSP. As confirmed by the chairman of the SMB, international visitors to the site have mobilized themselves into a group known as “Friends of Wechiau” who play a major role in providing both monetary and non-monetary support to brilliant but needy students. They are also said to send funds to support in the payment of tour guides/rangers, the canoe operators and the women involved in the watering of seedlings around the buffer zone.
- vi. The District Assembly is a decentralized unit of the central government mandated to tap potentials from the environs to carry out holistic



development. Gunn (1994) indicated that the DA play a crucial role in planning, enforcing laws to tourism destinations and construction of infrastructure and public tourism appeal. Findings gathered revealed that the Wechiau District Assembly plays a dormant role in the development of the Hippo Sanctuary in recent times. This affirms Harrill's & Potts's (2003, p. 233) proclamation that "tourism is also invisible to many planners, so tourism development is often left to private developers and leisure service providers".

- vii. The role of external organizations such as Calgary Zoo, NCRC, SFC and IUCN-PASCO, were also crucial in the development of the WCHSP. Findings established that these organization played supportive roles in facilitating natural resource conservation.
- viii. Lastly the EPA, Game and Wildlife and GTA played intertwining roles in the discovery and subsequently in the development of the site. Key informant interviews held with representatives of each of the agencies point to the fact that they provided technical support based on their prospective institutional roles. On the other hand, through their individual institutional budgets, some have supported the sanctuary.

The above findings goes to affirm the view of Niezgodna & Czernek, (2008) that whichever way, it is very crucial to identify and involve key stakeholders right from the planning stage.

5.2.4 Distribution of Benefits and Costs among Beneficiary Communities

The following findings were recorded under this objective;



- i. More than half of the respondents (65.5% - 91.7%) were of the view that the hippo sanctuary project has brought about a large mix of positive economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts which include increased employment; improved transport infrastructure; increased personal income, improved social amenities, unity among residents; increased community sense of pride; increased awareness of conservation; increased efforts in maintaining a clean environment; and increased efforts in natural resource preservation. Thus, these findings affirm the WTO's (1998) enumerated potential benefits local communities could derive as a result of ecotourism development.
- ii. Also, over 80% of respondents across surveyed communities disagreed with the existence of many of the negative economic, social-cultural and environmental impacts like reduced concentration on agriculture; increased cost of land; loss of cultural values; increased prostitution; increased crime/robberies/vandalism; increased alcoholism/drug addiction; increased hunting of hippos; increased pollution; increased noise making; increased bush burning and tree cutting; increased cost of land and housing. This implies that, either of these adverse effects do not exist at all or even if they do, their effects are insignificant.
- iii. Upon generally assessing the benefits of the WCHSP, findings stated clearly that the project has yielded a lot of benefits both at the communal and individual levels. However, the major constrain in relation to benefits had to do with the lack of a framework for benefit distribution. This finding



portray inequitable distribution of benefits. Additionally to the above, majority (63%) of respondents shared the view that members of the Sanctuary Management Board are the ones who benefit most from the project, to the extent that accusing fingers have been pointed to them for embezzlement of revenue generation.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes as follows:

Firstly, it could be concluded that the nature of participation in the Wechiau community is reflective of Tosun's (1999) top-down passive participation approach (Coercive Participation) approach to management. This finding therefore is in contrast with Arnstein's, (1969), Pretty's, (1995) and Tosun's, (1999) assertion that community participation in decision making is not only desirable but also necessary so as to maximize the socio-economic benefits of tourism in communities.

Secondly, it can be concluded that socio-demographic characteristics are not determinants for community participation in ecotourism development. Community members participate in diverse ecotourism activities regardless of the divergence in their sex, age, religion, educational level, marital status, ethnicity and income level among others. Community members are involved in providing tour guide services, sell food, host tourists, provide security and engage in communal labour among others. However, the majority of respondents indicated that they abide by the laws governing resource use and management of the sanctuary, this reflects a



high level community support for the project. On the other hand, none of them were part of the tourism management decisions.

Also, the study can conclude that throughout the sentiments shared by community members in relation to their motivation for participating, it was very clear that Aref's, (2011) suggestion of Community Development being a motivating factor for community participation, stood out. The popular acclamation of this indicate that the collective values, beliefs, experiences and interests among others that community members share makes them patriotic in the participation process towards ecotourism development. Therefore this finding could be used as a scale for measuring motivation for community participation.

In relation to the roles of stakeholders, it can be concluded that the varying roles that different stakeholders play are very crucial for ecotourism and community development. Thus the failure of major stakeholders in carrying out their prospective roles may lead to the possible failure of the ecotourism project. For example, if community members decide not to play their role there could be a possible failure of the project since they will go contrary to the norms associated with the project. Based on the findings of the study, all stakeholders played their prospective roles with the exception of the Wechiau District Assembly.

Furthermore, the study can conclude by saying that the project has yielded a lot of benefits both at the communal and individual levels. However the issues of inequitable distribution and embezzlement of revenue generated by the SMB were very critical issues raised by most community members. Thus, Blake et al., (2008)



are of the view that, in order for a conservation to promote effective economic growth leading to poverty alleviation, there must be good governance and zero tolerance for inequality. Therefore from our findings, there could be an abundance of ecotourism benefits but if not properly managed, it could lead to unequal distribution of project benefits to beneficiary communities and hence perpetuate poverty.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommendations were as follows:

The study recommends for a shift from the use of coercive to more spontaneous form of engaging community members in the WCHSP. The research revealed that there is insufficient involvement of local residents in the planning, implementation and decision making process of the WCHSP, which may prevent them from receiving more benefit. Thus, it would be more prudent to encourage and integrate local peoples interests into the decision making process. This would help do away with issues of exclusion and inequality. Thus when this is done, the tourism management approach would be more participatory, hence ensuring its sustainability.

Secondly, the study recommends the correction of all operational barriers identified. Operational barriers were discovered as the majority of all the barriers limiting local people's participation. As stated earlier (see chapter 4.3), the mode of "management" has associated effect on the benefits communities can derive. However, Mathieson & Wall, (1982); Weaver, (1998); Belsky, (1999); Jones,



(2005) and Stronza & Godillo, (2008) postulated that ecotourism projects when properly managed can exert positive benefits with limited cost to the localities in which they are situated. It is therefore recommended that, the SMB/SMC should refrain from the centralized management approach and rather adopt an effective decentralized system in relation to the dissemination of tourism information. It has been made very clear by respondents that access to information about ecotourism activities triggers their participation. This when properly done will ensure transparency and accountability since some community members reported on issues regarding ecotourism activity information gaps, with much emphasis on embezzlement of tourism revenue.

Furthermore, the study is recommending an improvement in the role of the District Assembly in relation to its lukewarm attitude towards ecotourism development. The role of the District Assembly as a major stakeholder is very crucial to the development and sustainability of the site. The DA should desist from its lukewarm attitude towards the development of the project. Apart from just having a representation on the Sanctuary Management Board, it should effectively utilize its planning and implementation function to assist the SMB to effectively manage the site. It was observed that aside the Non-Governmental Organizations (Development Partners), Governmental support was limited. Although Community Based Ecotourism Projects are supposed to be independent, it would be prudent for the Government, through the District Assembly to create an enabling environment for the WCHSP to succeed. This when considered will go a long way to improve ecotourism benefits both at the individual level and the community level as well.



The study is also recommending for the development of a “Benefit Distribution Framework” for the WCHSP. Even though it was evident that the WCHSP has yielded several benefits, it was clear that there was no formula for benefit distribution. The SMB should as a matter of urgency, organize a multi-stakeholder discussion with all relevant partners to discuss and develop appropriate framework that would ensure the equitable distribution of tourism benefits to all beneficiary communities and as well enforce proper financial management. This will go a long way to give every beneficiary an opportunity to benefit equally from the project. Lastly, the SMB should develop sustainable alternative livelihood source for most especially isolated communities within the “Core Zone” whose livelihoods have been destroyed as a result of the by-laws.



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APPENDIX I

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

**Community Participation in Ecotourism Projects In Ghana: An Evaluation
of Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary Project, Upper West Region**

Questionnaire for residents of Wechiau District

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project as a sustainable community based ecotourism project. It would be extremely appreciated if you could complete this questionnaire. The findings of this study would be solely used for academic purposes. You are guaranteed of total anonymity.

Thank You.

SECTION A: SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Place of residence:

- a) Wechiau []
- b) Talawona []
- c) Tokali []
- d) Tuole []

2. Native status:

- a) Indigene []
- b) Non indigene []

3. Sex:





a) Male []

b) Female []

4. Age of respondent:

a. 18 – 24 []

b. 25 – 31 []

c. 32 – 38 []

d. 39 – 45 []

e. 46 – 52 []

f. 53 – 59 []

g. 60+ []

5. Main occupations:

a. Farmer []

b. Fisher []

c. Petty Trader []

d. Civil Servant []

e. Others (specify)

6. Marital status:

a. Married []

b. Unmarried []

7. Educational level

a. Basic []

b. Secondary , Vocational, Technical []

c. Tertiary []

d. No Formal Education []

e. Others

8. Religion

a. Christianity []

- b. Islam []
- c. Traditional []
- d. None []
- e. Others

9. Ethnicity of respondent:

- a) Birifor []
- b) Dagao []
- c) Wala []
- d) Hausa []
- e) Others (specify)

10. Average monthly income:

- a. Less than GHC 50 []
- b. GHC 51 – GHC 100 []
- c. GHC 101 – GHC 200 []
- d. Above GHC 200 []

SECTION B: GENERAL ISSUES

11. Are you a native of this community?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

12. How long have you been staying in the community?

.....

13. Briefly state what you know about tourism.

.....
.....
.....

14. Are you aware of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary?

- a) Yes []



b) No []

15. How often do tourists visit the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary?

a) Not at all []

b) Not often []

c) Often []

d) Very often []

16. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of ecotourism development?

Advantages

a)

b)

c)

d)

Disadvantages

a)

b)

c)

d)

17. Outline some things you think ecotourism development would bring to the community and to you as an individual.

a)

b)

c)

d)

SECTION C: ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT.

18. Who owns the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project (WCHSP)?



- a) Chiefs & Elders []
- b) The community []
- c) Private Operators []
- d) Others (specify)

19. Are you in any way involved in tourism development in your community?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

19 a. If “Yes”, what role do you play? (Tick all that apply)

- a) I engage in communal labour []
- b) I sell goods to tourists/visitors []
- c) I provide entertainment to tourists/visitors []
- d) I host tourists/visitors in my home []
- e) I invite distant friends to visit the site []
- f) I provide security to tourists/visitors []
- g) I abide by the by laws of the sanctuary []
- h) I’m involved in managing the attraction []
- i) I provide tour guide services []
- j) Others
(specify).....

19 b. if No, why?

20. Is the community leadership making any effort in developing the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []
- c) No idea []

21. Are you aware of the involvement of any external agency in the development of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary?

- a) Yes []



- b) No []
- c) No idea []

22. If yes, then mention any that you are aware of.

- a)
- b)
- c)

SECTION D: NATURE OF LOCAL PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

23. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements on community participation in tourism development in your community. Scale: 1- A (Agree), 2- S/A (Strongly Agree), 3- U (Uncertain), 4- D (Disagree), 5- S/D (Strongly Disagree)

STATEMENTS (FORMS OF PARTICIPATION)	SCALE				
	A	S/A	U	D	S/D
1. Management decisions on the WCHS project is in total control of the community.					
2. The entire community is consulted before key decisions are taken.					
3. The community is directly involved in providing goods/services to tourists					





4. The project management team is made up of representatives of all groups in the community					
5. People will have the chance to participate if only they belonged to certain groups.					
6. Alternative decisions are made available to the community but there is no room for feedback					
7. I participate because of the material and financial benefits I will get in return.					
8. We have no say in the tourism development agenda of the community.					
9. The community is told about tourism development decisions after they are made by top management.					
10. External organizations and business men take the leading role of providing goods and services to tourists and visitors.					
11. Decisions taken on the use of revenue generated is done by the Wechiau District Assembly.					

24. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking all that applies. Scale: 1- A (Agree), 2- S/A (Strongly Agree), 3- U (Uncertain), 4- D (Disagree), 5- S/D (Strongly Disagree). I am unable to get involved in tourism activities in my community due to the following reasons.

STATEMENTS (Barriers of Community Participation)	SCALE				
	A	S/A	U	D	S/D
OPERATIONAL BARRIERS					
1. The centralized nature of tourism management is not favorable.					
2. There is total lack of co-ordination among the project management team.					
3. I have very little information on tourism related activities.					
STRUCTURAL BARRIERS					
1. Time for community meetings is not favorable.					
2. There are too many conflicts in the community					





3. There are inadequate committee meetings.					
4. I lack financial resources to actively participate.					
5. External business operators are leading in service provision to tourists					
6. I lack the required education and skills required to support my participation.					
7. Project management committee members lack the required training to enable them properly manage the site					
8. There is high level of elite dominance in the industry.					
CULTURAL BARRIERS					
1. My religion forbids me to participate in tourism development					
2. My age prevents me from participating in tourism development					
3. Poor people do not get the chance of participating.					
4. My marital status prevents me from participating in tourism development.					
5. Prescribed gender roles and responsibilities restrict my participation in tourism development.					

**SECTION E: MOTIVATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLES PARTICIPATION
IN ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT**



25. Are you satisfied in any way from your participation in ecotourism development in your community?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

26. How satisfied are you in terms of your level of involvement in tourism development in your community?

- a) Satisfied []
- b) Very satisfied []
- c) Dissatisfied []
- d) Very dissatisfied []

27. What motivates you to participate in tourism activities in your community?

- a) Home pride []
- b) Monetary gains []
- c) Social capital []
- d) Community development []
- e) Others (specify).....

SECTION F: BENEFITS DISTRIBUTION FROM THE WECHIAU COMMUNITY HIPPO SANCTUARY PROJECT.

28. Mention some benefits that the WCHSP has brought to your community.

- a)

- b)
- c)
- d)

29. Mention some benefits the WCHSP has brought to you as an individual.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

30. Mention some costs the WCHSP has brought to your community.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

31. Mention some costs the WCHSP has brought to you as an individual.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)



32. a. Which group of people benefits most from the WCHSP?

.....

b. Please explain your answer in Q32a.

.....

33. a. Who decides on the use of revenue generated from the project?

.....

b. Please explain briefly your answer in Q33a

.....

34. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the impacts of the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project since it was implemented? Scale: 1- A (Agree), 2- S/A (Strongly Agree), 3- U (Uncertain), 4- D (Disagree), 5- S/D (Strongly Disagree).

STATEMENTS	SCALE				
	A	S/A	U	D	S/D
Economic (Positive)					
1. Increased employment opportunities of community members					
2. Improved transport infrastructure					
3. Contributes to personal income levels					
4. Improved social amenities					
Economic (Negatives)					





5. Increase in prices of goods/services					
6. Reduced concentration on farming					
7. Increased cost of land and housing					
Socio-Cultural (Positives)					
8. Unity among residents					
9. Increased demand for local artifacts					
10. Cultural diffusion					
11. Increased community sense of pride					
Socio-Cultural (Negatives)					
12. Loss of cultural values					
13. Increased prostitution					
14. Increased crime/robberies/vandalism					
15. Increased alcoholism/drug addiction					
Environmental (Positives)					
16. Increased awareness on issues of conservation					
17. Increased efforts to maintain a clean environment in the community					

18. Increased effort to preserve natural resources					
Environmental (Negatives)					
19. Increased hunting of hippos					
20. Increased pollution					
21. Increased noise making					
22. Increased bush burning and tree cutting					



APPENDIX II

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

**Community Participation in Ecotourism Projects In Ghana: An Evaluation
of Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary Project, Upper West Region**

In-depth interview guide for key informants

Introduction

The purpose of this interview guide is to evaluate the Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project as a sustainable community based ecotourism project. It would be extremely appreciated if you could complete this questionnaire. The findings of this study would be solely used for academic purposes. You are guaranteed of total confidentiality.

Thank You.

❖ **Background Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary Project**

- a) Main stake holders
- b) Management Committee (Structure, Tenure, Mandate, Capacity [skills, training, authority], other related issues.
- c) Bylaws for the project (preparation, content, implementation, usefulness and challenges associated with its use).
- d) Source of funding for the project.
- e) Conflicts (sources, forms and management strategies)

❖ **Level of community participation**

- a) What form of participation was sought during project initiation
- b) What is the state of community participation in terms of (management, distribution of benefits and general decision making)
- c) Information flows (method, frequency and feedback)



❖ **Cost-Benefit Analysis**

- a) Benefits and costs from the project. (WHAT?)
- b) Distribution of costs and benefits to communities. (HOW?)
- c) (economic, socio-cultural, environmental impacts)

❖ **Challenges**

- a) Challenges affecting the sustainability of the project. (Funding, market access, conflict, traditional authority and others.)



APPENDIX III

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

**Community Participation in Ecotourism Projects In Ghana: An Evaluation
of Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary Project, Upper West Region**

Observation checklist

- A. Nature and location of tourism located facilities
- B. Nature and location of tangible project benefits
- C. Nature of roads to the community
- D. Modes of transportation to the community

