



# "Unpacking Community-Based Tourism: Attributes, Benefits, and Developmental Impacts"

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is an innovative approach to tourism that integrates local community participation, aiming to deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits. This study delves to provide a comprehensive understanding of its role in enhancing local socio-economic and environmental conditions. The research focuses on two main objectives first, to identify the core attributes and benefits of CBT and second, to analyze its effects on community development.

To achieve the objectives, an exploratory quantitative research methodology was employed. Primary data were gathered through a structured survey distributed to a diverse sample of 50 respondents, including community members involved in CBT, tourism experts, and tourists. This survey sought to capture perceptions and experiences related to developments and impacts of CBT. The collected data were analyzed using percentage-based descriptive statistics to elucidate the prevalence and intensity of various CBT attributes and benefits. Additionally, secondary data were reviewed to explore exiting literature on the attributes and benefits of CBT.

This research highlighted the importance of aligning CBT initiatives with the needs and capacities of the communities they aim to benefit, ensuring that these initiatives are not only socially and environmentally beneficial but also economically viable. Furthermore, the study contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism and provides actionable insights for stakeholders involved in the planning, implementation, and management of CBT projects.

**Keywords:** Community-Based Tourism, Sustainable Development, Economic Impact, Cultural Preservation, Environmental Sustainability

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Rural communities are increasingly influenced by tourism, which is often touted as a catalyst for development (Harrison, 2003). Consequently, tourism is perceived as a tool for community and economic advancement, serving specific objectives (Davis and Morais, 2004). The emergence of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) followed critiques of ecotourism (Barkin, 2003), offering an alternative to traditional tourism development approaches. CBT, as defined by Saarinen (2006), involves tourism development through negotiation and collaboration among key stakeholders at the destination. In CBT, local hosts play a pivotal role in shaping tourism development processes (Timothy, 2002), recognizing them as the primary custodians of destination resources. Empowering community members in decision-making regarding tourism development is crucial for effectively managing its impacts. Increased community involvement in tourism has garnered attention due to its proven success and sustainability, as active engagement leads to socio-economic benefits (Mitchell and Eagles, 2001). Moreover, training initiatives enhance the skills of community members, enabling them to better interpret local natural and cultural assets to tourists.

**This paper carried the study with following objectives:**

1. To study concept, attributes and benefits of Community based tourism.
2. To analyse the effect and development of Community based tourism.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In communities grappling with limited economic opportunities, Community-Based Tourism (CBT) emerges as a promising avenue centered on local environmental and cultural assets. This approach holds the promise of addressing poverty and environmental challenges. CBT initiatives typically aim to foster empowerment, gender equality, capacity building, education, and the preservation of cultural identity and traditions (**Moscardo, 2008**). In the realm of sustainability, community tourism stands out as a vital component, aiming to foster local development through community involvement (**Flores et al., 2016**). The Caribbean States Association characterizes it as a means for rural communities to diversify their income sources by leveraging cultural, natural, and local assets (**ACS-AEC, 2012**). This approach seeks to address poverty, create new employment opportunities, and ensure equitable distribution of generated resources among community members. Ecuador, being some mega diverse country rich in cultural, natural, and social aspects, has emerged as a trailblazer in this form of tourism (**Cabanilla, 2016**).

## 3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research applied quantitative approach with exploratory research methodology to analyse the data. The data collection was done from primary source through survey/ Questionnaire which was distributed in 50 selected individual's / tourism experts / tourists. The analysis of primary data has been done through percentage, and secondary data source of was also collected as literature review to fulfil the objectives of study.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 CBT: Attributes and Benefits

#### 4.1.1 Community-Based Tourism (CBT) operations typically share several key attributes (Asker et al., 2010):

- **Benefit to Local Communities:** CBT primarily aims to improve the welfare of local communities, with a particular focus on supporting rural, indigenous, or small-town populations, enhancing their overall well-being and preserving their cultural and environmental resources.
- **Local Hosting:** Tourists are accommodated within the local community, fostering direct engagement and cultural exchange between visitors and residents.
- **Communal Management:** The tourism initiative is managed collectively by community members, ensuring that the decision-making process is inclusive and representative.
- **Equitable Profit Sharing:** Profits and benefits from tourism activities are distributed fairly among community members, promoting economic equity.
- **Community Development and Heritage Conservation:** A portion of the profits is reinvested into the community for development projects or used to maintain and protect cultural or natural heritage assets, such as conservation efforts.
- **Community Involvement in Tourism Planning:** The community is actively involved in all stages of tourism planning and development, including ongoing decision-making and operational activities, ensuring that tourism growth aligns with local needs and values.

#### 4.1.2 Benefits of CBT

Community-based tourism (CBT) has gained prominence as a strategy for supporting biodiversity conservation in developing APEC countries. It links livelihood enhancement with biodiversity preservation, contributing to the dual goals of reducing rural poverty and achieving sustainable outcomes (Kiss, 2004).

CBT enhances social sustainability by empowering local communities to manage their own resources. It provides meaningful employment opportunities, aids in capacity building, and supports cultural preservation. From an environmental perspective, CBT generates income that communities can use to protect their land from degradation and bolster conservation efforts, particularly through eco-tourism initiatives.

When implemented effectively, CBT:

- **Supports Local Economic Development:** By diversifying employment opportunities, CBT fosters economic growth within communities.
- **Is Financially Viable:** Sustainable economic models ensure that CBT operations are profitable and self-sustaining.
- **Encourages Equitable Participation:** CBT promotes inclusive engagement of all community members in decision-making processes.
- **Minimizes Environmental Impact:** Adopting practices that are ecologically sustainable, CBT reduces its footprint on the environment.
- **Conserves Cultural Heritage:** It preserves and promotes the living cultural heritage and welfare of the community.
- **Educates Visitors:** CBT initiatives provide visitors with insights into the local culture and natural environment.

- **Demonstrates Good Management Practices:** Effective management ensures that CBT projects are well-organized and run smoothly.
- **Ensures Quality and Safety:** A focus on high standards guarantees a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants.

Despite these benefits, there are risks associated with developing CBT, especially when it is viewed as a quick solution for communities lacking diverse livelihoods, resources, or capacity.

#### 4.2 Effects and development of Community based tourism

**Table:1.1 Perception of respondents on effect and development through CBT**

S.no	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	Tourism has a potential for overall development of the area.	2	5	8	20	15
2.	CBT brings prosperity to the community.	1	3	6	25	15
3.	CBT increases the awareness towards socio- cultural & environmental conservation	3	2	7	18	20
4.	Tourist inflow increases occupational opportunities for host community.	2	6	10	20	12
5.	CBT provides opportunity for social and cultural interaction among Tourists and hosts	2	5	8	20	15

**Source:** Created by researcher from collected data from questionnaire

Based on the above responses by the 50 respondents from a tourism background, here is the analysis:

1. Tourism potential for overall development: The majority of respondents (20 strongly agree, 15 agree) believe that tourism has the potential for overall development in the area. However, a significant portion also remained neutral (8) or disagreed (7).
2. Prosperity brought by CBT: A large number of respondents (25 agree, 15 strongly agree) perceive that Community-Based Tourism (CBT) brings prosperity to the community. However, a few respondents (1 strongly disagree, 3 disagree) hold a contrary opinion.
3. Awareness towards socio-cultural & environmental conservation: Most respondents (18 agree, 20 strongly agree) agree that CBT increases awareness towards socio-cultural and environmental conservation, with only a small portion disagreeing or remaining neutral.
4. Occupational opportunities: The majority (20 agree, 12 strongly agree) agree that tourist inflow increases occupational opportunities for the host community, although some respondents (2 strongly disagree, 6 disagree) hold different views.
5. Social and cultural interaction: A significant portion (20 agree, 15 strongly agree) believes that CBT provides opportunities for social and cultural interaction among tourists and hosts.

Overall, the responses indicate a generally positive perception of the effects and development of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) among the respondents, with some variations in opinions on specific aspects.

#### 5.CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Community-Based Tourism (CBT) embodies principles of community empowerment, equitable profit sharing, and sustainable development. While it offers significant benefits such as economic prosperity and cultural preservation, careful consideration of local needs and potential risks is essential for long-term success. CBT holds promise for positive change, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and community-driven tourism initiatives. The analysis of respondents' perceptions underscores the significant potential of CBT to drive sustainable development and enhance the well-being of local communities. However, they also emphasize the importance of addressing concerns and challenges associated with tourism development to ensure equitable and sustainable benefits in the long run.

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