

COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: PROPOSITIONS BASED ON EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Reaching the goals of socio-economic development is an important aspect for any country that largely depends on the stock of resources available as well as efficiency and effectiveness of managing those resources. This study critically views on the area of development that necessarily to be inclusive of community participation and especially draws its attention to the context of alternative livelihood development and participatory resource management. The study follows the qualitative approach and multiple case study design where empirical evidence gathered from in-depth interviews at two phases as a longitudinal study. Based on the analysis, three major propositions have been developed. The discussion takes a critical reflection on community tourism experience of Sri Lanka with the support of propositions. Further, theoretical and managerial implications have also been surfaced in order to characterises Sri Lankan perspective on Community Environmental and Tourism Initiatives (CETIs).

Keywords: livelihood development, community tourism, participatory resource management, Sri Lanka

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Sri Lanka, tourism has been well recognised as an economic activity that could contribute to its development. With the end of ethnic civil war, the post-conflict atmosphere has created the much-needed space for the country to develop its tourism industry once again.

Despite much socio-cultural criticisms, tourism in developing countries like Sri Lanka plays a crucial role as an agent of economic development, especially at national level. Contribution to the balance of payments through increased foreign exchange earnings, employment creation, and contribution to government revenue are some of the direct economic gains that those countries look for. Regional or local development is also a possible priority in the same development agenda. In other words, there is an attempt to recognise tourism as a strategy for diversifying the economy. In this regard, Sri Lanka is no exception. However, for this to occur, active participation of communities at local level is vital. But achieving this objective is not a simple task.

The role of tourism is undeniable for socio-economic development of communities, provided that they have the motivation for productive involvement. In addition, they should possess or should have access to resources with tourism potential. In a context where new forms of (alternative) tourism are emerging, community heritage and resources are now increasingly becoming decisive inputs for this form of tourism development. In order to bring in the best out of this opportunity, there is a need to turn efforts of the community and other stakeholders into successful collaborations and partnerships and encourage best practices that foster community tourism wherever possible.

As explained earlier, the study has confined its focus to entities where community initiatives in tourism developed as an extension to participatory natural resource management. Yet there are different other modes of community participation in tourism exist. In addition, the nature of community participation in CETIs is not individual, but collective. Observations in this study have shown that community participation has been relatively distinctive at the implementation stage, compared to the planning or designing stages of CETIs. From a broader perspective, a community initiative has to involve everyone. If all the stakeholders (state sector, private sector, and non-governmental organisations) including the community take part in planning and designing stages, then the implementation stage will become less problematic.

Key considerations in the planning and design stage include minimising conflicts, achieving productive results through efficient use of resources, and stakeholders' involvement. Under this condition, those who are involved in the process should have either ownership or controlling interest in the proposed initiative. When opportunity is given for the community to participate in this manner, they really become empowered. When they become empowered nobody could dictate terms over them since the community itself is making decisions. This will make them better off in establishing profitable partnerships and in negotiating with other stakeholders.

In the case of communities that this study examined, there is much desperation for achieving the success even after much effort is taken to empower them. According to the Sri Lankan experience, this can be recognised as a basic problem in developing CETIs and as far as community participation is concerned. The reasons as identified by the study were numerous-some were more general and some were case specific. The following section is a discussion about those reasons organised and presented fewer than three propositions identified based on the empirical evidence of the study.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The primary data collection was mainly based on semi-structured and unstructured interviews. This was carried out first in 2008-09 and second in 2015-16 as a follow-up study. Interviews were conducted in the Sinhala language, except the interviews with the respondents from CEGA, Arugam Bay Tourism Association (ABTA) and foreign resource persons, which was conducted in English.

In addition to interviews, field notes were taken wherever necessary. The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, except for the interviews with respondents from governmental institutions. The files containing digitally recorded interviews (voice data) were transferred to the computer and saved in separate folders. The format of audio tracks was compatible to playback using the windows media player. The procedure has been initiated for producing a written version of the interviews, which is called transcribing.

Accordingly, all semi-structured interviews have been transcribed. Thus verbatim of transcripts of conversations were developed manually, first in Sinhala and then translated into English. This tape analysis was performed for the unstructured interviews. While listening to the audio tracks of those interviews, the notes were taken of the sections, which contain particularly useful information and key quotations for the use of analysis.

3.0 FINDINGS

Proposition 1: *CETIs face difficulties in planning and operational stages as a result of lack of persistence as well as ambiguity and rigidity in stakeholder expectations.*

The presence of multiple stakeholders in the context of CETIs is because of diverse interests they have in connection with ownership and management responsibility of resources concerned. However, the success of CETIs by and large depends on efficiency and effectiveness of primary stakeholders. Thus it is important to analyse whether the communities concerned have skills sufficient for planning and designing their initiatives. In this study, the communities did not have a holistic picture of the entire processes of developing and operating as successful community tourism ventures, which affects the viability of their ventures. For example, in Walathwewa Community Environmental and Tourism Initiative (WECTI) and Rekawa Community Environmental and Tourism Initiative (RCETI) this issue has been highlighted during planning and implementation stages. Tourism development was not taken as a primary objective by stakeholders e.g. Forest Department (DF) and Central Environmental Authority (CEA), where natural resource management was prioritised in the cases such as WCETI and MCETI.

Networks, partnerships, and collaborations among stakeholders of CETIs are still at infancy. Lack of consensus on appropriate organisational structures, development and operating protocols, inadequate technical skills, and lack of experience are still lacking among stakeholders. There is inadequacy in comprehensive measures taken by the convener on these aspects during the community capacity development stage. The consequences of this are numerous. For example, CETIs are poorly linked with the existing tourism industry and its other partners further affecting their functionality. Due to this reason, CETIs are presently operating in isolation without exploiting the opportunity by organising as a network to strengthen operations in particular. According to Programme Director/Sewalanka, for community tourism network an appropriate structure is fundamental for its success (personal communication, August 18, 2008). When reviewing efforts taken at various stages in the recent past, there are still many disagreements over establishing a network for such initiatives.

Establishing a common platform for a community tourism network is not an easy task due to the lack of consensus over inputs, sharing benefits, responsibilities etc. A programme facilitated by a local non-governmental organisation (LNGO) named 'Sewalanka' provides a unique evidence for this issue. This program aims at initiating a network for CBOs. However, it was observed that they were not having a shared vision since the representation was from different types of organisations. The options considered were the models of a cooperative society or a people's company (registered under the Company Act), but little progress has been achieved. This shows the need to understand the motives behind an effort and the degree of inputs required from each and every stakeholder in order to make an initiative work.

Another reason that affected operational success is misunderstanding and lack of awareness on organisation and the nature of tourism industry operations. Some community members do not realise the importance of establishing business relationships among various stakeholders. For example, they have questioned the need of offering a commission for individuals and institutions that are willing to promote services of CETIs. They do not understand the necessity for sharing some benefits among those who are in the tourism business (Tourism Officer/Mercy Corps, personal communication, August 15, 2008). For example, a fisheries cooperative society in Southern Sri Lanka, which offers a boat service for witnessing a *blow-hole by sea*, also fails to give any commission for the guides and local hoteliers for promoting their activity. The Manager of this project (*blow-hole by sea*) expressed his displeasure for not being able to accommodate such need due to the unavailability of provisions based on rigid rules and regulations of the cooperative society (personal communication, May 12, 2008). However, certain initiatives like Walawe River Ecotourism Organisation (WREO), Turtle Conservation Project and Tourism Initiative (TCPTI), CEGA and Muthurajawela Community Environmental and Tourism Initiative (MCETI) allow hoteliers and tour operators to work on commission basis when they promote those tours, activities or services. Clearly, the business development skills of the community members must be enhanced to make them understand about available business opportunities and the competitiveness of tourism industry, as these are essential knowledge to manage their growth and future survival.

Stakeholder collaboration has been the main concern in community tourism literature. New ideas are immersing in favour of local operators where more and more people are trying to find access to them to seek their assistances (Travel Journalist/Lonely Planet, personal communication, April 22, 2008). The journalist also mentioned that stakeholder collaboration must be made a system to provide market access to people and places that normally do not have it, especially in countries that are yet to be developed to a global commercial level. World Hotel Link (WHL) is an example for a collaborative effort by many stakeholders including small-scale local operators. The idea of WHL is for small groups to unite around a central structure or a central organisation that has more technical skills, more access to finance and banking, and merchandising opportunities on the internet, some degree of expertise. This central organization brings in people of different skills and different strengths together to support local organisations, and work as a global network. Such phenomenon is yet to exist at a significant level as far as CETIs in this study are concerned because they are yet to exploit business opportunities by entering into partnerships with other stakeholders.

As revealed in this study, weak collaboration can be identified as one of primary disadvantages in CETIs operational success, which weakens their entrepreneurial strength. The all cases mentioned in the study do not have impressive records of collaboration in general. Collaboration is an essential factor particularly in successful marketing. It also helps to develop community tourism initiatives into clusters further strengthening capacities and may turn into successful partnerships. Due to lack of understanding there were instances where CETIs have declined some requests for partnerships offered by private entrepreneurs and NGOs. For example Treasurer/WCETI states that, "such proposals have been offered but we were not interested" and according to him, they did not respond, "because outsiders' terms and conditions were not in favour (of us)" (personal communication, July 22, 2008).

On the other hand, former President/WCETI says that, "now we think that failure to establish a partnership with any suitable party was a mistake" (personal communication, July 23, 2008). The statement is referring to the fact that despite lack of collaboration with external parties, unity was still unattainable. Instead the lack of consensus among certain CBOs operating in a same village on the use of potential resources has led to conflict (for example, conflict between RCETI and Local Fishermen Organisation of the same village). These types of conflicts should be avoided. Even better, different community groups should work together in some sort of partnerships. Otherwise, planning of CETIs development will not be successful.

During the follow-up study only the TCPTI is found still in operation. The strong initiation with technical back up by the Turtle Conservation Project was the key success factor of this success. Other projects were completely out of operations. An exception to that WREO was destabilise due to conflicts among its membership (Ex-President/WREO, personal communication, February 12, 2016).

Proposition 2: *Lack of 'participation readiness' (attitudes, resources, and commitment) of the community is a significant shortcoming, which is directly affecting to the community involvement in CETIs.*

In community development literature, positive attitudes, resource availability, and commitment of the community members are considered as vital inputs. The same inputs are also required in any effort to develop CETIs. In this study, it has been revealed that attitudes of the community vary according to their understanding, experience and exposure to the tourism industry. Community attitudes that favour tourism development is highly essential, without which, community tourism may not be successful. Community awareness is a key element that could

make a substantial attitude change in this regard. According to the findings of the study, positive attitude of the communities that prefer conservation and sustainable use of resource was a result of awareness programmes that disseminate the knowledge on environmental consequences, particularly on undesirable impacts that they are mainly responsible for. In other words, these programmes were successful in improving their understanding on natural resource conservation issues. TCPTI, WECTI, RCETI, MCETI, CEGA and WREO have showed substantial evidences to prove this.

However, community's attitude about tourism, on the other hand, was quite different from the perception of the community on nature conservation and varies substantially among community members even prior to awareness campaigns or gaining any experience. "Initially some of us were reluctant to accept the idea of promoting tourism in the village since our main concern were about the socio-cultural impacts" (Secretary/WREO, personal communication, September 05, 2008). The study further reveals that negative perception of certain community members was basically due to misunderstanding about *foreign tourists* rather than *tourism*. Their reluctance to welcome tourists was mainly because of perceived negative impacts of international tourism to their culture.

From economic point of view, resource endowment is the base of the process of developing CETIs. The marginalised communities are more often not in a position to find the right combination of resources enabling them to develop their own livelihoods. For example, the use of and substitution of labour has its own limitation within the context of those communities. As the study recognises, the use of volunteer labour as an input in community development activities is no longer successful. Since there is an obvious opportunity cost which is highly influential in communities who are depending on rural subsistence agriculture. In most occasions, it has created unrest among the communities. This means that the use of volunteer labour for community development beyond a certain level is not practical and this must be taken into account where volunteer labour is considered as an input in development projects.

In addition to labour, land tenure of the community is also a determinant of the degree of potential community participation. However, most coastal communities in particular are losing property rights day by day, making land tenure a complicated issue. Both local investors and foreigners purchase properties (lands) belonging to members of such communities. Those lands are often of high commercial value being located on to the coastal belt, which is ideal for tourism development. Since most of the locals in these areas do not have the capacity to invest

in tourism, they were compelled to sell. As a result, those communities are losing their position in bargaining over the development decisions that take place in their locality.

The interactions of enforcement agencies are obvious in marginalised communities living adjacent to natural resources like forests, wildlife, or marine ecosystems. Since controlling aspects of natural resources have been prioritised, this regulatory framework is relatively rigid. However, "considerable change in the approach now hopes for better community participation than before. But still we experiencing too much technical and regulatory limitations that difficult us to adapt to certain contexts" (Deputy Conservator of Forests/DF, personal communication, December 15, 2009). The community participation in CETIs should be encouraged by means of supportive legislation and regulatory mechanism. It is important that rights of the community to access natural resources be given to avoid unsustainable and illegal use of the resource

In addition to positive attitude and community capacity, commitment is also a driving force behind a successful community tourism development. It is therefore, vital to understand how committed the community is in engaging with their own development activities. Certain CETIs in this study have demonstrated outstanding commitment by the respective communities, particularly at the initial stage of their development. The CETIs such as WREO, RECTI and WCETI are typical examples for the achievement of this nature. However, maintaining such commitment has been proven difficult among some communities. For instance, misguided and less performing CETIs such as WCETI and RCETI, experienced complications in maintaining community commitment requiring them to reorganise themselves before any success is to be attained.

Empowerment is another influential factor in community development. Understanding power relationships among various community members are important in order to empower communities because meaningful empowerment requires changes in power relations. In other words, if power can change, then empowerment process can be easily accommodated. Therefore, the concept of empowerment depends upon the idea that power can expand and this reflects our common experiences of power existences in relations between people and places.

As elaborated in community literature review, *power* is a factor that determines most deliverables in development processes and as well as potential access to those by various stakeholders. Moreover, power is of direct relevance to *participation readiness*. Since power exists and occurs within individuals and groups of the community for various reasons; as Spear

and Hughey (1995) state, "...most important is the understanding that a reciprocal relationship exists between development of power for community organizations and individual empowerment for organisation members" (729). This reflects not only the ability of the community and its individuals to be involved and have influence in collective decisions, but also how well they are able to take decisions that affect their lives, their ability to bargain over development decisions, their responding ability, their willingness to take calculated risks, their access to necessary information, their competencies in mobilizing social capital, and their ability to bargain with external parties and deal with supportive mechanisms.

However, power imbalances that exist among community members were a common occurrence. The traditional power patterns in rural communities may resist or may not support collective decision-making due to heavy dominance by local elites or existence of traditional community or religious leadership. In most Sri Lankan rural communities, traditional power bases are still in dominance. In this context, development process of CETIs, like any other collective economic activity that takes place in rural settings requires power sharing. Therefore, empowering communities is inevitable. *Participation readiness* of the community largely depends on a successful empowerment process. As observed during the study, such empowerment processes are rather ad-hoc or less comprehensive. Therefore, they have not been able to deliver the expected. The convener below has discussed this issue further under the 'inconsistent facilitation'.

By the year 2015 for example, RCETI the lack of commitment by its membership discontinued all of its function as a community based organisation. In addition, it was also due to poor self financing mechanism (Ex-Treasurer/RCETI, personal communication December 12, 2015).

Proposition 3: *Shortcomings in planning approaches, absence (or lack) of supportive institutional framework, and inadequate (or inconsistent) facilitation by the convener, inhibit the stability and expansion of CETIs.*

The study identifies certain reasons that inhibit the stability and expansion of CETIs- shortcoming in planning especially lack of collaborative efforts by stakeholders and inadequate or inconsistent facilitation by the convener have also been highlighted. Clearly, the gaps in community capacity are widening but those issues have not been adequately addressed in a planned manner. For example, the case WCETI provides substantial evidence during the planning effort by Sri Lanka Australia Natural Resource Management Programme (SLANRMP),

that there was no collaboration with any stakeholder representing tourism industry. This lack of industry integration is one of the reasons for the failure of the initiative.

In most cases, facilitation by the convener has not been comprehensive. For instance, WCETI demonstrates lack of expertise in certain fields like tourism, while SLANRMP fails to deliver technical assistance inclusive of overall aspects on organising and operations of community tourism initiatives. The main focus of the SLANRMP was to establish measure to improve environmental condition of the existing ecosystem of the area through natural resource management. However, this weakness would have been avoided, if there was considerable stakeholder involvement with tourism industry representation.

Clearly, planning approaches in Sri Lanka are often top-heavy and failed to take appropriate mechanisms that consider ground realities. This is despite the fact that professional, political and administrative input at a regional level are taken, that the delivery is top-down and that the vision is altruistic. Since development processes are highly politicised and politically motivated, priorities are set according to political interests. Generally, the focus is mainly on infrastructure development, as it is a politically sensitive issue in most regional and local contexts. The influence of bureaucracy and unnecessary delays in planning and implementation stages are very common. Planning activities are more often curtailed in order to speed up execution.

As found in this study, the nature of stakeholder approach that led to ad-hoc planning has caused shortcomings in resource mobilization. Projects like WCETI, has not been facilitated by (tourism) industry specialist institutions. In this case, the DF and the SLANRMP also did not pay adequate attention to access to such institutions, which is the case of substantial missed opportunities. The effort taken by a LNGO named Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation to push this initiative forward was also not sufficient. Lack of direction by the state agencies as well as weaknesses in community organisations was mainly responsible for this (President/SLETF, personal communication, September 22, 2009). It is, therefore, a requirement for communities involved in these initiatives to have access to support from individual experts, practitioners, or academics. Otherwise, substandard result would be unavoidable.

4.0 DISCUSSION

A community is a vital element as it plays a dual role in tourism development. First, tourists have often been attracted by the distinct life styles of the host community. Second, the

participation and support of the local community in numerous ways in tourism is essential to its long-term sustainability. This relationship is developed when communities interact either directly or indirectly with both visitors and the industry. Hence, the local communities cannot simply be avoided in tourism development of a country, particularly when it takes place in marginalised or in remote rural areas. Moreover, community tourism improves avenues to mobilise social capital available in communities, sustains local knowledge, socio-cultural values, and traditional lifestyles and fosters on value addition opportunities for the tourism industry of the entire destination.

As far as the present community participation in tourism in Sri Lanka into consideration, there are three basic models; such as: 1) Privately owned enterprises with outsourced services to individuals, groups, and community organisations; 2) Initiatives by resource managing agencies, for example, DF with funding support from external agencies (this type of initiatives comes under participatory forest management programme of the DF); and 3) Initiatives by NGOs, and/or CBOs with relatively by more involvement by the community. The latter has been the type of community participation that is considered for developing CETIs. However, the initiatives vary substantially in terms of structure, operations, and level of the stage of development.

Community tourism based on natural resources fits well into sustainable resource management principles. It can be positively contribute to conserve natural resources and as well as benefiting the community by promoting alternative sustainable livelihoods. Being world's one of bio diversity hot spots, Sri Lanka has a tremendous advantage for promoting alternative forms of tourism. In order to make this possible, there must be considerable shift from command and control approach to participatory approach where active community involvement is taken into consideration as a vital input in the process of natural resource management. From the tourism industry point of view, there is a growing concern for product diversification as well. Given this background, there is very conducive environment for developing and promoting community tourism in Sri Lanka.

According to Kiss (2004), tourism can generate support for conservation among communities as long as they see some benefit. However, the case of Sri Lanka is quite different from this. Even if such initiatives are not capable of generating much benefit, the study shows that the conservation attitudes of the communities have not been affected considerably. Once strong attitudes have been established towards conservation of natural resources, communities believe that they are primarily benefiting from it rather than secondary rewards that the introduction of

community tourism would bring. In other words, in the context of CETIs, community tourism of this nature in Sri Lanka is a secondary response that has been taken up in the process of conservation and natural resource management.

In CETIs, conservation objective seemed to be well achieved. However, the efforts taken to link such initiatives with tourism industry were not that successful since stakeholder collaboration was not sufficiently materialised and less focussed. Particularly, tourism is not able to generate sufficient revenue for funding conservation efforts in the long-term. And that objective has not been recognised or prioritised as it should have. As a result, those initiatives further need external funding for such purpose if required. However, community tourism development based on existing natural and cultural heritage is a very prospective dimension in tourist product diversification. At the same time, it can be demonstrated that such resources are vital and also have multiple uses. At the same time, those resources should be protected for the present and future generations. Further, access to the natural resources such as, forests wildlife, and water bodies etc. has encouraged the community participation to a considerable extent.

In Sri Lankan context, tourism is not at all a traditional economic activity in local communities that are considered for most of the study. Thus idea generation of developing community tourism has always been originated from individuals and organisations external to the community. Therefore, technical assistance to the community is highly essential as it is mainly focussed on capacity development. Attention for strengthening marketing mechanism of community initiatives has been neglected. And they are mainly lacking necessary marketing know-how. Therefore, strong stakeholder support is a must with formal and holistic approach in providing technical assistance. This assistance should be inclusive of the support from existing tourism industry players. In addition, institutional support at policy level is also a vital factor. At present, at destination level most stakeholders are not empowered and this is a serious shortcoming at local levels in particular. This has direct impact on successful community participation in the destination in the context of catering to the domestic and international market.

The notion of alternative tourism is in the centre of discussion, in most occasions, community development takes place, provided that tourism potential resources are available. Repositioning of Sri Lankan tourism product is also a current requirement of the industry. It demands quality potential resources as it depends on them for long term sustainability. The contribution of the local community must be an important consideration in the context since there are potentials and prospects of developing community tourism based on available resources. Because, it is

easy to obtain the rights to access natural resources that are under the management of state agencies when collective community participation is concerned.

As far as the performance of CETIs is concerned, the most initiatives are still progressing at a slower rate and some other are already out of operations. Low level of operational capabilities and limitations in available opportunities hinder more community members to involve directly even though they are willing to do so. Indirect benefits are being mostly offered to non-participatory community members as a compensation for the use of resources of collective ownership. However, indirect benefits are mainly confined to the social welfare, therefore, it is almost one-way. In general, there is weaker participation by women, particularly in active or direct participation. But their participation is relatively visible in indirect ways. Thus, they mainly have access to indirect benefits and, for them it is a part-time source of income.

It has been questioned whether these types of initiatives are capable of generating enough revenue for environmental conservation in the long term. However, it is required to look at this from a different angle. Basic fact is that these initiatives are not having lucrative sources of revenue generation or any generation of revenue is not consistent. Even if they do, the context studied is not demanding high level of environmental conservation efforts that essentially require critical funding to maintain environmental values. Rather, those initiatives were successful in changing attitudes of the community towards environmental conservation, which is more beneficial in the long term.

It is important to understand the real volume and value of community tourism and its potential to diversify and induce local economies, create linkages, stimulate multiplier effects, and foster sustainable resource utilisation. Tourists began incorporating environmentally friendly and culturally protective activities into their travel plans. In other words, the demand for alternative tourism including community tourism exists, because there is a clear prospective market. Hence, no reason can be produced to justify for any failure for CETIs from market point of view. Lack of organisation at each initiative level and no proper establishment of a network at national and international levels have been recognised as a long-felt weakness of those initiatives. Therefore, Sri Lankan community tourism initiatives are still not in a position to be linked with both national and international CBT networks for effective marketing.

During the study, there are certain aspects considered, such as, organisation and internal functionality of CETIs; the role of the convener; inter-organisational relationships; and *participation readiness* of the community. The findings of the study are leading to some

important implications as described above, which can also be recognised as ingredients for *best community tourism practices*. Those include factors can be summarised as: inputs with right combination (efficient resource mobilisation), visionary community leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and responsible intervention by the convener.

Theoretical Implications

This study on CETIs primarily tries to understand the social relationships associated with their planning, development, and operations. The findings of the study mainly support to establish its theoretical foundation. For example, findings clearly help to understand how relationships among different stakeholders are established, maintain and collapsed as explained by the theory of social exchange; and influence of power relations within community members, which affect directly to organisation and execution of community development activities at village level. However, some important implications have been highlighted from the same analysis with respect to certain cases. For example, rational decision-making ability of the community could be recognised as a vital factor that determines social exchanges to take place benefiting those who involved. But due the lack of knowledge and awareness (can also be recognised as a shortcoming of community capacity development) of the community limiting this to a considerable extent. No tourism development in the community is possible, if such exchanges are not taking place.

In the light of the above facts, if community tourism to be a success, established relationships are required. Primarily this has to take place between the primary stakeholders (community and convener) and secondary stakeholders (individuals and institutions). Initiation and facilitation are the outcome of this relationship. As McIver assumes, it is true that, "all social relationships are an outgrowth of the common interests that prevail among people" (cited in, Poplin, 1972: 132). According to the author, many of the goals that human beings are trying to reach and are only possible by working together. Therefore, they affiliate or collaborate with each other. The collaboration among community members is not easy to maintain as experienced in certain cases (for example, RCETI), due to loss of "common interest" at a particular stage of development and operations. In community tourism, these relationships should be maintained and developed in order to establish both community and stakeholder compliances, which are based on community empowerment and cohesiveness. The findings of the study show that the significant role played by the stakeholder collaboration and the consequences of not having the same or inconsistency collaboration processes.

Most of the deliverables of a development process are determined by how the social power has been distributed among its stakeholders. In certain cases, it has been highlighted that community collaboration deteriorates when the individuals enjoy more power than community members, even though their collective bargaining ability still exists (for example, legitimate access to natural resource under state ownership). As Blau (1964) states, "an individual who uses his resources to assert his dominance over a group and protects his dominant position by making them dependent on him while refusing to become dependent on them usually creates resentment and fails to earn social approval" (221). As elaborated in the case WCETI that particular community has been experienced such situation as a result of the existing resort operation in the same village. This provides clear indication of the impact of power unbalanced sharing and factors that contribute for creating such situations within local communities.

Managerial Implications

- CBOs are mostly established for resource mobilisation in marginalised communities. Such respective communities and CBOs are lacking significantly necessary technical expertise to carry out ventures like tourism.
- Community participation is distinctive in implementation stages since most of idea generation in CETIs was from external parties. In general, community participation in CETIs is mainly on part-time basis. Hence, community tourism initiatives can be recognised as an alternative economic activity for the participants.
- Most of time, effort, and resources have been utilised for delivering community capacity development programmes. However, weaknesses in those programmes are a common experience. For instance, technical shortcomings and ad-hoc nature of capacity development has been widely recognised and those efforts have been ended up with unproductive results. In such cases, it was unable to push most of CETIs forward.
- Relatively unsuccessful CETIs were mostly poor in product or facility development and marketing. These initiatives are very limited in scope as far as operations are concerned. The CETIs that are located close to existing tourism and city centres in the country are able to receive relatively high visitation. However, they are mostly day visitors. There is no special effort to access to special interest tourism markets.

- Weaknesses in domestic capital formation by community participants and limitations in substituting labour for venture capital have significantly affected the operational capabilities.
- Inter-sectoral coordination between state agencies has not been at its best.
- No significant progress has been made for entering into partnership with possible parties by most of the CETIs.
- CETIs are heavy convener dependent. However, the involvement of INGOs was relatively productive than the involvement of LNGOs. The approach of INGOs was systematic being backed with technical expertise available for their project implementation.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Findings of the study also reveal that resource potentiality, social, and cultural factors are favourable and can contribute immensely to induce community tourism development but not certain economic, political, and technological factors. Moreover, dependency on existing mass tourism market generally reflects the weakness of marketing effort by each initiative as well as lack of collaborative effort by the initiatives on the same purpose. Those who have already accessed to the benefits or at least at the door step of reaping benefits consistently are the ones who possess more understanding, sense of change and responding to it, ability to work collaboratively than others initiatives studied. It is also important to recognise ways and means that not only the community can benefit from tourism but also how tourism could benefit from community. Therefore, it is crucial to improve measures, in order to place community on right track through a planned process for sustaining their well being without any failure and before it is too late.

Finally, in order to make community tourism a feasible option for community well being it should not be treated as a stand-alone strategy. Thus, as far as community tourism is concerned; needs, opportunities and limitations must be considered together with other potential alternative sustainable livelihood opportunities of a respective community. The opportunities will not remain the same in the future as competitiveness is always on the rise, thus creating challenges of different nature. Hence, if appropriate measures are not taken to

correct the fundamental weaknesses, community tourism could be a missed opportunity in Sri Lanka.

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