

**THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE  
VILLAGE, MBOMBELA MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

by

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that, **“The Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation in Nyongane Village, Mpumalanga Province”** hereby submitted to the **University of Limpopo** for the degree **Master of Development (Planning and Management)** is my own work in design and execution and that, it has never been submitted anywhere else before. All the information included here that does not belong to me was duly acknowledged.

**Ms P.T. Mnisi**

**July 2021**

**Signature**

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the following individuals:

- My mother, Mrs **T.C. Chiloane**: I am so grateful for the great support, love and encouragement you have given me.
- My Grandmother, **Mrs N.E. Shabangu**: You have done a great job in helping my mother raise a star in me. I really appreciate your prayers every day. I am this wonderful woman today all because of your teachings. Your unconditional love for me means a lot.
- My brother, **Dillon Mnisi**: Thank you for believing in me and choosing the academic route that I, your big sister, chose.

Thank you so much! You are all the best in my life.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The foundation of ecotourism is associated with poverty alleviation all over the world. That is, ecotourism is believed to be significant in income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies and in educational purposes. However, it has been noted that regardless of the significance of ecotourism, poverty remains a major problem across the world. In some developing countries like South Africa and Botswana, among others, ecotourism could account for about 25% of their Gross Domestic Product. The Mpumalanga Province of South Africa relies on ecotourism as a source of income, employment creation and for boosting local economy. In light of this, the purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village. The study reviewed both theoretical and empirical literature on the subject. It also adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches in undertaking the study wherein an interview schedule and questionnaires were used for data collection. The findings of the study revealed that the Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve turned a blind eye on community participation by using the industry-oriented approach in ecotourism. They also revealed that the community members of Nyongane Village do not have access to resources in the reserve. Majority of the residents from the village argued that there is no communication from the aforementioned Nature Reserve while others argued that they are hardly communicated with. Therefore, the study recommended that there is a need for the Nature Reserve to provide employment opportunities for most people who are from Nyongane Village. It also recommended the need for the reserve to consider community participation by allowing the community members to provide inputs during decision making processes at least once in 6 months at the reserve. This could be done by hosting meetings attended by the representatives of the reserve and the community members. Lastly, the study concluded that although ecotourism adversely affects poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village, these negative effects, however, could possibly be addressed by implementing the recommendations of this study.

## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

SA	: South Africa
SPSS	: Statistical Package of Social Sciences
PGNR	: Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve
Stats SA	: Statistics of South Africa
KNP	: Kruger National Park
SAPS	: South African Police Service
RDP	: Reconstruction and Development Programme
GEAR	: Growth Employment And Redistribution
ASGISA	: Accelerated and Shared Growth In South Africa
ANC	: African National Congress
SATSA	: South African Tourism Service Association
BEE	: Black Economic Empowerment

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## CHAPTER 1:

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction and Background

The foundation of ecotourism is associated with poverty alleviation all over the world (Ocampo, Ebisa, Ombe and Escoto, 2018; Ma, Cai, Zheng and Wen, 2019). That is, ecotourism is believed to be significant in income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies and educational purposes (Osman, Shaw and Kenawy, 2018). The interaction between tourists and poor local communities through ecotourism has an immense potential to enhance the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of those poor local communities (Jones and Lalley, 2013). However, it has been noted that regardless of the significance of ecotourism, poverty has been considered as a major problem across the world (Tella, Akande, Adigun, Odunola, and Stella, 2017; Zhou, Guo and Liu, 2019). In addition, poor local communities are still deprived of chances to interact with the tourists and do not have access to the ecosystem (Brand, De Beer, De Villiers and Van Marle, 2013).

Ecotourism has been seen as an important motion to generate income, create employment, foreign exchange and assist in boosting the economy in most developing countries such as South Africa, Botswana, China, Indonesia and Nepal, among others. In different countries, governments together with international donors called for a robust consideration of ecotourism to alleviate poverty (Manwa and Manwa, 2014; Ishaq, Yacob, Kabir and Radam, 2015; Lee and Du Preez, 2016; Walter, Regmi and Khanal, 2018; Ma *et al.*, 2019). In some developing countries, ecotourism could account for about 25% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Modiri, 2015: np). The contribution was recognised as a major, viable and sustainable development action, which focuses on the improvement of people's standards of living and capacity building while ensuring the environment's conservation and/or protection (Zhou *et al.*, 2019). It has been

highlighted in literature that ecotourism in South Africa is flourishing (Lee and Du Preez, 2016). This is because it is the quickest way of growing the economy.

Prior to the apartheid era in South Africa, black communities had access to the ecosystem without restrictions (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018). In addition, the black communities used the forests to fetch firewood, traditional medicine and hunting animals (Osman *et al.*, 2018). During the apartheid era, black communities were forcefully moved from their land and placed in an unproductive land (Kangalawe and Noe, 2012). Parks were established with an idea of ecotourism in mind (Jones and Lalley, 2013). The rationale behind the establishment of parks was to generate income for the economy. However, this resulted in black societies losing their livelihoods as they were deprived of access to their land which was their main source of decent standards of living (Kepe, 2016; Blackmore, 2017). After 1994, the government of South Africa gained its democracy, and policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, 1994), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative in South Africa (ASGISA, 2006), The Constitution of South Africa and Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR, 1996) were introduced by the African National Congress (ANC) to assist in fighting against poverty, unemployment and the imbalances of the past. The country continues to suffer from a tripartite of challenges, namely: poverty, unemployment and inequalities (Tella *et al.*, 2017). South Africa has been seen as one of the countries with high level of poverty (StatsSA, 2021). The Statistics of South Africa previously reported that between the year 2006 and 2011, poverty rate decreased from 66.6% to 53.2% (StatsSA, 2021). However, from 2015 the rate has increased again to about 55% (StatsSA, 2021). South Africa has considered the significance of ecotourism in improving its image and in benefitting the residents of the country (Kangalawe and Noe, 2012). This is imperative, particularly when one considers the belief that ecotourism aids the country in conserving biodiversity, job creation and poverty alleviation. One of the country's provinces, Mpumalanga Province, is believed to be rich in terms of biodiversity in which many platforms for ecotourism were opened to take place in the province (Shi, Weaver, Zhao, Huang and Liu, 2019).

Mpumalanga Province's top ecotourism attraction areas are Kruger National Park (KNP), Blyde River Canyon and Sabie Sand Game Reserve. However, Kruger National Park is believed to be the dominant park undertaking ecotourism (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). The park occupies about 58% of the Mpumalanga Province (StatsSA, 2013: np). The province uses ecotourism as a source of income, employment creation and for boosting local economy (Berrian, Van Rooyen, Lopez, Knobel and Conrad, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village.

## **1.2. Statement of Research Problem**

Ecotourism has a gigantic ability to assist in terms of fighting against poverty (Cobbinah, Amenuvor, Black and Pephrah, 2017; Hsu, 2019). It plays a leading role in economic development in South Africa. South Africa is known to be dominated by poverty (StatsSA, 2021). In the year 2021, the poverty statistics show that Mpumalanga Province has about 7.8% households that still remain in the grip of poverty (StatsSA, 2021). Most people in Nyongane village are faced with abject poverty yet the village is located next to Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. The South African Tourism Service Association (SATSA) tried to provide better standards for ecotourism by ensuring integrity, accountability as well as controlling the quality of the tourisms (Eshun and Eshun, 2014). However, there are only few people from the village who are employed during eco-travels. Community members are also denied the opportunity to fetch firewood, traditional medicine and other natural resources that are important for their livelihood in places that are perceived to be designated for ecotourism purposes (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). This renunciation of poor local communities to use the conserved natural resources conflicts with the economic development of the poor local communities (Mbaiwa, 2018). Consequently, ecotourism is believed to be exploiting the natural resources of the country in favour of satisfying tourists (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018).

Ecotourism was criticised for stressing the environment in the village when handled inappropriately (Mbaiwa, 2018). The poverty level in Nyongane Village is very high regardless of the ecotourism related activities around the village. Furthermore, during

eco-travels, tourists tend to visit villages and cause problems such as pollution, destroying the residents' areas conserved for spiritual purposes, pick flowers planted for adornment at yards as well as stealing other materials (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). Kruger National Park is said to be having about nine hundred and fifty thousand tourists a year (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015; SANParks, 2019), and as a result, the Nyongane Village residents get affected by most of the activities that the tourists engage in. For instance, some of the tourists who came with an aim to explore KNP ended up going to nearby communities on their own and picked plants meant for decoration purposes, among others (Salesa and Cerda, 2020). Some of the activities done during ecotours cause soil erosion. In addition, the off-road vehicles also disturb the landscape, and the village, therefore, develop potholes that make it difficult for certain plants to grow (Salesa and Cerda, 2020). One of the principles of ecotourism is that it must deliver education not only to tourists, but also to individuals residing in local societies (Dube, Francis and Maliwichi, 2018). Ecotourism should help local community members to generate income through employment and provision of skills (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). However, majority of the employees hired at Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve during eco-tours or at the Nature Reserve are not residents of the Nyongane Village. This is also why the village is still characterised by high levels of poverty. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The general research question of the study was as follows: How does ecotourism affect poverty alleviation?

The specific research questions as formulated from the general research question were as follows:

- What is the nature of ecotourism?
- What is the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation?
- What is the socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism?

- What are the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation?

#### 1.4. Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study was to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

The research objectives of the study as formulated from the research aim were as follows:

- To explore the nature of ecotourism.
- To evaluate the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation.
- To analyse the socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism.
- To investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.
- To investigate measures that address the adverse effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

#### 1.5. Definition of Terms

This section defines the core terms that are used in the study as follows:

- **Ecotourism:** the act of roving in zones of great status, comparatively uninterrupted, protecting the environment while refining the standards of living of local societies (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018). It includes roving to zones that comprise of fauna, flora and cultural heritage (Ma *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism concentrates on the communication of biotic apparatuses of the environment (Shi *et al.*, 2019). The study operationalises the definition of ecotourism as the tourism conducted sustainably with the aim of conserving the environment, providing local communities with education and means to sustain their lives, generating income for ecological conservation as well as promoting the cultural heritage of the localities.
- **Poverty:** the state of facing scarcities in terms of daily basic needs. It is the condition of being highly poor (Khumalo, 2013). It is a multidimensional concept which looks at different aspects of individuals (Modiri, 2015). These aspects



entail the social, economic, political and environmental development of the individuals concerned. The study defines poverty as the state where one lacks the necessary means to meet their daily basic needs and opportunities to participate in decision making processes concerning standards of living, disempowerment and violation.

- **Poverty Alleviation:** refers to the process through which mechanisms to assist people with improving their standards of living are developed (Tella *et al.*, 2017). It is the act of dealing with the denial of choices as well as opportunities and human violation (Khumalo, 2013). According to Zhou *et al.* (2019), poverty alleviation could also be defined as a way of coming up with solutions to insufficiencies and incapability to play a part in decision of matters disturbing the standards of living of local communities. From the presented definitions, the study defines poverty alleviation as the process of coming up with solutions to tackle problems faced by local communities. These problems include among others lack of education or skills, employment, income to secure daily basic needs as well as the inability to participate in the decision-making process on matters affecting them as a local community (Zhou and Liu, 2019).

## 1.6. Research Design and Methodology

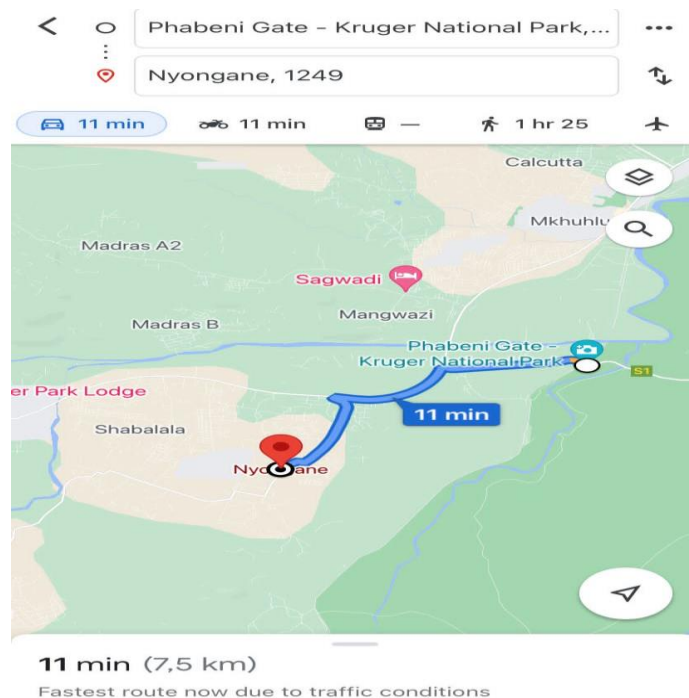
Research design and methodology shows the data collection techniques used in the study. If the researcher knows which research design and methodology to use, they are unlikely to face uncertainty, confusion and other practical haphazard in relation to any research problem (Geoffrey and Wile, 2019). In addition, the researcher also becomes advantaged in a way that he or she is able to avoid spending too much time, costs and effort during the data collection process (Geoffrey and Wile, 2019). On the same hand, research design informs researchers about the measures to be utilised to collect information and how valid and reliable their study is (Geoffrey and Wile, 2019). This section focuses on the research design, description of the study area, kinds of data required, target population, including the unit of analysis, sampling design, data

collection tools, data analysis techniques as well as the validity, reliability and significance of the study.

### 1.6.1 Research Design

The study adopted the normative design since human beings and their life activities were the focus, and there were no controlled variables. The normative design appraises and establishes norms and values that best fit the society's expectations (Sharma, 2017). The normative design was criticized for being remote from practical reality (Sharma, 2017). However, that did not affect the study because the researcher also made use of the evaluation method under the normative design to evaluate the nature of ecotourism, role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, socio-economic status of communities practicing ecotourism, and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. The evaluation method enables the researcher to enhance the chance of ensuring that the aim and objectives of the study are achieved (Rahman, 2020). It also points out areas that should be improved. However, it has a weakness in terms of having management support and required skills and resources (Rahman, 2020). The researcher made sure that this did not affect the study by paying attention to every little detail.

### 1.6.2. Description of the Study Area



The study was based at Nyongane Village under the Mbombela Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Nyongane Village is about 10 kilometres away from Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. This area is believed to be characterised by high levels of poverty (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017). This is due to the problem of unemployment, illiteracy and lack of skills prevalent in the village. Most houses are female-headed while in some cases there are child-headed households. The village is also characterised by the shortage of clean water and proper sanitation. About 90% of the households are still using pit toilets with a few houses which are properly structured (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017). Most of the people in the village engage in informal businesses and employment such as spaza shops, car wash, domestic works, commercial farming, hair salons and crafting for a living. Compounding the problems faced is also the fact that there is no proper infrastructure, i.e., proper roads, in the village.

According to James (1937), Kruger National Park is seen as one of the biggest game reserves in Africa. It was initiated in 1898 and was South Africa's first national park in 1926. It is believed to be covering an area of 19,485 square kilometres in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces. Its directorial head offices are in Skukuza (James, 1937). The park has many ecotourism attractions such as the rest camps, bushveld camps, designated private lodges, and restaurants. Kruger National Park has the ability to raise large income annually. Between 2013 and 2014, it raised approximately five million, two hundred and thirty-five thousand and ninety-five rands (SANParks, 2019). Therefore, it is believed that the park has the capacity to improve the standards of living of its neighbouring communities. However, in practice, poverty levels are still high at the Kruger National Park Phabeni Gate's neighbouring communities such as Nyongane Village.

### 1.6.3. Target Population

The target population of this study was the community members of Nyongane Village, Mbombela Municipality officials, the Department of Tourism and the representatives of the Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. The unit analysed under community members were heads of households representing families of Nyongane Village, those who engaged in ecotourism in KNP (coming from Nyongane Village), a community development facilitator of Kruger National Park in Phabeni Gate and a manager from Mbombela Municipality under The Ehlanzeni District, unit 8 of LED, Tourism and Rural Development and community development practitioner from the Department of Tourism. The identified participants were relevant for the study because it was believed that they had the necessarily information to bridge the knowledge gap on the subject under investigation.

### 1.6.4. Kinds of Data Required

The study required both primary and secondary data from which experiences, facts and observations were attained through literature review, community members of Nyongane Village, municipal officials, Department of Tourism officials and representatives of the Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. The socio-economic status of the communities was drawn from literature review, municipal officials and community members of Nyongane Village. Representatives of Kruger National Park and the Department of Tourism provided information based on the nature of ecotourism. Furthermore, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation was drawn from municipal documents and officials, journals, newspapers, community members of Nyongane Village, Department of Tourism officials and representatives of the Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. Household heads representing families of Nyongane Village provided information based on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

### 1.6.5. Sampling Design

For the purpose of this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were adopted. The Nyongane Village had about 500 households (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017) and the researcher sampled 10% of the households, i.e. 50 heads of

households, using the systematic sampling design. The sampling design assisted the researcher to be able to easily execute, understand and control the process of sampling. The design has a weakness of enabling some of the population to detect the process of sampling. However, the researcher made sure that such weakness did not affect the research as strict research steps were followed. Sampling 10% of the population enabled the researcher to have a smooth data collection process. In addition, it also assisted the researcher to have less confusion when collecting the data. Every 10<sup>th</sup> household in the village was requested to participate in the study. The sampling technique was used to ensure that every household in the village was fairly represented for the study to be able to collect information for generalisation purposes. Since Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, had more than 5 sections headed by different community development facilitators, the study sampled one community development facilitator under the division of ecotourism and conservation using judgmental sampling. There were less than 10 workers from Nyongane Village, the researcher surveyed all the 10 workers. The researcher proceeded to sample the manager at Mbombela Municipality and community development practitioner from the Department of Tourism using judgmental sampling. The judgmental sampling design was advantageous to the researcher because it saved time and costs since the researcher knew exactly who to sample. It also helped the researcher to sample relevant key informants.

#### 1.6.6. Data Collection Techniques

Primary data of the study was collected through questionnaires and interviews. The researcher used an interview schedule to collect data from the representatives of Kruger National Park Phabeni Gate, municipal official and Department of Tourism official. The study further used questionnaires to collect data from the selected community members in Nyongane Village, including households and workers in the park. Secondary data was collected from scholarly articles, books, government documents, newspapers and research journals through a desktop study.

#### 1.6.7. Data Analysis Techniques

The qualitative data emanating from both primary and secondary data were analysed, using the thick description (describing in depth or details), and classified. The quantitative data emanating from both primary and secondary data were analysed through the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). SPSS was utilised to capture data and produce frequency tables, then the input was transferred to Microsoft excel to draw graphs for analysis purposes. The data were utilised to approve, balance and improve the qualitative data on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

#### 1.6.8. Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the study emanated from notion practice, data gathering and examination methods. Much has been written about the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Scholars such as Gardyne *et al.* (2005), Jones and Lalley (2013), Saayman and Giampiccoli (2015), Ocampo *et al.* (2018) and Mbaiwa (2018) have written quite notably about the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Jones and Lalley (2013), Eshun and Eshun (2014), and Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2015) used the SPSS to analyse quantitative data in studies on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation and analysed qualitative data through description and classification. The study ensured validity and reliability by making use of the precisely described research methodology. It has also ensured that all the research ethics mentioned in the study were followed appropriately.

### **1.7. Significance of the Study**

The study hoped to bridge the knowledge gap on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. It aimed to improve people's general understanding and ability to reason. It, thus, provide extra data based on the relationship between ecotourism and poverty alleviation in an effort to assist the residents and relevant authorities on how poverty can be alleviated through ecotourism. Moreover, it envisages that both the residents and relevant authorities in the domain of ecotourism will gain substantial understanding on issues highlighted by this study which will further improve their efforts towards poverty alleviation. It will assist future researchers in finding information based on the

effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. The study was determined by the researcher's inquisitiveness and yearning to deliver additional knowledge on the relationship between ecotourism and poverty alleviation. Consequently, the findings and recommendations of this study will influence a policy such as the Integrated Development Plan within municipalities towards considering the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

### **1.8. Ethical Considerations**

Before the study could be conducted, ethical clearance was sought from the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

For the study to be successful, it adopted the following ethics:

- *Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality*

It is a practical component of research ethics employed to guard the privacy and confidentiality of the study's respondents (Benett, Ellender, Makinen, Miya, Patrick, Wasserman, Woodford and Weyl, 2016). Most respondents would be willing to participate in the study if their privacy, anonymity and confidentiality are prioritised (Hitchcock, 2017). As a result, during all the interviews conducted and administration of questionnaires when data were collected, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were highly considered. From the data that were disclosed to the public, nothing that would identify the respondents was used.

- *Obtaining Informed Consent*

Obtaining informed consent is one of the foundations of research ethics (Hitchcock, 2017). It is pivotal in making sure that the respondents are well informed about the study conducted (Morrow, 2015). In this study, the researcher ensured that the respondents were fully informed about the reasons why the study was conducted, why they were required to take part, what was expected from them and when they had to undertake all the required activities. Such information required the researcher to specify the data collection techniques, purpose of the research, risks, inconveniences and discomforts that the respondents might come across.

- *Integrity and Right to Withdraw*

It is a priority in research that all information provided by the researcher be truthful (Wolfgang, 2015). As a result, the researcher ensured that all the information used in the study was correct and not faked. With the exclusion of those examples of underground observation where it is not possible to allow everybody that is being observed know what the researcher is doing; research respondents had the right to pull out from the research process at any time.

- *Avoiding Plagiarism*

An ethical researcher does not fabricate and or copy and paste data that do not belong to him or her without even acknowledging the owners of the information (Benett *et al.*, 2016). Since research ethics guides the study, the researcher did not present information extracted from other sources as his/hers. References were provided for all the information where necessary and appropriate; credit was given to the work of others.

The benefits associated with the study are presented as the significance of the study and there are no risks that the study poses.

### **1.9. Outline of the dissertation**

The dissertation consists of 5 chapters which are outlined as follows: Chapter 1 of the dissertation provides the introduction and background of the study and it further outlines the statement of the research problem, research design and methodology, significance of the study as well as ethics to be considered in the study. Chapter 2 focuses on the general principle and understanding on how ecotourism affects poverty alleviation in different countries. Chapter 3 of the study centers on how ecotourism affects poverty alleviation specifically in South Africa. Chapter 4 focuses on the research findings, analyses and interpretation of the data collected from the target population. The last chapter, chapter 5 provides summary of the study, key findings and recommendations.



### **1.10. Conclusion**

The above section provided the introduction and background of the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation, statement of the research problem that was investigated, research questions to assist in filling the gap of knowledge, aim and objectives the study hoped to achieve, definition of the two main concepts used to formulate the title, the research design and methodology used to collect and analyse data, the significance of conducting the study as well as the ethics that were considered during the collection of data.

## CHAPTER 2:

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES ON THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

#### 2.1. Introduction

Various scholars have argued that ecotourism should be seen as a pivotal activity as it is said to be very helpful in terms of income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies as well as education (Osman *et al.*, 2018). Nevertheless, ecotourism was criticised for many negative activities. For instance, it was criticised for stressing the setting in communities nearby nature reserves when held improperly as this negatively affected the process of poverty alleviation (Greyling, 2014). This chapter focuses on providing findings of previous studies on the nature of ecotourism, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation from an international context.

#### 2.2. Theoretical Framework

Ecotourism has been carried forward as a system of sustainable tourism that is predicted to boost conservation and the development of underprivileged societies (Chiutsi, Mukoroverwa, Karigambe and Mudzengi, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the Ecotourism Theory which promotes stakeholders' engagement and sustainability of the environment was adopted. The Ecotourism Theory has placed weight on the necessity for ecotourism to entirely deliver the travellers and high societies with education regarding the environment (Giampiccoli, 2015; Mosammam, Sarrafi, Nia, and Heidari, 2018). In context of this study, the representatives of Kruger National Park should, therefore, make sure that education about conservation is ensured where necessary. The Theory of Ecotourism further states that ecotourism should guarantee that its reimbursements are enjoyed with underprivileged and neighbouring rural societies (Tella *et al.*, 2017; Dube *et al.*, 2018). The representatives of Kruger National

Park (particularly the development facilitator under the division of Ecotourism and Conservation) should work hand-in-hand with the local community, municipality, traditional authority and the Department of Tourism to ensure that nearby rural communities benefit from ecotourism activities.

A wide range of literature review on stakeholders' engagement displays that the impression of stakeholders' identification is very noteworthy (Benn, Abratt, Abratt and O'Leary, 2016). Therefore, the Ecotourism Theory emphasises the necessity to confirm that there are numerous participants involved in the organisation progression (Nicholas, Thapa and Ko, 2009). In this study, participants are all the individuals directly and indirectly affected by ecotourism and poverty alleviation. The stakeholders are the representatives of Kruger National Park Phabeni Gate, local community members, municipality, traditional authority and the Department of Tourism. The Ecotourism Theory proffers that managers should have a connection with other participants (Nicholas *et al.*, 2009). The Ecotourism Theory also contends that the participants' involvement in a venture should be advantageous to those participants too (Greeff, 2013). During decision-making processes at Kruger national Park Phabeni Gate, local societies, municipalities and other participants should be taken into thought and reimbursements should be relished with them.

The theory also puts emphasis on the need for sustainability in a way that a steadiness in growth and the environment is created (Van Zijl, Wöstmann and Maroun, 2017). It highlights the necessity for growth events to pay consideration to the environment (Jenkins, n.d; Ben-Eli, 2006). Events of poverty alleviation should not cause the devastation of the environment. There should be steadiness. In other words, there should be acknowledgement and elevation of sustainable development whereby the desires of the present cohort are encountered without conciliating those of the upcoming cohorts. Along with notions of sustainability purported by the Ecotourism Theory, the Ecological Model was adopted in this study. The Ecological Model calls for the necessity to ensure protection of biological truthfulness (Jenkins, n.d). That is, paying consideration to the existing biosphere's well-being. With this model, one could be either anthropogenic or egocentric when it comes to sustaining ecology. Therefore,

the researcher was anthropogenic. The anthropogenic view requires the researcher to ensure that important natural resources, ecological systems and regenerative processes that people rely on are sustained (Foxcroft, Richardson and Wilson, 2008; Jenkins, n.d). The Ecotourism Theory places weight on the necessity to uphold entirely substantial varieties of lifetime practices in the biosphere. The representatives of Kruger national Park, Phabeni Gate should ensure that during the conservation of ecology, local communities also benefit for the purpose of their well-being (Ben-Eli, 2006).

### **2.3. The Nature of Ecotourism in Developed and Developing Countries**

Ecotourism is guided by various principles undertaken through different approaches, and associated with various activities (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014; Giampiccoli, 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this section is to discuss the nature of ecotourism with particular focus on its principles, approaches and activities.

#### **2.3.1. The Context of Ecotourism**

It is evident that a move from the sustainability to the management of nature has become apparent (Chifon, 2010; Casale and Posel, 2021). Discussions in literature concerning sustainable tourism are progressively concentrating on ecotourism. There is quite a vital discrepancy among sustainable tourism and ecotourism (Von Fintel and Orthofer, 2020). Although ecotourism is approximately well-defined as a substitute foldaway to nature-grounded zones, sustainable tourism is an extra surrounding notion and put emphasis on the need for devotion to the comprehensive sustainability notion industrialised by the World Tourism Organization between all kinds of tourism events and in all sections of the tourism industry (Casale and Posel, 2021). Ecotourism is still a comparatively minor section of the general tourism area, meanwhile at the same time, one of the fast-increasing industries (Chifon, 2010). The essential concentration of ecotourism is ecological sustainability, conservation and gratitude of the world and outdated philosophies situated in natural parts (Von Fintel and Orthofer, 2020). It is, therefore, intentioned at minimising the injurious anthropological influences on the natural and socio-social environment and cares for the safety of natural and social

possessions and the well-existence of multitude societies. The imbrication and co-operative connection with the spirit of sustainable tourism is quite clear from this portrayal of ecotourism together with its intentions (Asongu and Odhiambo, 2021).

The important role of ecotourism in socio-financial growth was strained in May 2002, as noted at the World Ecotourism Summit held in Quebec (Chifon, 2010). The Quebec Declaration stated that “if approved out responsibly, ecotourism could be a treasured resource to be used in alleviating poverty and endorsing the socio-economic growth of multitude societies whereas producing possessions for the conservation of natural and educational possessions” (Von Fintel and Orthorfer, 2020:568). It must be well-known at this point that these natural and educational possessions are retained by the underprivileged, predominantly individuals in emerging republics which are contingent on these ordinary and educational possessions for their living (Okeocha, 2020).

### 2.3.2. Principles of Ecotourism

The principles of ecotourism include environmental protection, education about conservation, management of ecological funds as well as its benefits to the community. In this section, the principles of ecotourism are discussed as follows:

- *Environmental Protection*

Ecotourism should be responsible for avoiding harmful impact on the environment (Osman *et al.*, 2018). Ecological and social mindfulness should be assembled and at the same time, physical, behavioural, emotional and societal effects should be reduced (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015; Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). There should be elevation of stewardship around the environment. Countries like Tanzania began practicing environmental protection between 1884 and 1999, where activities such as hunting animals, collecting firewood and grazing cattle were prohibited (Pallangyo, 2007). There has been much effort put through the establishment of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) and the establishment of an environmental act to deal with the negative effects on the environment since 1983 (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017).

Ecotourism should call for people to be wise about and conscious of the environment (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015; Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). Serious attention should be paid to people exploiting natural resources and effective measures should be taken to deal with such (Shi *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism should make sure that natural resources are safeguarded in a way that demonstrates that sustainable development is taken into consideration. It should try as much as possible, to ensure balance in the environment and ensuring provision of constancy to different features of nature (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017). The impression and attractiveness of ecotourism aids the groundwork of National Park Schemes (Fedele, locatelli and Djoudi, 2017).

One advantage of ecotourism is that it seeks to guard the home-grown faunas and floras (French, Tangney, Crane, Wang and Appelhans, 2019). Whereas, other arrangements of tourism, particularly physique tourism, does not pay attention to the environment at all (Daramola, Lewu and Malan, 2021). Ecotourism has the aim to guard the natural surroundings as well as sustaining the natural surroundings of frequent faunas and floras while giving travellers the chance to visit these natural places at the same time (Graham, 2020). Ecotourism does not seek to protect plants and animals only, but also to sustain natural ecosystems at a large extent (French *et al.*, 2019). This usually includes some portions of nature reserves that are not reachable to people at all so that faunas and floras are adequately preserved. Consequently, ecologies have the latitude to grow in a nearly completely usual way (Wright *et al.*, 2017). Numerous individuals are just too eventful in their everyday existence and do not want to care about the animals and plants during their relaxation period (Liu, Wang, Zhu and Qu, 2021). Therefore, it is critical to increase the consciousness of individuals on the significant matters pertaining to environmental difficulties through ecotourism (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020).

- *Education about Conservation*

It has been highlighted by numerous scholars that ecotourism should provide all the tourists with data built on the problems of management of usual zones among others (Giampiccoli, 2015; Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). Experiences of both tourists and local communities should be provided (Shi *et al.*, 2019). Individuals should have complete

and imperative acquaintance regarding ecotourism. This will serve as a way of promoting environmental awareness. China was one of the developing countries to first establish a sustainable development strategy (Kunmin and Peng, 2008). In 1984, education about conserving the environment was announced as China's basic national policy (Chunmei and Zhaolan, 2010). Some individuals do not get used to valuing their residential natural resources (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). However, individuals are able to see the effects of ecological and cultural maintenance on their standards of living. They are edged to utilise their possessions sustainably and guard their surroundings from damaging acts like unlawful forestry logging (Ilkcaracan, Kim, Masterson, Memiş and Zacharias, 2021). Residents in communities around nature reserves and other travellers' destinations are instantly open-minded on the significance of protecting the environment (Yao, He and Bao, 2020). They were taught how to use the environment sustainably while benefiting from it. There is a perception that through environmental awareness, the degradation of the environment is reduced, and that the ecosystem appears to gain balance (Graham, 2020).

Ecotourism provides support for sustainable development by confirming stability among anthropological requirements and conservation of natural ecologies and biodiversity (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Sustainable ecotourism is thus essential to establish self-determining and self-sustaining societies (Graham, 2020). It is also specifically connected to the notion of sustainable expansion over such creativities as means of organisation in order to tackle socio-economic issues faced by local societies whilst bearing in mind the conservation of social truthfulness, environmental procedures, biotic variety and schemes supporting lifespan (Graham, 2020). Even though numerous scholarly work illustrate how multitude districts profit meaningfully from ecotourism, a smaller amount of these studies have revealed how underprivileged rural societies in those districts profit from the time of inadequate participation of local societies and formerly abandoned clusters' ecotourism ingenuities (Xaba, Selepe and Mdiniso, 2018).

- *Management of Ecological Funds*

The revenue produced from ecotourism events is used for the supervision of protected natural zones (Shi *et al.*, 2019). Funds should be openly managed for ecological maintenance (Santarem, Campos, Pereira, Hamidou and Brito, 2018). Funds generated from ecotourism activities should be used to deal with problems associated with ecotourism. As a result, there should at least be fewer problems regarding ecotourism. Botswana is a respectable sample of intelligent ecotourism policies. Around the 1980s, the government of Botswana took the guidance of ecologists and commenced rising high-revenue and low-volume tourism (Rutina, Mogwera, Seonyatseng, Mpofo and Ntloyathuto, 2017). The national parks in South Africa receive about 70% of their income from tourism profits (Igene, Sedibe, Solomon, Van Der Westhuizen and Fadeyi, 2017). Therefore, national parks directly contribute to ecological funds to enable the reserves to deliver what the tourists expect.

Ecotourism should offer support to ecologists so that they could be able to do advanced conservational investigation (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). It is believed that ecologists in Africa are faced with exclusive trials whenever they conduct research (Graham, 2020). Therefore, ecologists need to be supported by developing their skills, knowledge and familiarity base, and to be connected with other international ecologists (Yao *et al.*, 2020). Ecotourism should also ensure that support is given to exceptional biological science in Africa through the provision of funds and equipment (Mpofo and Hlatywayo, 2015). In Northern Nigeria, it has been argued that ecological funding and natural resources are conflicting (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Literature reveals that the consumption of ecological funds ranged from non-conformism to specified expenditure procedures, unfinished payment of the funding to appropriate agencies and unlawful deviations of the funding (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). In other cases, the funding was used to assist secluded comforts. This has led to the growth of natural-resource struggles in the Northern Nigeria (Yao *et al.*, 2020). The Ecological Fund through the Federation Account Act of 1981 was introduced as a puddle of funding that could be exclusively helpful to the funds of biological glitches due to the need to fight the danger of ecological complications Nigeria is facing. According to Ifesinachi, Adibe and Wogu



(2015:1857), “Decrees 36 of 1984 and 106 of 1992, as well as the Allocation of Federation Account Modification Order of 2002, subsequently modified the Act”.

In 1992, the funding that initially instituted 1% of the Federation Account was revised to 2%, and later 1% of the original distribution which was further added and it led to the entire percentage of 3. Ifesinachi *et al.* (2015:1889) state that, “ecological schemes are implemented on behalf of the Federal Government by the Ecological Fund Office (EFO), and since 2009 the Federal Government has permitted a guide for the distribution of ecological funding that guarantees that drought and desertification have 60% of ecological projects in Nigeria”.

- *Its Benefits to the Community*

Most developing countries are depending on ecotourism for development (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). Ecotourism has been seen as one of their largest sources of generating income. The developing countries use ecotourism to help them contribute to their development. Ecotourism has been praised and argued to be the fastest growing industry that even attracts foreign exchange (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). Nation-States tend to use their own tourism resources in an attempt to develop and turn their sites into competitive attraction (Graham, 2020). It has been argued that in 2016, ecotourism contributed to Gross Domestic Product in some of the African countries (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). It has contributed the following percentages: Nigeria (4.7%), Ghana (7.1%), South Africa (9.3%) and Botswana (12.7%) (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). Ecotourism is also used as an active instrument of sustainable development, which is why it is nowadays the chief motive in which developing countries are principally reliant on it, containing in their fiscal expansion and protection tactics (Graham, 2020). It is essentially a source of livelihoods to local communities and to be involved in conservation of the ecology and biodiversity helps in returning economic incentives to the local communities (Graham, 2020). The practices of touring help to reduce environmental effect which further contributes to work formation and maintainable livings of the local communities.

Ecotourism should produce revenue that could be utilized in improving the living standards of the underprivileged local societies situated near the well-kept-up zones used for ecotourism determinations (Tella *et al.*, 2017). There should be priority placed on poor local communities when acquiring benefits from ecotourism (Shi *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, ecotourism should yield more benefits to the poor local community members. After Botswana started raising high revenues for ecology, its local communities became beneficiaries too (Rutina *et al.*, 2017). This is how lodges and safari operators reimburse tenancy levies that go straight to the societies.

Guests in East Africa have the chance to socialise with the Maasai individuals who well-maintained much of their social performances (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). The culture and traditions of different societies face various dangers, precisely because of the way that ecology and the atmosphere are handled. Their threats might not be at the same degree as those posed to the environment, but they all face threats nonetheless (Graham, 2020). In fact, some are at the edge of extermination. They are faced with westernisation threats, which in turn cause the traditional ways of life to be deemed as out-dated (Wang, Chen, Han, Yao, Gu and Jiang, 2021). Ecotourism tried to assist in the preservation of civilisation meanwhile accepting new things. When guests study the philosophy of the populaces in these countries, they get to know them, improving and respecting their principles (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). Ecotourism has assisted various societies in Africa to hold in regard their beliefs and thus sustain them for long time (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020).

### 2.3.3. Approaches to Ecotourism

Ecotourism could be undertaken through the industry-oriented approach, spatial/physical-oriented approach and community-based approach. Therefore, the approaches are discussed in the subsequent sub-sections.

- *Industry-Oriented Approach*

The Industry-Oriented Approach is also known as the Economic-Oriented Approach (Osman *et al.*, 2018). It is an approach that is employed to ensure that monetary

enticements secluded marketplaces and further portions of government can attain their purposes (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). This approach is assumed to mainly focus on making profit and it views ecotourism as an export industry (Lee, 2019). The approach also focuses on the economic benefits of ecotourism, job creation and regional development (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). Nevertheless, conservationists and growth experts critiqued the approach for its catastrophe to practical (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015).

Structuring responsibility, integrity and vigorous connection between the state and its residents is the key to decent ascendancy (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). Governments worldwide should strive to create and have healthy relationships with their residents (Gonzales, 2018). This makes it easier to fix the challenges faced in the process of poverty alleviation. In order to have good service distribution plans, allowing individuals to participate is believed to be the key (Denman, 2001). Moreover, allowing people to take part in decisions that affect their standards of living enables them to acquire a sense of ownership, self-reliance, empowerment, working in a collaborative manner and sustainability (Rutina *et al.*, 2017). Decent planning of service delivery assists in avoiding the exploitation of fiscal and physical possessions as well as creating a good image for the administration of a republic (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017). Problems such as inequalities and poverty are better dealt with by allowing participation of the people in the country. This is because the presence of the residents during decision making processes quickens the process and helps the government to deliver correct services to the people.

Despite the foregoing assertions, the Industry-Oriented Approach to ecotourism is thought to be whirling a shade eye on the enhancement of the ideals of living of the underprivileged resident societies (Osman *et al.*, 2018). In practice, it encourages secluded tenure of nature reserves. Since this approach was critiqued, it highlighted a mode for the introduction of the Physical-Oriented Approach also known as the Spatial-Oriented Approach.

- *Physical/Spatial-Oriented Approach*

The assumption of this approach to ecotourism was that too much consideration should be placed on the shield of the atmosphere (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). It called for a need to raise environmental awareness. The Physical-Oriented Approach to ecotourism advocated for the need to focus ecotourism on spatial patterns in order to diminish negative impacts on the environment (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015; Lee, 2019). The approach has also placed weight on the need to put superior consideration to the communal, corporeal and ecological volume when undertaking ecotourism (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). However, development practitioners also criticised this approach. In Namibia, tourism was managed by a private minority group of people during the 1990s when the country gained its independence. Local communities were only getting few benefits and only a few of those local communities had incentives to practice conservation (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). The Physical-Oriented approach has been criticised for disregarding expansion (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). It is said to be partial when it comes to the atmosphere (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). This deprived the poor local societies which has led to the introduction of the Community-Based Approach.

- *Community-Based Ecotourism*

Most of the world's good-looking resources are in protected areas and susceptible local communities (Daman, 2001). Community-Based Ecotourism strained the requirement for the advancement of underprivileged local societies and called for the prerequisite to permit communal associates to be involved in ecotourism matters disturbing them (Eshun and Eshun, 2014). Local community members should get substantial control over ecotourism's development and management. Giampiccoli (2015) emphasises that the Community-Based Ecotourism Approach squeezes separate ingenuities in the local societies, and it should stand-in maintainable practice and cooperative accountability in matters including mutually endangered zones and local societies. With this approach to ecotourism, local societies form part of the everyday happenings with the travellers (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015).

Thailand, as the most successful country with ecotourism development in the Mekong Region, has emphasised that involving local communities in ecotourism matters and

activities strengthens the awareness of the natural environment (Khanal and Babar, 2007). In addition, the main objective of Community-Based Ecotourism in this country is to develop sustainable tourism as well as marketing programmes of good quality. In South Africa, Community-Based Ecotourism is associated with problems such as the uneven distribution of the benefits of ecotourism between the management and local communities (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). There are still issues of discrimination based on gender and race, among others. Most local communities do not engage in the process of enjoying the benefits from ecotourism (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015).

- *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Ecotourism*

The Sustainable Livelihood Approach is a method utilised to examine the influence and effect that various methods of ecotourism could make to the welfare of the underprivileged (Chifon, 2010). The approach is seen as an arrangement of organised investigation which is aimed at assessing the numerous matters that affect the way underprivileged people put their ways of living together as well as sustaining their relatives, and drive past what is frequently believed about finances incomes or communal incomes to ensure the livelihood diversification (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015). This livelihood method offers a technique that concentrates on the optimistic and adverse effects of specific ways of ecotourism expansion upon the living of the underprivileged (Kunmin and Peng, 2008). Smearing a living method could make it likely to evaluate the miscellaneous effects of ecotourism creativities on dissimilar living approaches of persons and families in a specific region (Steyn, 2019). The effect of ecotourism on poverty alleviation and subsequent enhancement of society's ways of living comprises of the production of employment openings, the launching and expansion of Small and Medium Micro Enterprises, health care and infrastructural advantage "such as advancement of roads, suppling of water, electricity and telecommunication, education and training, corporate social responsibility programmes and empowerment" (Rogerson, 2006 cited in Chifon, 2010:25).

The Sustainable Livelihood Approach stipulates a systematic agenda that encourages an organised examination of the fundamental procedures that caused poverty (Steyn, 2019). The benefit of utilising the sustainable livelihood approach is that it concentrates

on society's personal description of poverty and takes into mind an extensive variety of aspects that caused or contributed to poverty (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015). The enlargement of livelihood reimbursements needs a sympathetic consideration of what individuals furthestmost require and want in terms of their livelihood significances and the multifaceted conducts wherein various alternatives have an effect on livelihood right away and not directly (Kunmin and Peng, 2008). There is also a need to determine whether or not pro-poor tourism programmes by the communities are sculpted by the predicted effects on their livelihood (Jordaan and Barry, 2009). Conscientious preparation and layout, centred on the consideration of the maintenances of specific residents, could momentarily improve the optimistic effect of an ecotourism inventiveness on the economy and its effect on poverty alleviation (Steyn, 2019). A livelihood method is usually, but furthestmost frequently, pertinent in some state whereby a well-distinct civic is seen as attractive in ecotourism as a living approach (Kunmin and Peng, 2008). A livelihood method is also convenient in recognising probable connections between ecotourism and other livelihood events (Jordaan and Barry, 2009). The graphic demonstration of the significant fundamentals of the livelihood method is described in the segment of the Department of International Development (DFID) (Fedele *et al.*, 2017). A livelihood method is implemented from the sustainable livelihood structure employed by the Department of International Development (DFID) in the late 1999 (Chifon, 2010).

#### 2.3.4. Activities of ecotourism

Ecotourism could be done through different activities. The sub-section below provides discussions of the different activities associated with ecotourism.

- *Cultural Ecotourism*

This activity of ecotourism contains learning about different cultures of people without taking into consideration the necessity to be mindful around the environment (Grieves, Adler and King, 2014). Eco-tours strive to ensure protection of sacred places as well as exploring spiritual customs and or assist in terms of preserving cultural traditions (Korth, 2016). With this activity, tourists get to notice communities across the world. It places

weight on the prerequisite for the nominated ecologically responsive excursion worker to support in nourishing engagement with residential directors and ensuring that the travellers and residential inhabitants increase optimistic knowledge (Gonzales, 2018). This activity of ecotourism usually has no positive effects on the local communities (Grieves *et al.*, 2014). It results in social misuse and corrosion (Grieves *et al.*, 2014). Inventive inhabitants miss meadowland and harvest land once extra accommodation is constructed for a great quantity of travellers (Korth, 2016). During eco-tours around residential societies, travellers go to an amount whereby they get to spaces of great status as well-thought-out by the communal associates (Hirtenfelder and Hirtenfelder, 2014). They typically disrepute the mode in which dissimilar communal associates reside and/or do their things (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). One of the philosophies of ecotourism which assures reimbursements to the societies has opposed that ecotourism should produce revenue that might be utilized to advance the social welfare of underprivileged local societies situated nigh the reserves utilized for ecotourism resolutions (Tella *et al.*, 2017). However, there are many complaints made by local communities that ecotourism affects their culture and traditions (Korth, 2016).

- *Endangered Wildlife Ecotourism*

According to Korth (2016), the Endangered Wildlife Ecotourism is an action wherein travellers visit threatened biota parks correctly. Associations athwart the biosphere work together with biota parks with the intention of planning the wildlife (Hirtenfelder and Hirtenfelder, 2014; Kennedy, Monica, Maria and Carlos, 2013). This ecotourism action permits travellers to assist in directing biota interactive research that will in return assist them in acquiring knowledge regarding trailing the documentation of faunas (Korth, 2016). Eco-tours could widely focus on one surface. For instance, assimilating chimpanzees for upcoming proclamation could have a wider scope of incorporating endangered wildlife in different habitats.

- *Adventure Ecotourism*

Adventure Ecotourism includes maintenance of the character of ecotourism whereas rambling up the quest throughout journeys (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). It places weight on

the need for travellers to make an exertion about lessening and totally evading harmful effects on the atmosphere throughout station activities (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). This is done to ensure that future travellers relish and practice the equivalent escapades. Most African countries indicate an embryonic culmination point for adventure ecotourism in Africa. The motion of ecotourism did not show a giant character in the enormous expansion that happened in country's international tourism economy around 1994 (Rogerson, 2007).

## **2.4. The Role of Ecotourism in Poverty Alleviation: Developed Versus Developing Countries**

Ecotourism has the most effective ability to assist in terms of fighting against poverty across the world (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). A study initiated by the World Trade Organization concluded that ecotourism plays a vital role in foreign exchange, tax revenues, sustainable education and job creation (Mope, n.d). The purpose of this section is to discuss the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation.

### **2.4.1. Provision of Foreign Exchange Remunerations**

Foreign exchange remunerations serve as an important strategy for poverty alleviation in most developing countries (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). In countries like Thailand and Indonesia, ecotourism has been the major basis of foreign exchange compensations specifically geared towards poverty alleviation (Mope, n.d). Robust foreign exchange compensations frequently work as a needle of privileged lucrative environments for a specific country (Meluddi and Pulina, 2016; Clements, Biggs and Cumming, 2020). The compensations also have a straight impact on the economy of the country (Walter *et al.*, 2018). It aids as an imperative tool essential for poverty alleviation. Foreign exchange compensations are making it simpler for the exportation and importation events to be supply (Meluddi and Pulina, 2016). In other words, the extra a country's foreign exchange compensations, the simpler it is to export and import merchandises and amenities that could in return support in terms of poverty alleviation. Literature argues that foreign exchange compensations assist in increasing and certainly encourage wealth movement of a country (Van Zijl *et al.*, 2017). It is believed to be carrying vital



political implications in such a way that politicians may pledge by portentous decrease in a country's levies at the same time indorsing import accountabilities and dividends planned to protect the country's economy (Meluddi and Pulina, 2016; Walter *et al.*, 2018).

#### 2.4.2. Raising Tax Revenue

Ecotourism provides revenues from tax paid by the nature reserves. These returns assist in terms of funding programmes that could be utilised for poverty alleviation (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). In addition, the returns from tax could help in relation of subsidizing the desires of the societies. Whenever the business of ecotourism enlarges, the economy of a country is mostly expected to cultivate (Hsu, 2019). This is because additional capitals get gathered by parks which later result in enlarged tax rates remunerated to the government. In Costa Rica, the admiration of ecotourism led to the creation of numerous countrywide nature reserves. In return, tax revenues were raised (Hsu, 2019). It is believed that ecotourism is substantial in increasing the residential economy (Walter *et al.*, 2018). Most nature reserves are privately-owned (Carreira, Machado and Vasconcelos 2016; Korth, 2016). Therefore, their chief goal is to ensure the generation of profits that will in return be advantageous only to them. Even though other reserves in other countries pay taxes, there is still a vigorous consequence that the reserves have on the economy (Giampiccoli, 2015).

#### 2.4.3. Creation of Jobs

Creation of jobs is very important in poverty alleviation (Osman *et al.*, 2018). Ecotourism creates a platform for community members to generate income that will assist in terms of poverty alleviation (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). Ecotourism is believed to have created about 107 million jobs around 2015 in many countries (ILO, 2016). Ecotourism offers work opportunities through spreading and accumulating earnings that could be of assistance in terms reducing the exposure of the deprived (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). In a country like Namibia, ecotourism has created about 547 full-time and 3250 part-time employments (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). The engagement of local people in the formulation and organisation of ecotourism emboldens lasting natural resource maintenance and reduces harmful effects on the environment caused

by the practices of human beings (Tseng, Lin, Lin, Wu and Sriphon, 2019). Creation of jobs is one of the economic benefits of ecotourism (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). Ecotourism provides training and skills for the people to be able to qualify for job opportunities (Weerakkody, Omar, El-Haddadeh and Al-busaidy, 2016). It gives the community members the opportunity to generate income that could help them in starting their own businesses and make extra incomes.

Ecotourism plays a predominantly significant role in poverty alleviation because it could create jobs in distant areas that factually have profited fewer from economic development agendas than have more crowded areas (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). Even a minor number of jobs may be important in groups where people are not many, and replacements are insufficient (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). In many developing countries such as China, ecotourism is perceived as important in attaining sustainable growth over the poverty alleviation and joblessness (Xaba *et al.*, 2018). Majority of states now integrate ecotourism into growth, conservation guidelines and tactics that are executed at residential management level as part of residential fiscal growth of Local Economic Development creativities (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). As a substitute to conventional leisure industry, ecotourism involves going to see natural parts with an intention to study, train, or perform events that are ecologically beneficial (Xaba *et al.*, 2018). The main attention of ecotourism is the natural knowledge, which if yoked well, could interpret into fiscal and communal growth of local societies, therefore contributing to poverty alleviation and combating joblessness (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015).

#### 2.4.4. Provision of Sustainable Education

Education is acknowledged as one of the solutions in achieving poverty alleviation. Hence, ecotourism delivers maintainable education that possibly will contribute in relation of enlightening the ways of surviving for societies (Giampiccoli, 2015). It is believed that ecotourism educates local communities to establish residential industries that would fascinate travellers for the determination of producing revenue (Adom, 2019). Local communities develop the skills to do crafting, open restaurants in order to make

tourists have an experience in local businesses (Adom, 2019). At the same time, local communities benefit in a way that profit from the local businesses contributes to the improvement of the communities' ways of surviving. Ecotourism provides education in a way that natural capitals might perhaps be consumed exclusive of any system of exploitation (Arsic, Nikolic and Zivkovic, 2017). It calls for a prerequisite for maintainable growth wherein the desires of the present group are encountered without conciliatory those of the upcoming cohort (Arsic *et al.*, 2017). The reimbursements coming with the cleanliness and nutritious education performs of travel are matchless, and these reimbursements could be enhanced through the education delivered by ecotourism (Ma, Yin, Zheng, Wen and Hou, 2019). Local societies could profit academically from travellers as it is believed that learning is an unremarkable motion which could still occur through meeting new individuals (Ma *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism permits local societies to plunge themselves into the standards and philosophies of other individuals and leaves on-going impersonations that are simply unremarkable (Ma *et al.*, 2019).

#### 2.4.5. Improving Infrastructure

The income earned from a tourists' destination and/or ecotourism could be utilised by the state to improve local communities' infrastructure (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). The capitals are also utilised for improving the tourists' attraction areas (Graham, 2020). Ancient infrastructures are enhanced while produced from scratch. Civic spaces are given a renovation and this assists in attracting more tourists. Most prominently, renovated and enhanced infrastructure is advantageous to the people in local communities (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). The income composed could be utilised to advance education and health-care facilities, communication lines as well as airports (Graham, 2020). These could also assist with the improvement of the process of economic development of the areas and also contribute to job creation. According to Nguyen and Nasir (2021:105), "[d]ecent infrastructure and improved communication lines mean that services and movement of goods are greatly improved and most areas in Africa have developed as a result of ecotourism".

#### 2.4.6. Protects the Environment Necessarily for Livelihood Diversification

Ecotourism is a travel activity that has shown sensibly to guard the natural setting and sustain the well-being of residents in societies (Walter *et al.*, 2018). Ecotourism provides the construction of ecological consciousness and delivers straight monetary assistances for maintenance (Van Zijl *et al.*, 2017). It provides monetary reimbursements and enablement of residents in communities. It aids in a sense of valuing residents' philosophies (Hsu, 2019). It also aids in providing backup to anthropological moralities and self-governing actions. Ecotourism ensures the maintenance of living and social variety through the protection of ecology (Perugini and Vladisavlievic, 2019). It promotes the sustainable utilisation of biodiversity through the provision of employment to people in communities (Walter *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, ecotourism ensures the distribution of socio-economic reimbursements with residents in communities as well as native individuals through having their well-versed agreement and involvement in the organisation of ecotourism initiatives (Van Zijl *et al.*, 2017). Ecotourism ensures that travel to unchanged natural possessions, with negligible influence on the atmosphere is seen as the main apprehension (Chifon, 2010). The livelihood also ensures the minimisation of travel's own ecological influence and ensures the affordability and absence of left-overs in the form of extravagance (Hsu, 2019). Ecotourism ensures that the residents' philosophy, plants and animals remain the chief magnetisms. It also ensures that communities frequently benefit economically from tourism (Walter *et al.*, 2018).

The protection of ecology could assist with the funds required for the process of endangered zones like nature reserves which frequently need to hire as well as provide payments for park wardens, and if it happens that Safari lodges are forecasted, employees are required too (Chifon, 2010; Graham, 2020). For numerous nations, ecotourism is not just a bordering movement to fund the safety of the environment, it is also the main business of the nation-wide economy (Perugini and Vladisavlievic, 2019). For instance, in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nepal, Kenya, Madagascar and territories such as Antarctica, ecotourism signifies a substantial share of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) together with a financial movement (Chifon, 2010; Graham, 2020). In countries

such as Tan-awan, Oslob and Philippines, the ecotourism of swimming with giant sharks produces up to \$5 million USD per annum (Walter *et al.*, 2018). This money is consumed to assist in stopping overfishing and injury to the natural ecology.

A case study was undertaken by cooperative tourism investigation parts from the US and Australia on the benefits of ecotourism to evaluate ecotourism's instantaneous inspiration of Antarctica voyage involvement on travellers' information, insolences, and behaviours in the year 2002 (Chifon, 2010). The tourism research units remained also for the investigation of the extended-term impact of Antarctica voyage involvement on travellers' acquaintance, arrogances, and behaviours (Walter *et al.*, 2018). Later, grooves based on the over-all environmental behaviour and related intentions directory improved by 10% with defendants proposing at increasing meaningfully (Walter *et al.*, 2018). Nevertheless, 3 months after their journey, the reflective respondents presented no important growths in behaviours associated with the pre-inspection collection (Chifon, 2010). The purpose of the case study was to reveal how much ecotourism is beneficial to the society.

## **2.5. The Socio-Economic Status of the Communities Practicing Ecotourism**

This section discusses the socio-economic status of selected societies across the world, particularly in developing countries. Most communities in developing countries are vulnerable (Rawatlal, Pillay and Kliewer, 2015). The majority of the societies are faced with extreme percentages of hazardous and transmittable diseases such as the Human Immune Virus (HIV), Malaria and Tuberculosis (TB), among others (Van de Poel, Hosseinpoor, Speybroeck, Van Ourti and Vega, 2008). Furthermore, child death and undernourishment are unevenly spread in developing countries, and are grouped in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia as well as in underprivileged communities in these countries (Van de Poel *et al.*, 2008). Poverty is also caused by ill-health. In other words, most people are unable to work when they are faced with ill-health (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). This leaves them without any choice but to lose the revenue typically essential for a better social welfare. It is believed that most houses are left to be female or

children-headed due to the passing of husbands or parents caused by different diseases (Kruger and Steyn, 2019).

Literature reveals that high levels of education result in improved economic and social livelihoods of people (Hasan, Nahiduzzaman and Aldosary, 2019). This is because education is believed to have a positive effect on income generation. Educated people are more likely to be exposed to higher levels of income in workplaces (Le Roux, 1997). Most communities in developing countries have a high rate of illiteracy in such a way that the absenteeism of education and capability disturb their process of alleviating poverty (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015; Van Loeper, Musango, Brent and Drimie, 2016). They have the inability to acquire useful information and are more likely to get exposed to contagious diseases (Zhou and Liu, 2019). There is high number of people who have dropped out of schools and the quality of education provided in most local communities practicing ecotourism is poor (Sunderland, Roe, Blomieg, Day and Yuliani, 2018). Majority of families are unable to even sacrifice part of their salaries for education due to the fact that they do not have enough (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). Most older people in developing countries, about 29%, are educated with only 10% having secondary education while about 55% have primary education (Rabie, Klopper and Watson, 2016).

Issues of gender inequality continue to be a challenge in most communities (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). It is believed that women are vulnerable to poverty (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). Women easily get injured and are susceptible to diseases (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). It is quite evident that women are most given poor job positions and earn lower income rates (Perugini and Vladisavlievic, 2019). Depriving women of certain job opportunities due to the belief that they are sensitive makes it even more difficult to alleviate poverty (Simoes and Santos, 2014). According to Khan (2000), in most local communities practicing ecotourism, women and children are mostly suffering than men. Contrary to other countries, women in local communities of India work in jobs demanding high-brawn stages than men (Rendall, 2013). Apparently, women in India are frequently working in the agricultural segment, so they are likely to meet some survival income levels (Rendall, 2013).

Ineffective community participation is still a major problem in most developing countries. People are still denied opportunities to take part in matters affecting them (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). There are different types of participation methods used in different countries. Participation by consultation is one of the levels of participation used (Arndt, Davies, Gabriel, Harris, Makrelov, Robinson, Levy, Simbanegavi, Van Seventer and Anderson, 2020). It has to do with the involvement of citizens in expressing their opinions on factors that are affecting their standards of living (Yao *et al.*, 2020). The consultation could be done through public hearings hosted in communities, surveys as well as through neighborhood meetings (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Countries such as China practice this type of public participation. However, the public does not have full control over the decision-making process (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). Participation by consultation is believed to be vital for the promotion of collaboration between the government and its citizens in the Republic of Congo. In addition, it is also believed to have the ability to build robust relationships and connections (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). The United Nation Economic Commission for Europe has also put emphasis on the notion that participation by consultation should be considered as a fundamental activity in which the public voices its concerns and opinions based on its needs and/or other factors affecting it (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). However, the opinions brought forward by the citizens are not always taken into consideration.

## **2.6. Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation in Developed and Developing Countries**

The basis of ecotourism is associated with poverty alleviation all over the world (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018; Ma *et al.*, 2019). It is thought to be significant for income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies as well as for educational purposes (Osman *et al.*, 2018). This section focuses on the indicators of the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in developed and developing countries. The indicators are lack of access to resources in the reserve, inadequate skills/knowledge and lack of income, poor principles and morals, poor standards of living and slow economic growth.

### 2.6.1. Lack of access to resources in the reserve

In Africa, the efficacy of ecotourism efforts on public and private land depends on some procedures that are combined informally, carefully and environmentally into the nearby zones and the lives of the local communities (Gardyne *et al.*, 2005; Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). As a result, the standards of living in those communities suffer. In Kenya and Mexico, ecotourism failed to accomplish its objective of incorporating the management of biodiversity and the socioeconomic improvement of neighbouring communities (Kirsten, Wordsworth and Plessis, 2017). Moreover, ecotourism was weighed down with matters related to the non-realisation of possibilities, benefits, none or fragile growth buildings, and absenteeism of well-organised authority and organisation. The refusal for poor local communities to use the conserved natural resources fights with the economic development of the poor local communities (Mbaiwa 2018). Therefore, most local communities are still faced with high levels of poverty. The land used for ecotourism purposes is mostly the land that would be used by the poor local communities to sustain their livelihoods (Korth, 2016). There is continuous denial for the local communities to fetch firewood, traditional medicines in places used for ecotourism purposes (Shi *et al.*, 2019). This has a robust effect on the ways of living of the local community members. The per capita income of poorest local communities is too low because most assets that were owned by the black communities before the establishment of nature reserves are currently conserved for ecotourism purposes (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). It was found that ecotourism causes inequality on incomes of most local community members. This is because developing and operating ecotourism is resources extensive. In addition, rich individuals usually invest in businesses and enjoy the benefits alone.

### 2.6.2. Inadequate skills/knowledge and lack of income

According to Gardyne *et al.* (2005), ecotourism is seen as a luxurious commodity for rich people and a threat to the environment of the poor communities. Ecotourism continues to make it difficult for poverty to be tackled. Practically, activities such as ecotourism are contributing significantly to economic growth of the elites while turning a



blind eye to the economic development of the poor. Literature highlights that ecotourism should generate income that will help in ecological issues and paying attention to the standards of living of the residents (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014). However, most nature reserves are privately-owned, therefore the core intention of those reserves is to generate revenue. This handicap most villages of China because most of their assets and infrastructure are utilised with no benefit to local residents' standards of living. Ecotourism should deliver education not only to travellers but also to individuals residing in local societies (Dube *et al.*, 2018). However, in practice, local communities in Africa are complaining that ecotourism stipulates extra education and experience to the travellers. This hinders local communities to alleviate poverty; education and knowledge are perceived as part of the approaches to assist in tackling poverty. Literature purports that ecotourism should help local community members to generate income through employment and other ways (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). In practice, there has been grumbles made by many societies in Africa that majority of the employees hired during eco-tours or at the nature reserve are not poor, to make matters worse, they are also not citizens of the country.

### 2.6.3. Poor principles and morals

Ecotourism should reduce the bad social, psychological and physical behaviours in local communities (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). It should create a mind of positivity among the local communities when it comes to offering unforgettable and explanatory experiences to tourists that could assist in raising compassion to the host countries' radical, ecological and communal temperatures (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). Practically, it is rare to find local communities with good or improved social, psychological and physical behaviours. Ecotourism should establish, build and activate low-impact lavatories for the local communities (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). It should also admit the human rights and spiritual principles of the communities in the communal sphere and work with them to shape their standards of living (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism is seen as a way to generate income for the owners of the national parks and reserves as well as the government. Local communities are mostly forgotten when it comes to sharing benefits. Only a selected few who happen to have occupations in the reserves and/or at national parks

get some of the benefits. Had it been that the national parks are placing local communities in their priority lists, poverty would be lesser as compared to the current situation.

#### 2.6.4. Poor standards of living

During the 1980s, ecotourism alleviated about 10% poverty in local communities of Costa Rica (Modiri, 2015). It has been found that ecotourism is responsible for about two-thirds of poverty alleviation which was grounded on the poverty index apprehended by the local community members' employment status and domestic appliances as well as effective use of data (Fedele *et al.*, 2017; Mbaiwa 2018). Ecotourism is labour-concentrated, and majority of its events are suitable for disadvantaged persons, adult female as well as younger generation; it allows individuals to plunge themselves into philosophies and other society's ways of living (Donaldson, 2015; Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). It is believed that through ecotourism, poor local people get opportunities to learn new things and apply the knowledge acquired to alleviate their poverty (Gobat, Butler, Mollison, Francis, Gal, Harris, Webb, Byrne, Watkins, Sukumar, Hood and Nichol, 2019). Although ecotourism is argued to be assisting in terms of alleviating poverty, scholars such as Shi *et al.* (2019) believe that ecotourism has negative effects on poverty alleviation.

Poverty is a serious problem across the world (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). It has been predicted that the world has more than 6 billion populations and 2.8 billion live on fewer than US\$2 daily while 1.2 billion live on less than US\$1 on a daily basis. It has been predicted that there are 1.2 billion individuals who still live in thrilling poverty across the world, of which around a quarter are living in sub-Saharan Africa and 3 quarters are working and living in rural parts (Chifon, 2010). Literature highlighted that, 80% of the underprivileged individuals across the world (who live below US \$1 daily) are living in 12 nations, and in 11 of those nations, ecotourism is an important segment and or an increasing segment (Chifon, 2010). International ecotourism as a growing segment has the ability to deliver gigantic commercial reimbursements in developing countries where a big populace of the biosphere's underprivileged dwell (Chifon, 2010).

Literature submits that poverty is also a societal delinquent demanding a multidimensional method concerning its lessening of concentrated exertions at worldwide, nationwide, provincial and communal stages to solve this desensitising blight. It is quite challenging for states, the sequestered division, political civilisation, governments as well as the global public to be intricated in dealings intended at dipping poverty (Chifon, 2010; Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). The MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) have put emphasis on the need to call for concentrated exertions to eliminate poverty by the year 2015 through dropping by half the quantity of individuals who live on less than \$1 daily and to lessen by half the number of individuals suffering from starvation and illness (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism is a feasible segment that could be completely advanced, improved and also serve as an important tool for poverty alleviation across the world (Chifon, 2010). Ecotourism and the overall tourism industry were called upon to donate towards poverty alleviation in their personal method (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). This could be done by employing residents in communities to participate in the residential obtaining of goods and services, structuring pro-underprivileged corporations and connections and delivering preparation together with care towards minor self-governing initiatives. This can help to produce occasions for local inventiveness and proprietorship, assisting in paying a reasonable or overhead-regular income and set up money-making allocating arrangements in terminus parts (Chifon, 2010; Rendall, 2013).

Contrasting the neo-liberal conventional procedure that specifies that poverty could be alleviated through the dribble-down concept of commercial development, the so titled new classical consensus specifies that poverty alleviation requires thoughtful interference procedures by the civic and the private division (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). The private division encompasses numerous subdivisions and one of which is the ecotourism industry (Chifon, 2010). There has been cumulative agreement that ecotourism, labelled as a socio-economic marvel, encompasses the events of individuals travelling to and remaining in spaces separate from their normal environment for not further than a successive year for relaxation, commercial and other

determinations have the ability to donate towards poverty alleviation (Rawatlal *et al*, 2015).

Worldwide ecotourism accounts for about 11% of the world's Gross Domestic Product and hires 200 million individuals yearly (Chifon, 2010). Ecotourism is the principal and quickest increasing industry, and it is anticipated to remain growing between 4% and 5% yearly (Chifon, 2010). The ecotourism sector is progressively becoming a significant basis of revenue generation, job creation and prosperity in numerous countries. The quick development of the ecotourism industry over the past 50 years was the greatest extraordinary commercial and communal singularity of this period. During the year 2007, world-wide international travellers' advents cultivated by 2% (16 million) reached 924 million in 2008. In spite of the growth in international ecotourism advents in 2007, near the end of September 2008 and mostly as an outcome of the biosphere commercial breakdown, the ecotourism sector ached a sequence of hold-ups (Chifon, 2010). For instance, in 2009, worldwide travellers' visits deteriorated universally by 4% to 880 million. Worldwide ecotourism nonetheless produced US\$ 946 billion in exportation incomes in the year 2008. However, in the year 2010, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation forecast a growth in international tourist arrivals of between 3% and 4% (Chifon, 2010).

#### 2.6.5. Slow economic growth

It has been stated in literature that in developing countries, ecotourism has been growing significantly quicker lately than in the European Union and the Organisation of Economic Corporation and Development republics (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). During the year 2000, developing countries had about 292.6 million of worldwide comings and a rise from the time when countries had enlarged by 9.5% yearly equated to about 4.6% worldwide (Chifon, 2010). Ecotourism is the solitary package industry wherein there is an optimistic equilibrium of skill curving from First World to Third World countries and from US\$ 4.6 billion in 1980 to US\$ 6.6 billion in 1996 (Chifon, 2010). In 2000, ecotourism was graded as number 3 among the main retailed exportation subdivisions in developing and slight developing countries (Rendall, 2013). Of late, adversative

effects of mass tourism on the environment are noted. This is due to the fact that the ecotourism industry is recklessly implementing a sustainability tactic for the purposes of ensuring that it generates profit from ecotourism events and also guaranteeing that the upcoming cohort is not restricted from their own possessions (Chifon, 2010; Simoes and Santos, 2014).

Developing arguments in ecotourism literature have also moved in the direction of pro-poor ecotourism schemes (Chifon, 2010). The pro-poor tourism bursary has profoundly reformed policy arguments by involving African academics all around ecotourism by raising the crucial query of how ecotourism could be associated to become extra pro-poor. According to Chifon (2010:24), "these developing pro-poor arguments all around ecotourism were showcased at the World Summit on sustainable development held in Johannesburg during the year 2002". The pro-poor tourism schedule concentrates on how ecotourism affects the livings of the impoverished and how its encouraging impacts could be improved through adjusts of interferences or approaches for pro-poor tourism (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). It has been argued that there is a need to recognise probable benefits from ecotourism for people in communities (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). Ecotourism expansion should be reorientated corresponding to the concerns of regional participants, specifically poor people (Hitchcock, 2017). Ecotourism should provide reimbursements to the underprivileged and ensure that ecotourism development contributes to poverty alleviation (Gonzales, 2018).

Pro-poor tourism is not a merchandise or division of tourism per se but somehow a general tactic that aims at unlocking opportunities for fiscal benefit, other living gains, or commitment in decision-making process by the impoverished (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). An amount of pro-poor tourism tactics intended to unlock opportunities and generate remaining advantages for the underprivileged have been established (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). These tactics comprise of the work of the underprivileged in ecotourism industries, supply of commodities to ecotourism companies by the impoverished or by companies utilising the impoverished, and venture capital in infrastructure motivated by ecotourism profiting the underprivileged (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). Pro-poor tourism also promotes immediate sales of commodities to tourists through impoverished, income tax

or charge on ecotourism revenue (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). Pro-poor tourism could be established together in rural and urban regions thus beginning a variety of opportunities and access not only for tourists, but for residents as well. The United Nations accentuated that from the time when ecotourism functions in diverse topographical parts, it could be a significant instrument in the alleviation of poverty (Gonzales, 2018). Ecotourism could rise revenue producing occasions for both the rural and urban underprivileged by creation of jobs leading to extra revenues and the welfare of the affected people hired in ecotourism businesses (Tseng *et al.*, 2019).

Ecotourism is a suitable instrument for poverty alleviation. It has an extra communal, ecological and social reimbursements and charges and it contributes to economic growth (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). Ecotourism is believed to have the ability to offer job opportunities through spreading and growing the revenue of the underprivileged which decrease their defencelessness (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). Increasing the nationwide revenue from external exchange incomes and taxation through ecotourism, extra funding could be abstracted towards formulating poverty alleviation technique schemes that could assist in improving the living of underprivileged in the rural and urban areas (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). In spite of profitable restrictions, much could be done to improve the influence of ecotourism on poverty alleviation (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). Ecotourism was well-thought-out to be an actual substance of rural socio-economic growth and rejuvenation. It has been argued that research on ecotourism in developing countries was typically focusing on the optimistic fiscal, ecological and socio-cultural influence of the industries (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). Even though the ecotourism industry has a hypothetically advantageous effect, practically speaking, the effect was regularly cancelled by adverse penalties for the local people. Ecotourism contributed to the mal expansion of several developing countries (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). The reimbursements of ecotourism in tackling poverty is a trial because there is minimal information that establishes the influence of ecotourism on poverty alleviation (Gonzales, 2018).

With these urgings, ecotourism growth has customarily been leisurely and stated in standard fiscal vocabulary and waffle by mentioning to it short-cut numerical monetary

relations statistics of worldwide guests' visits, input to job and to the equilibrium of expenditures in external exchange incomes (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). Ecotourism accounts for the multiplier notions such as how a rise in pecuniary action begins a restraint response that produces additional movement than the unique rise was utilised in identifying the fiscal input of the industry at the countrywide level (Tseng *et al.*, 2019). Normally, there is a hypothesis that over a trickledown procedure, societies could gain from jobs either straight, ramblingly or by persuading such an advantage and through travellers' expenditure at the end. However, there is a very slight rigid indication to back-up this opinion (Tseng *et al.*, 2019).

To reveal the dribble-down result of ecotourism on the country's economy, the instance of Tanzania was provided, which was based on the role of ecotourism on poverty alleviation (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). Ecotourism has been believed to be responsible for the creation of jobs for individuals in local communities (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). It has been detected that there was considerable job formation in guesthouses and bistros, campsites, hostels, with about 1,114 workers, of which 1,056, (95%), are the citizens of Tanzania (Chifon, 2010). Although these job opportunities were mostly situated in inferior positions with incomplete informative and abilities' obligation and diffident recompense, it did, nevertheless, assist in alleviating poverty among the employees' families (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). It has assisted in improving the availability of straightforward requirements such as shelter for the households in local communities as well as improving the infrastructure with the social services (Carreira *et al.*, 2016). It has provided meaningful input to the national economy by generating job opportunities, external exchange incomes and community returns (Gonzales, 2018; Sunderland *et al.*, 2018).

Nevertheless, in spite of the optimistic effect of ecotourism on the livelihoods of the receivers, there were some immeasurable bad results (Chifon, 2010). These comprised of environmental dilapidation, misrepresentation of out-dated philosophy and depraved conduct (Gonzales, 2018). Ecotourism growth in Tanzania played an imperative role towards the alleviation of poverty (Chifon, 2010). This set an example that other African countries should consider in their remedial interventions towards poverty alleviation.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

Ecotourism has the most effective ability to assist in the fight against poverty across the world. It serves as an important strategy for poverty alleviation in most developing countries. It provides foreign exchange remunerations, sustainable education, tax revenue, job opportunities and improved infrastructure. However, most communities in developing countries are still facing socioeconomic issues such as ill-health, gender inequality, and lack of effective community participation in ecotourism, just to mention a few. In Kenya and Mexico, ecotourism failed to accomplish its objective of incorporating the management of biodiversity and the socioeconomic improvement of neighbouring communities. The land used for ecotourism purposes is mostly the land that would be used by the poor local communities for their livelihoods. Most nature reserves are privately-owned, and their main aim is to make profit. This disadvantages most villages or local communities in South Africa because most of their assets and infrastructure are utilised with no benefit to their standards of living. This chapter concludes by stating that ecotourism has negative effects on poverty alleviation in some developing countries such as Kenya and Mexico. The next chapter is based on the discussion of ecotourism and poverty alleviation in South Africa.



## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **ECOTOURISM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Ecotourism is seen as the quickest growing part of the economy of South Africa (Pinsof and Sanhaji 2006; Ionela, Constantin and Dorica Dogaru, 2015). Ecotourism is believed to be linked to poverty alleviation due to its significant improvement of the infrastructure of the country (Briana, Van Rooyen, Lopez, Knobel, Simpson, Wikes and Conrad, 2016). However, ecotourism continues to make it difficult for poverty to be tackled (Mbaiwa, 2018). This chapter is based on the discussion of the nature of ecotourism (which will be covering only the principles, approaches and activities of ecotourism), the role of ecotourism on poverty alleviation, the socio-economic status of communities practicing ecotourism as well as the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in a South African context. According to Van der Bank and Van der Bank (2012:1), "Section 24 and 152(1) of the Constitution of South Africa (1996) puts emphasis on the need for the 3 spheres of government to ensure that the environment is protected, and that the security of the environment is not detrimental to the welfare of the society both the current and future generation".

#### **3.2. South Africa's Nature of Ecotourism**

Ecotourism is said to be a growing industry in the country of South Africa (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). It has been accepted that ecotourism is a major factor in the creation of employment opportunities, income generation and improvement of livelihoods of local communities (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). Ecotourism is guided by various principles, undertaken through different approaches and associated with various activities (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014; Giampiccoli, 2015), as discussed below.

### 3.2.1. Principles Guiding Ecotourism

In 1996, the government of South Africa together with the Department of Tourism came up with a plan on how to sustainably and responsibly develop and manage tourism (Lee and Du Preez, 2012; Department of Tourism, 2018). The government and the department achieved that by coming up with the principles of tourism discussed below:

- *Safeguarding the Environment*

The organisation of ecotourism in the environment of South Africa has constantly been seen as unpredictable and impolite (Loubser, Le, Mouton and Nel, 2001). There has not ever been a stable background in the supervision and organisation of ecotourism in environments of South Africa (Sebola, 2008). South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism emphasised the need for ecotourism to ensure that there is no overconsumption and exploitation of resources (Wepener and Degger, 2019). There should be sustainable use of all resources in local communities around the whole country. There should be stewardship of the environment. Shi et al. (2019:60) contend that "the main aim of ecotourism is to promote conservation of the natural environment". Ecotourism should make appropriate guarantee of upkeep of the natural setting. Too much attention should be paid to people exploiting natural resources and certain measures should be taken to deal with such (Wepener and Degger, 2019). Human activities such as fishing and elephant riding which take place during eco-tours should not place pressure on the environment (Wepener and Degger, 2019). Ecotourism is believed to be linked with all types of pollution such as land, water and air. As a result, the government of South Africa notes the need for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to guard against such (Wepener and Degger, 2019). Ecotourism should ensure that there is supervision in the setting of South Africa at all times or most of the time consistent and decorous (Loubser, Le, Mouton and Nel, 2001). There is a rise in the threats to the natural heritage and resources. This is why it is crucial for ecotourism to provide gears that will make sure that the environment is safeguarded (Santarem, Saarinen and Brito, 2019).

South Africa is one country with supreme flora and fauna; however, it is argued that there are situations where natural resources are overused and exploited (Von Fintel,

and Fouriea, 2019). According to Daramola *et al.* (2021:6306), “[i]n the past, activities such as tree logging and clearing land for agriculture or settlement led to the destruction of plants and the natural habitats of animals”. Ecotourism began by attaining its fame between individuals and their doings while at the same time deforestation and rustling became pretty widespread (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). The individuals did all these for the sake of surviving. It was mentioned that other floras and faunas became destroyed (Daramola *et al.*, 2021). Currently, there are numerous faunas that are scarce. Ecotourism ascribes people’s wrongdoings against natural resources by bringing other ways that could be used to safeguard the flora and fauna (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). Hence, the environment is safeguarded from biological disproportion, contamination and wide-ranging demolition (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). The cutting of trees was deeply demotivated (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). Afforestation and reforestation were encouraged in these societies. Scarce animals such as mountain gorillas in the Virunga Massif were safeguarded against the local communities and other people whose aim was to kill, misuse and sell the fauna and flora (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). In 1981, conservationists predicted that there could be around 254 endangered mountain gorillas across the world (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). This number progressively improved to 1,004 mountain gorillas in the year 2018 (Daramola *et al.*, 2021). Nature reserves only permitted about 80 individuals to see mountain gorillas daily. This could be due to the fact that their natural habitation is easily breakable and each time a person is walking in the forest where there are mountain gorillas, they leave footprints (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). Other scarce species that were safeguarded from being poached by the public are rhinos (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). Thus, from that time when ecotourism came into existence encouraging results were seen in the surroundings.

- *Create Conservational Awareness*

Ecotourism should make conservation consciousness by offering education to travellers and local societies. In South Africa, the Department of Tourism has delivered supervision in environmental organisation, maintenance and sentinel regarding sustainability in order to benefit the country’s people and its environment (Gilder and Dhladhla, 2013). The country’s National Development Plan has put emphasis on the

significance of environmental conservation for the purpose of promoting sustainable development and building strong socio-economic conditions (Bekker and Mashaba, 2018). It is the duty of ecotourism to create a balance between the bio-centric and anthropocentric views for the purpose of ensuring long-term sustainability (Santarem *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism should make a careful contribution to the conservation and improvement of biodiversity and its surroundings (Santarem *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism should initiate behaviours that will assist in environmental awareness by providing learning experiences and enforcing a culture of education about the environment to both tourists and local communities (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020).

It is also vital for one to increase the consciousness of the overall community on the significant matters of ecotourism in order to protect the animals and plants (Yao *et al.*, 2020). Numerous individuals are still not yet conscious of how significant it actually is that global problems are solved in the near future to guarantee the maintenance of countless upcoming groups (Liu *et al.*, 2021). In contrast, it was argued that ecotourism was antagonistic from the time when community development purposes were not automatically corresponding with nature maintenance objectives in an assumed setting (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). Although connecting ecotourism with communal management matters is extensively documented, actual slight was mentioned concerning the everyday presentation of ecotourism on poverty alleviation and unemployment in rural areas (Gilder and Dhladhla, 2013). Due to that, societies are progressively taking a midpoint phase in the management of biodiversity exertions. In this style, maintenance begins from the pulverised ahead and includes systems and connections characterised by transversely numerous stages of administration such as the public sector, community-based-organisations and recipients (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Community maintenance is grounded on the idea that protection and expansion can be accomplished, and thereafter, the comforts of both could be aided. Local communities should be sanctioned in a way that they are able to take part in the organisation of protected ecotourism parts so that they could have a say in the delivery of reimbursements and maintainable usage of their setting (Gilder and Dhladhla, 2013).

- *Beneficial to Local Communities*

Ecotourism's benefits should be shared with local communities as it is believed that ecotourism is advantageous in refining the ways of living of residential societies. South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism formed an idea to grow and accomplish the tourism industry around 1996 in an accountable and maintainable way (Stone, 2015). It has highlighted the necessity to certify that community members are involved in deciding procedures regarding issues of ecotourism that disturb their social welfare (Prinsloo, Marokane and Street, 2018). Ecotourism should deliver deference for the livings and principles of the individuals in diverse societies (Santarem *et al.*, 2019). More emphasis has been put on the need to ensure that local communities benefit from ecotourism. Ecotourists are individuals who travel to various places with an aim to explore different kinds of nature; be it flora, fauna or both as well as exploring various cultures of the communities around nature reserves (Van der Merwe, Brand and Hoffman, 2019). Ecotourists travel to various places with another aim of experiencing new aspects of life (Graham, 2020). This enables local communities to express their capabilities, ways of living and beliefs. The populaces in the countries that undertake ecotourism activities represent features such as their backgrounds, antique talent and construction, melody and as well as how they dress (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2021). It has emphasised the need to guarantee that community members are included in decision making procedures regarding issues of ecotourism that disturb their social welfare (Prinsloo, Marokane and Street, 2018).

- *Reduces Human-Wildlife Conflict*

In an archetypal environmentalism involving people and faunas, it is usual for fights to rise in the sequence of their communication (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). Some of the fights entail the obliteration of harvests by faunas, hunting and so on (Ilkharacan *et al.*, 2021). This could lead to losing human beings and animals, rigid competition of natural resources that are available as well as ruining the environment (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Whenever human-animal conflict happens, certain stages and measures should be undertaken to save faunas away from humans, while caring for both. Such arrangements contain translocation where specific faunas are moved from diverse

endangered spaces (Van Heyningen, Honikman, Myer, Onah, Field and Tomlison, 2017). The number of residents could also be structured in order to ensure that the accessible properties are enough for the present generation. In some occurrences, barriers are utilised to limit wild faunas from escaping the nature reserves (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Ecotourism has enforced the need to create safe and guarded nature reserves in order to keep the animals safe (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). Communities were taught about conservation in order to avoid poaching, misusing and killing the fauna and flora (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021).

### 3.2.2. Approaches used to undertake Ecotourism in South Africa

This section will focus on the application of approaches used in South Africa to undertake ecotourism.

- *Ecosystem Approach*

The Ecosystem Approach focused on sustaining the natural structure and the operation of the ecosystems which includes the efficiency of natural systems, recognised significant species as well as biodiversity in South Africa (Melin, Donaldson, Melin, Midgley, Donaldson and Rouget, 2014). It has argued that people's uses and values of ecosystems are dominant in creating purposes for the usage and organisation of natural resources (Melin *et al.*, 2014). Ecosystems are lively and their qualities together with limitations are continuously altering; consequently, communications people utilises are also lively. The approach believes that natural resources are well organised within an organisation scheme grounded on a communal vision and bunch of purposes established amongst shareholders (Melin *et al.*, 2014). Effective organisation is adaptive and grounded on scientific acquaintance, frequent education and entrenched monitoring process (Garcia, Marquez, Isenhardt, Rodriguez, Crespo and Cifuentes, 2019).

The Ecosystem Approach makes environmental sustainability the main goal of management and identifies the dependence of people's well-being on environmental health (Melin *et al.*, 2014). The Ecosystem Approach to ecotourism takes into consideration the connections of tourists with the ecosystem and is best accomplished through an integrated management approach which involves all participants in the

country (Garcia *et al.*, 2019). The approach puts emphasis on the need for participants to cooperatively come up with a vision for the sustainability of the environment that take into account their needs justifiably and at the same time identifies the environmental restrictions of the system.

- *Industry-Oriented Approach*

The Industry-Oriented Approach is also known as the Economic-Oriented Approach (Osman *et al.*, 2018). It is an approach wherein financial incentives, sheltered markets and other segments of management could accomplish their intentions (Bekker and Mashaba, 2018). This approach is assumed to mainly focus on making profit and it views ecotourism as an export industry (Lee, 2019). It also focuses on the economic benefits of ecotourism, job creation and regional development (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). However, conservationists and growth experts critiqued the approach for its ability to practice its concept (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018).

The Industry-Oriented Approach to ecotourism is believed to be turning its back when it comes to ensuring that economic development is achieved (Bekker and Mashaba, 2018). Practically, it encourages secluded proprietorship of nature reserves. Literature found that the approach delivers an extensive separation from the development of communities and the environment (Bekker and Mashaba, 2018). It proceeds to put emphasis on the need to promote a bureaucratic way of decision making. It ignores the need to include local communities in decision making processes (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015). Communities are often denied opportunities to consume resources necessary for their survival (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). In addition, they are denied the opportunity to participate in resource management authority (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). The belief is that decision making processes should only include the reserve's representatives. The reserves argued that the smaller the decision-making process, the easier it becomes to take informed decisions and reach conclusions within a very short period of time (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015). The Industry-Oriented Approach calls for individuals to promote the expansion of private property rights and reduction of government regulations on publicly held property (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). Since this approach was critiqued, it

flagged a way for the introduction of the Physical-Oriented Approach also known as the Spatial-Oriented Approach.

- *Spatial-Oriented Approach*

The assumption of this approach to ecotourism was that too much consideration should be placed on the defence of the environment (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). The Physical Approach to ecotourism advocated the need to focus ecotourism on spatial patterns in order to diminish negative impacts on the environment (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015; Lee, 2019). The approach has also placed importance on the necessity to give superior consideration to the communal, corporeal and environmental volume once undertaking ecotourism. (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). However, development practitioners also criticised this approach.

The Spatial-Oriented Approach has been critiqued for overlooking expansion. It is said to be predisposed on the environment (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). This disadvantages the underprivileged local societies which has led to the introduction of the Community-Based Approach.

- *Community-Based Approach to Ecotourism*

Community-based ecotourism emphasised the necessity for the expansion of the deprived local people and called for the need to document communal members to be involved in ecotourism matters troubling them (Eshun and Eshun, 2014). Local community members should get substantial control over ecotourism's development and management. In South Africa, community-based tourism is associated with problems such as the uneven distribution of the benefits of ecotourism between the management and local communities (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). There are still issues of discrimination based on gender and race, among others. Most local communities do not engage in the process of enjoying benefits from ecotourism (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015). Giampiccoli (2015) emphasises that the Community-Based Ecotourism Approach encirclements separate ingenuities in the local societies, and it should foster maintainable use and cooperative accountability in matters including both endangered



areas and local societies. With this approach to ecotourism, local societies share some of their day-to-day activities with the travellers (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015).

Some scholars see the Community-Based Approach as mainly an expansion tool that provides communities with empowerment and gives them perceptible paybacks, and on the other hand, other scholars perceive the approach as a conservation approach to protect wildlife and other ecosystems (Nkongolo, 2014; Nwammuo and Salawu, 2018). The approach puts emphasis on the need for policy makers to deny outside protected areas to utilise the land that belongs to the local communities, especially land used or could be used for livelihood diversification (Nkongolo, 2014; Nwammuo and Salawu, 2018). The Community-Based Approach could make a contribution to both development and conservation objectives, however, lack of clarity around its importance could lead to misperception and disharmony among all the stakeholders (Nwammuo and Salawu, 2018).

The Community-Based Approach to ecotourism purports that communities get to be committed and put more effort to ecotourism only when they realise that ecotourism directly benefits them too (Eshun and Eshun, 2014). The approach calls nature reserves, NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations) and local communities to work together in creating a balance between development and the environment (Phiri and Okeyo, 2015; Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). The approach proceeds to call countrywide and transactional groups to shape innovative forms of ecological and communal support that combines communal fairness and ecological programmes (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015; Mosammam *et al.*, 2018).

### 3.2.3. Activities Associated with Ecotourism in South Africa

This section focuses on the activities of ecotourism, namely, adventure, endangered wildlife ecotourism and culture ecotourism in South Africa.

- *Adventure Ecotourism*

Adventure ecotourism includes the attractiveness of ecotourism while walking up the exploration during voyages (Santarem *et al.*, 2018). It places weight on the necessity for

travellers to make an exertion of reducing and totally evading harmful impressions on the environment during boundary events (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). This is done to certify that forthcoming travellers appreciate and practice the same ventures. Adventure ecotourism is one of the quickest rising ecotourism activities (Rogerson, 2007). South Africa implies an embryonic climax point for adventure ecotourism in Africa. This motion of ecotourism did not show an immense character in the enormous expansion that took place during the country's international tourism economy around 1994 (Rogerson, 2007). However, the adventure ecotourism business in the country is presently showing cyphers of incorporation and growth (Rogerson, 2007). Korth (2016) shows that the adventure ecotourism is a significant theme in the pictures of announcements customised by frequent regional ruling classes.

- *Endangered Wildlife Ecotourism*

Endangered Wildlife Ecotourism is an occasion whereby tourists visit endangered wildlife parks sensibly (Grieves *et al.*, 2014). In South Africa, associations work together with wildlife reserves with the goal of plotting wildlife (Hirtenfelder and Hirtenfelder, 2014; Kennedy *et al.*, 2013). This ecotourism activity permits travellers to support in leading faunas' interactive investigation that will in return assist them to learn about trailing the certification of faunas (Korth, 2016). Eco-tours could widely focus on one surface. For instance, assimilating chimpanzees for upcoming proclamation could have a wider scope of incorporating endangered wildlife inspection in different habitats.

- *Culture Ecotourism*

This activity of ecotourism includes coming transversely educational assortments while taking into consideration the necessity to be mindful of the environment (Grieves *et al.*, 2014). Eco-tours strive to ensure protection of sacred places as well as exploring spiritual customs and/or assisting in terms of preserving cultural traditions (Korth, 2016). It places importance on the necessity for the nominated environmentally responsive trip worker to provide support in nourishing employment with residential directors as well as ensuring that the travellers and local residents benefit positive knowledge (Stone, 2015). Cultural awareness should be built and at the same time, corporeal, social,

psychological and societal effects should be reduced (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015; Mosammam, Sarrafi, Nia and Heidari, 2018).

Ecotourism was multifariously distinct as a developing course benefiting the individuals in communities while putting emphasis on the need to keep a co-operative stability amongst ecological fortification; the local society's welfare is continuously a problem assumed the contradictory participant's requests and primacies (Korth, 2016; Xaba *et al.*, 2018). It was appealed that ecotourism tried to integrate commercial and ecological effects in a prototypical manner that encourages community development events meanwhile shielding as well as conserving local properties. Informally, ecotourism delivers a chance for cross-cultural discussion and permits individuals from equal edges (Xaba *et al.*, 2018). For instance, eco-travellers and individuals in societies are able to study about each other (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). It was mentioned that ecotourism provides the latent for economic conversion, provincial expansion, community authorisation and the formation of job opportunities for outlying and original societies (Korth, 2016).

### **3.3. South Africa's Role of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation**

The purpose of this section is to discuss the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation from the South African Perspective.

#### **3.3.1. Provides Education**

There are many things showing that education in South Africa is failing (Modisaotsile, 2012). For instance, there is often high number of grade 12 learners enrolling each year yet there is a small number of those grade 12 learners passing (Shareef, Dwivedi and Kuma, 2016). Educated generations are believed to be significant in the process of meeting some of the Millennium Development Goals in South Africa. Modisaotsile (2012) makes a cautionary statement that, unwillingness of parents' participation in their children's education as well as the malfunctioning of school government bodies has a negative effect on the overall education system. Nowadays, most schools do not have appropriate leadership, and this affects the educational system in those schools

(Chirwa, Mamba, Manda and Babalola, 2015). There are too many dropouts from schools. Nepotism is dominating in terms of hiring teachers, with most teachers hired without the necessary skills and qualifications (Modisaotsile, 2012).

In South Africa, the National Parks are known to be the main role players in providing nature-based education (Menzie, 2013). One of the significant principles of ecotourism is that it should provide learning occasions to both tourists and community members (Van de Poel *et al.*, 2008). Literature reveals that one of the keys to alleviating poverty is education. Education in public schools of South Africa is free (Das and Chatterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). Education enables and develops people's capability to reason. It also advances people's interaction and allows them to have a more well-organised exchange. Education widens people's viewpoints and stipulates their capacity to grow. This serves as a benefit towards the process of poverty alleviation. Moreover, literature contend that education benefits individuals in a way that they are able to manage their finances in an organised manner that will in turn be fruitful to them (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). This also positively benefits the process of poverty alleviation (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017). Most individuals have negative attitudes towards education as they argued that it requires dedication, commitment and time (Das and Chatterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). Individuals only need the benefits that come after obtaining educational certificates without working for it.

In South Africa during apartheid, there were inequalities in the educational system. The quality of education provided to white people was different from the quality that was provided to non-white people (Das and Chatterjee, 2015). The educational facilities given to non-white people were of bad quality whereas white people were given great quality education facilities. The purpose of Bantu Education Act no. 47 of 1953 which was later named the Black Education Act no 47 of 1953 was to rectify all the divisions in education. However, it was never brought into practice. Non-white people continued to suffer even more (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). Their education buildings did not even have resources such as electricity, chalk boards, among others. In 1994, an Interim

Constitution was introduced (Berrian *et al.*, 2016). Practically speaking, inequality still exists in schools.

### 3.3.2. Offers Employment Opportunities

South Africa is still faced with high levels of unemployment. Many companies have retrenched employees due to losses they are experiencing in their turnovers. The unemployment rate increased from 27.1 to 27.6 in the first quarter of the year 2019 (StatsSA, 2019). Most of the people are hired temporarily during festive seasons to help since there are many customers to be served within a short period of time. It is quite a disadvantage for the people to be hired for a shorter period of time and dismissed because they do not get to make adequate savings or savings at all for their future unemployment stages (StatsSA, 2019). The most unemployed group in the country is the youth. Most graduates from tertiary institutions are currently sitting at their homes with no job opportunities for them (Republic of South Africa, 2011; StatsSA, 2019). It is quite a disgrace how education and qualifications are unable to address the problem of unemployment. The structure of the country's economy is also the reason why South Africa is faced with high levels of unemployment (Republic of South Africa, 2011). The economy of the country is moving too much on skills-intensive while most of its participants have little of the necessarily skills (Republic of South Africa, 2011).

Literature argues that black people did not have the ability to contribute to South Africa's ecotourism economic growth (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). This was because they could not enjoy a country that discriminated them. Still, ecotourism plays a predominantly significant role in poverty alleviation because it could create jobs in distant areas that have factually profited less from economic development agendas than have more crowded areas (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). The Constitution of South Africa (1996) together with the White Paper on Local Government (1998) have charged local administrations with encouraging fiscal and communal welfare and announcing growth and employment formation activities in the parts below their authority, often inside the outline of the local economic development databases (Kennedy *et al.*, 2013). The outcome has been the appearance of a variety of introduced schemes with some of

the greatest shared schemes being exertions to inspire ecotourism-based expansion schemes, public-works schemes, local gaining and small-business elevation approaches as the main elements of the Local Economic Development menu existing to some resident specialists (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). Ecotourism-led expansion is obviously a developing melody in the literature on expansion in the country, mainly within the Local Economic Development context (Chifon, 2010; Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). The ecotourism division as a slice of a Local Economic Development creativity for socio economic and public growth is seen as a feasible rising choice and instrument for poverty alleviation.

It has been believed that ecotourism has come to be extensively perceived by the resident experts in the country as an instrument, through which progress could be achieved, yielding reimbursements for the crowd societies (Chifon, 2010; Nkongolo, 2014). Two writers maintained their belief with evidence found in the amount of the applications of traditional authorities received by the nationwide Local Economic Development funding to support ecotourism schemes, such as the creation of customary and ethnic communities, and arts complexes (Chifon, 2010; Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). Ecotourism was seen as a crucial local economic development approach in the country as well as a presenter of increasing local economies (Nkongolo, 2014). It was also proclaimed that Local Economic Development planning is a main rank, particularly with ecotourism as a principal division for Local Economic Development (Lee and Du Preez, 2012). Ecotourism was believed to be a significant strategy for the alleviation of poverty, specifically in South Africa since it has high level of communities facing poverty.

### 3.3.3. Generates Revenue from Tax

Nature reserves that practice ecotourism pay taxes (Van Heyningen *et al.*, 2017). These paid taxes could be utilized to enhance the ways of living of disadvantaged people in local communities (Rogan, 2016). The industry of ecotourism is growing rapidly. As a result, more tax is accumulated by the government. The government uses the tax to finance some of the skills development programmes such as learnerships and

internships (Van Heyningen *et al.*, 2017). This could also assist in shaping majority of the local community members into better individuals. In other words, it could make them to be employable (Lee and Du Preez, 2012). Revenues from tax could also enable the government to provide funding to the local communities to be able to start-up small businesses that could assist in generating income (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015). This would be very beneficial when it comes to fighting income poverty faced by the majority of local communities. The government of South Africa has seen ecotourism as one of the main factors providing income for the country. Most nature reserves aimed at making profit for themselves (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017; Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). However, by paying tax, they indirectly provide funds that could be used to improve the standards of living of poor communities.

Oftentimes, communities nearby nature reserves earn low incomes (Okeocha, 2020; Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). Theoretically, ecotourism has produced too many job opportunities for the communities around nature reserves in restaurants and the likes (Ajide and Alimi, 2021). It is believed that individuals could sustain themselves using the small income getting from workplaces created by ecotourism (Von Fintel and Orthorfer, 2020). In addition, as the individuals earn incomes, they could also utilise it to get access to services they need. Generating incomes also enables them to support their local community's economy since they buy some of the goods around the informal markets in their communities (Asongu and Odhiambo, 2021). It has been argued that during the times where ecotourism was not practiced, majority of the people were relying on illegal forests to practice their livelihood diversifications (Okeocha, 2020). During eco-tours, too much money is spent by tourists on food and other material they could be delighting in purchasing from the markets owned by local communities (Von Fintel and Orthorfer, 2020). As a result, the income is generated by the local communities which also boosts their local economy. Theoretically, ecotourism is believed to be contributing too much to the process of refining the ideals of the survival of local societies (Asongu and Odhiambo, 2021).

After the apartheid era in the country, ecotourism was regarded by the state as an important segment for nationwide rebuilding and expansion; one that provides massive latent as a compound for fiscal and communal expansion crossways the entire state (Chifon, 2010). The elevation of ecotourism in the country is extensively documented as an important development substitute (Lee and Du Preez, 2012). South Africa's natural and social tradition provide detail evidence which shows one of the greatest interesting and speedily increasing traveller purposes in the biosphere (Van Heyningen *et al.*, 2017). While well-recognised attractions such as Table Mountain, Robben Island, Kruger National Park and the Cape Winelands are obviously promoting the country's new appeal, the country is nervous to safeguard the reimbursements ensuing from ecotourism from all portions of South Africa (Chifon, 2010). During the period 1998–2002, ecotourism was the only division that presented optimistic development in both engagement and influence on the GDP, which was associated with numerous other important divisions where a distressing tendency has been a reduction in employment (Chifon, 2010). For the reason that the exportation incomes premeditated from tourism exceeded that of gold-plated for the period 1998-2002, ecotourism in the general crowd has developed the new gold for the economy of South Africa.

#### 3.3.4. Boost Local and National Economy

Ecotourism has been recognised as an important division in South Africa in terms of improving the local economy, extraneous argument group, country expansion, gloomy financial authorisation and consequent poverty alleviation (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). From the time when the changeover to the new self-governing indulgence in 1994, superior possessions have been pitched towards generating a helpful atmosphere for ecotourism expansion and poverty alleviation in South Africa (Chifon, 2010; Lee and Du Preez, 2012). This was completed to authorise this division in all-purpose and to compensate for the previous disparities twisted by the apartheid organisation. This is in line with a key essential worth and characteristic feature of pro-poor tourism, for example, putting formerly underprivileged and relegated individuals and their deficiency at the core of creativities (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). From 1990-1994, the tourism policy has changed (Chifon, 2010).



In the self-governing period, ecotourism is recognised as an important division for nationwide rebuilding and expansion and a division that has massive probability to be a compound for fiscal and communal expansion in the country (Melin *et al.*, 2014). The elevation of maintainable ecotourism in the country was recognised as an imperative approach to convey fiscal upliftment, communal expansion and lack reprieve (Cilliers and Adams, 2016). In South Africa, tourism has come to be widely recognised by local authorities as a device where the expansion could be achieved, squash reimbursements for multitude societies by creating jobs and alleviating poverty (Pinsof and Sanhaji, 2006). In 1994, after the apartheid era, the government of South Africa publicised a determined movement so that ecotourism could be South Africa's main business in the making of job opportunities and production of external incomes by the period of 2000 (Melin *et al.*, 2014). For periods, the nation's apartheid rule prohibited it from attaining its possible goals (Melin *et al.*, 2014).

### **3.4. The Socio-Economic Issues of Communities Practicing Ecotourism in South Africa**

Poverty alleviation remains a very difficult goal to be achieved in most communities of the country South Africa. Policies such as the RDP, GEAR, ASGISA and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) have been introduced to try and help in alleviating poverty (Khumalo, 2013). However, due to continuous challenges such as inequalities of the past, lack of necessarily skills and the high rate of unemployment, the level of poverty is still high. This section discusses the socio-economic issues of communities practicing ecotourism in South Africa.

#### **3.4.1. Inadequacy of Necessarily Skills**

Lack of skills remains a problem in South Africa (Steyn, 2019). This has worsened to a part wherein majority of individuals in the country are incapable of filling in diverse occupation positions which also have a negative effect on poverty alleviation. Around 2014, about 8% of employers plotted the complications of filling many job posts because of insufficiency of essential skills (Jinyu, Xiao, Yilei, Jing and Yali, 2015). The number of employers who plotted those difficulties went on to note that they increased

from the 8% to 31% in 2019 (Steyn, 2019). This has served as evidence of the high level of lack of skills among the majority of South African citizens (Merino, 2018). It is believed that the country also lacks technical skills. Most technical companies have outsourced foreign employees to fill up some of the gaps (Mclean, 2005). The most difficult positions for companies to fill include skilled trades and engineers (News24Wire, 2015). With unemployment rising among citizens of South Africa, it becomes tough for poverty to be alleviated; instead, it increases to extreme levels (News24Wire, 2015). The youth of the country is faced with high instances of poverty which unable the majority of them to pursue their education, be it primary, secondary and/or tertiary (News24Wire, 2015). This shows a difficulty in terms of the skills enhancement and work success of the youth (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020).

South Africa is also faced with a lack of skilled artisans (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). It continues to suffer a scarcity of qualified and experienced generation to help fight against poverty. The 2014 vision of the country's government of alleviating poverty and unemployment was restricted by insufficient skills development and or acquisition (Jordaan and Barry, 2009).

#### 3.4.2. Inequity

South Africa is regarded as one of the countries seriously dominated by inequality (Shocking *et al.*, 2015; Winchester and King, 2018). The inequality involves several dimensions together with some features such as category division and residential discrepancy complementing the ostensible cultural constituent (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). In South Africa, the Employment Equity Act (EEA) no. 55 of 1998 was formulated to help in guaranteeing the value and fairness of employment (Williams, 2009; Sarkodie and Adams, 2020). The Employment Equity Plan of 2002-2007 did not succeed in contributing towards the actualisation of employment equity. The EEA was critiqued for its unsettled radical necessities by which it drove its significances and results contribution (Williams, 2009; Yonto and Thill, 2020). The South African government faced the encounter to address the disproportions caused by apartheid in offices (Krugell, Otto and Van Der Merwe, 2010). Practically, there are still workers

victimised based on gender and race in offices. There are still women who are not allowed to do certain jobs because they are believed to be without the necessarily capabilities (Snijders, Blumstein, Stanley and Frankes, 2017).

The government of SA utilised diverse gears to confront the persistent levels of disparity that have overwhelmed the country, with the broadminded economic rearrangement (Yonto and Thill, 2020). Energies to decrease disparity have absorbed advanced societal expenditure, embattled the state's allocations, and assented accomplishment to expand prosperity possession, and encouraged free enterprise among the formerly downgraded (Ogundele, Pavlova and Groot, 2020; Hasan *et al.*, 2019). These measures should be completed with improvements promoting private ventures, occupations and comprehensive development (Snijders *et al.*, 2017).

South Africa agonises over the uppermost levels of disparity across the world when measured by the usually utilised Gini key (Yonto and Thill, 2020). Disparity demonstrates itself over a twisted income delivery, inadequate access to chances, and local inequalities (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). Little development and increasing joblessness contributed to the perseverance of disparity. Most economists contended that disparity was an unavoidable portion of economic development (French *et al.*, 2019). Kuznets mentioned that economic growth originally leads to an increase in the stages of disparity (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). Rich individuals are able to save too much as compared to poor people. As a result, disparity helps the procedure of investment growth in the country (French *et al.*, 2019). However, as economies grow, greater parts of their inhabitants change from cultivation to other sectors of the economy and their abilities increase (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). Consequently, a point is grasped where disparity falls (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). There should be equity between rich and poor people. There are also rich ethical and governmental motives because disparity is not good for the society (Ilkcaracan *et al.*, 2021). The Fiscal Periods' Martin Wolf records that increasing disparity is mismatched with factual fairness which denotes impartiality (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). A 2012 World Bank statement on the country of SA drew the alterations in lifetime occasions for

children in the country and predictably got huge modifications created on gender, race, domestic income and location (Snijders *et al.*, 2017).

A reasonable community was never going to permit conditions in which a person does not have control to effect rudimentary prospects (Casale and Posel, 2021). Whether people are born with different gender, race, with or without formal education, that must never be pertinent to attaining their full potential (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). Preferably, people's efforts, inborn talents, selections in life would be manipulating militaries. This is essential in ensuring the equivalence of occasion belief that offers an influential stage for the preparation of communal and financial procedure; one of the infrequent procedure objectives on which a party-political agreement is simpler to attain (Casale and Posel, 2021). Such modifications of occasions are ethically disgraceful and also stop the economy's greatest aptitude from articulating its potential; furthermore, fiscal and communal growth are retarded (Kerr and Wittenburg, 2021). An additional motive why disparity is not good, particularly where is clearly recognisable, is because it allows representatives to escape problematic fiscal queries and encourage apparently unassuming explanations to what are actual multifaceted difficulties (Okeocha, 2020). Scarcity of, or lack thereof, work and communal facility distribution could all be responsible for disparity somewhat than rule or political disappointment (Von Fintel and Orthorfer, 2020). If disparity is the reason why there are many difficulties, the answer to all glitches should be taken from the rich people and given to the underprivileged people (Okeocha, 2020). It could therefore be contended that it is all because of the self-centred reluctance of the rich people to portion what they have added at the expenditure of the underprivileged that grips back fiscal redemption (Von Fintel and Orthorfer, 2020).

When community members are allowed to take part in decisions affecting their day-to-day activities, they develop a sense of belonging (Wang, Zhang, Worden, Cao and Li, 2021). Their relationship with the government and nature reserves becomes strong to a point where even their concerns are heard and taken into consideration (Kuang and Lin, 2021). Allowing people to participate in the decision-making process also empowers them to meet their basic needs (Kuang and Lin, 2021). When people are empowered, they develop as sense of ownership and independence (Gelderblom, 2006). They start

to own businesses and projects that help them generate the income required to have decent standards of living (Wang *et al.*, 2021). The government should consider community participation as a priority at all times. This will help in terms of avoiding the exploitation of the state's resources (Alba-Rodriguez, Machete, Gomes, Falcao and Marrero, 2021). Majority of state officials are still practicing corruption, nepotism and fraud. They take the state's resources to their friends, loved ones or family members (Wang *et al.*, 2021). This makes the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer. The participation rights of the people in the local community are violated. Municipal officials make decisions without consulting the citizens and later deliver resources or services that are not even necessary for the development of the people (Kuang and Lin, 2021).

#### 3.4.3. Ineffective and Inefficient Agricultural Extension System

South Africa needs an effective and efficient extension system to support agricultural activities in order to contribute towards achieving poverty alleviation projects (Dube *et al.*, 2018). This will also advance production systems and enthusiasm. It is believed that the development of South Africa's agriculture mainly in rural areas needs substantial hard work that could improve the value of the state's extension service (Castellanos and Sahoo, 2015; Dube *et al.*, 2018). The core intention of the farming extension service must not only be to rise food manufacture and spread the reimbursements of boosted agricultural schemes widely, but also to rise construction and releasing people in rural areas from poverty (Dube *et al.*, 2018). According to Dube *et al.* (2018:36), "[a]gricultural extension and advisory services encompass systems and mechanisms designed to build and strengthen the capacity of farmers to produce more efficiently". This is attained by refining delivery and interaction to suitable important information collected with fitting mechanical skills.

Teaching programmes and improved supervision should be provided to assist in innovating and addressing various rural development problems (Dube *et al.*, 2018). The tendency to make usage of the top-down approaches delays the extension structure from having a vital inspiration (Leshoro, 2012). This is believed to be offering a dissuasion to farmers (Motala, Ngandu and Mpungose, 2016; Dube *et al.*, 2018). Lack

of access to land affects the livelihoods of underprivileged individuals (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). Improving land policy in matters revolving around poverty alleviation and issues of land tenure in communities should be considered and never taken for granted. South Africa should revisit and review its land reform policy and make adjustments taking into consideration the development of local communities (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017; Osman *et al.*, 2018). The level of poverty in the country has increased and a large number of residents are still faced with lack of necessities such as shelter, food, among others (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015).

The agricultural system in South Africa contributes about 5% of recognised employment, which is comparatively lower when likened to other portions of Africa; the percentage is still declining and offering labour to unpremeditated employees contributes about 2.6% of Gross Domestic Products of the country (Senyolo, Long, Block and Omta, 2018). As a result of the dryness of the land, 13.5% could be utilised for the production of crops and only 3% could be regarded as potential property. The government of SA established a process of restoring 30% of industrious farmland to formerly underprivileged black individuals in 2014 (Theron, Archer, Midgley and Walker, 2021). Land reform was critiqued by both agriculturalists' groups and employees without land. The latter claims that the step of transformation was never adequately quick and that discriminatory conduct as well attendant apprehensions were comparable to Zimbabwe's land reform policy (Senyolo *et al.*, 2018). In February 2018, the National Assembly advanced the motion to adjust the Constitution in order to permit for the expropriation of land without reimbursement (Theron *et al.*, 2021). Some forecasts demonstrate that superficial water provision could decline by 60% by the year 2070 in some portions of the Western Cape Province. To combat the harm instigated by the mismanagement of land, the state supported a structure that encourages sustainable development as well as the utilisation of natural resources (Malunga and Tshisikawe, 2015).

Maize production contributes to 36% of the gross value of the country's ground of yields and has also experienced bad effects caused by change in weather conditions (Malunga and Tshisikawe, 2015). The predictable value of loss, which takes into

thought situations with and without the carbon dioxide insemination effect, varies among tens and hundreds of millions of Rands (Van Loon, Woltering, Krupnik, Baudron, Boa, and Goavarts, 2019).

#### 3.4.4. Lack of Basic Services

Communities in rural areas are often unable to provide basic needs for their families such as food, clean water and transportation (Ahmed, Hill, Smith and Frankenberger, 2007; Arndt *et al.*, 2020). They mostly depend on social grants for their households to run. People from rural areas are exposed to unclean water as a result of not having access to good quality water pipes provided for them (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). They end up depending on water from the rivers which is too unhealthy because the same water they draw to cook and drink, some people wash their laundry from the same rivers (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). Children play in the rivers and eventually the water gets contaminated with dirt. Having to survive from social grants and provisions from the state is a challenge because the money is oftentimes not even enough to cater for their daily needs of survival which forces them to depend on hand-outs and drop-in centre services from which they sometimes receive expired food that tampers with their health (Arndt *et al.*, 2020). They sometimes even struggle with having to travel to get their grants or other social services from hospitals or clinics for health attention (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). Transportation is another major issue they encounter in rural areas. Some community members reside far from schools and usually lack transportation to travel to school (Hellum and Kameri-mbote, 2015). They also often face problems with regards to poor sanitation as a result of not having toilets. Sometimes, pipes containing waste burst and the water flows into their streets and cause diseases because of the environmental contamination such as air pollution (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017).

The South African government uses the Constitution to guide the process of public participation (Ling, Xu and Xiang, 2021). It also uses consultation to serve as a distribution channel of data as well as a means of collecting information from the citizens (Arndt *et al.*, 2020). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of

1996 is a supreme law which provides equal rights to all South African citizens (Wang, Chen, Han, Yao, Gu and Jiang, 2021). According to Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), all citizens in the country have socio-economic rights which must be protected and respected. The socio-economic rights mainly include the right of access to services such as water, health care, education, social security, food and housing (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). The participation policy framework proffers that municipalities should seek inputs from the communities on matters pertaining to the needs and services of the community and ensure that they are catered for (Ling *et al.*, 2021). Local communities have the right to be consulted and they should contribute to decision making in every initiative planned for their environment (Wang *et al.*, 2021). The citizens are requested to offer response, contribution or remark on examines, substitutes and/or choices (Acemoglu, Gelb and Robinson, 2007).

#### 3.4.5. Low-Income Levels

Income poverty is still one of the serious problems in South Africa. It has gotten to a point where it evoked other problems such as urbanisation (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). People are fighting to leave rural areas to urban areas with hopes that they will get employed and overcome income poverty (Alba-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2021). The quick movement of individuals to urban areas in the country has placed a drastic pressure on local government in urban areas to provide services for a large number of people who were not even included in the service delivery plan (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015). This has also resulted in the local government making mistakes when providing services. Urbanisation also births other problems such as urban sprawl (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Informal settlements are created on land that was not distributed to the people lawfully (Omonyi, 2018). Income poverty is indeed a problem. Due to lack of proper income most local communities cannot afford to send their children to good quality offering schools, they settle for nearby or neighbouring schools that do not offer their children good education (Kuang and Lin, 2021). Shelter is another major issue people in rural areas face, they do not afford to build or buy houses for themselves (Ramphoma, 2014). Some live in houses without good quality doors and proper windows which exposes them to coldness in times of winter and windy weather conditions, and also



exposes them to armed robbers since their safety is compromised (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Again, some of them stay in leaky houses, where rain gets into the house and ruins their furniture.

People who are more likely to be vulnerable to income poverty are women, children, youth and disabled people (Daramola *et al.*, 2021). The more there are changes in the economy of the country or local community, there more income poverty rises to a higher extent (Rodriguez-pineros and Marret-mayenno, 2015). Income poverty affects most people to a point where they become food insecure and malnourished. Income poverty is linked with food insecurity (French *et al.*, 2019). Due to lack of enough money, it is rare for local communities to purchase healthy food or adopt a healthy lifestyle (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). They purchase cheap and bad quality food. The purpose is to avoid sleeping with empty stomachs (French *et al.*, 2019). In other words, great or better-quality food accessibility is a challenge to low-income earners.

#### 3.4.6. Crime

The issue of crime has been troubling almost all the nations across the globe which has led scholars to researching and writing scholarly articles about it. It is believed that not all people commit crime because of poverty (Isaacs and Witbooi, 2019). Others commit crime because they want to have more than they already have. However, literature found that majority of the people commit crime with hopes of getting what is required to sustain their living (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). The crime level in post-apartheid South Africa is bizarrely high. More than two million crimes were committed in the country over 28 years. This implies that crime is actually committed nearly every second (Fraser, 2021). The statement almost always mentioned by South African Police Services that the crime rate is decreasing is fallacious and ambiguous. The violence of crime in the country is too much compared to its distinctive feature. Over 2 million crimes committed were violent. According to Breetzke (2010), South Africa experiences about 49.7% of murder on a daily basis compared to other countries like the US and China. Apartheid has a very unique position in terms of its past political issues together with its current economic and social position (McCrea and Hopson, 2019). The scourge

of community violence that besets the country's citizens in high levels of poverty is difficult to deal with (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018).

There are principles to assist in addressing crime (Jonck and Kandala, 2015). Some of them are giving residents in townships and informal settlements operative mechanisms in dealing with crime; providing assurance that people's homes are of great conditions. Due to scarcity and deficiency, unbalanced living preparation and unpredictable child-care, children are exposed to dangerous features which rise their probabilities of becoming involved in misconduct and fierceness (Jonck and Kandala, 2015). Poverty could also lead to ferocious misconducts for the reason that power is a simpler way to get a big amount of goods. Numerous convicts have a feeling in that the confidence of riches values the likelihood of being trapped (Bjerk, 2010). Thus, poverty causes desire, and in turn, increases the crime rate. Rich people are becoming more richer whereas poor people get to prisons. A woman called Malek argued that there are many factors that could cause crime and the factors perpetually begin very prematurely. Some of the factors are firstly, losing parents or caregivers could put children in poverty or stresses that encourage them to see crime as a way of dealing with problems (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). Secondly, the failure of parents and/or caregivers to teach children at a very young age about the importance of not committing crime contributes to the escalation of crime rates (Graham, 2020). Thirdly, some of the children experienced violence in their homes which has in turn affected their state of mind and encouraged them to commit crime with the purpose of freeing themselves from anger (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). However, in reality, it is difficult for an individual who is used to committing crime to stop it. Once they start committing crime, they seldom stop.

The head of general pediatrics at Tygerberg Hospital mentioned that there is a clear indication attesting to the knowledge that children could be prone to later proclivities to misconduct or ferocity (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). In that period, what specialists' call "noxious anxiety" could have a substantially harmful effects (Isaacs and Witbooi, 2019). Such anxiety could be the huge cause of poverty, negligence, manipulation and even psychological well-being complications on the mother's side (Davis, 2015). Too much emphasis was put on not only the toxic stress associated with poverty that leads

to crime, but also on the belief that mothers who are isolated as a result of their violent partners as well as being young parents suffering from low self-esteem could be a factor (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021). Whenever young children are unceasingly abandoned, disadvantaged of considerate rendezvous, and exposed to traumatic surroundings, the mind zones accountable for education and cognitive are affected (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). Inferior self-confidence at schools follows as an outcome, and performance could begin to decrease and those children experiencing this are perceived as challenging (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). It circles in a gesture a complete hawser of proceedings that could be a continuing descending twisting. According to Davis (2015), “[t]here is definitely a link between the science around brain development and outputs for risk for criminality, anti-social behavior and mental health problems”. Not all children vulnerable to dangerous stress would turn into criminals, but that preliminary “dosage of hardship” could knowingly rise the danger (Davis, 2015). The need for children to grow up in steady and appealing surroundings cannot be exaggerated (Nguyen and Nasir, 2021).

Places where one considerate grown-up is present for a lengthy period to build a meaningful relationship with children could combat its signals (Jonck and Kandala, 2015). Such a grown-up does not really have to be the children’s parents; it can be a grandmother or any other family member and or non-related caregiver (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). They are all required to invest in all children in order to shape them in a way that tomorrow they see crime as a dangerous activity that must never be undertaken by anyone (French *et al.*, 2019). Amongst the insinuations of the connection among noxious anxiety experience and after committing misconduct are a prerequisite to screening expectant people early in order to recognise the ones who could be in danger (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). Extra education is required concerning the significance of initial childhood growth and the fact that the mind grasps about 80% of it in the initial 2 years (Davis, 2015). The head of general pediatrics at Tygerberg Hospital proceeded to suggest that “superior consideration also needs to be paid to the issue of paternal and maternal work leave, to give parents the financial space to spend this crucial early time with children” (Davis, 2015:1). From an administration subsidy

viewpoint, it is believed that heaviness should slope to initial childhood growth, than schooling much later down the pathway (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). In this way, things would be better economically.

Malek stressed the fact that an inter-sectoral method is essential to solve the problem, and there were procedures underneath in the management to recognise that (Meth and Buthelezi, 2017). Nhleko labelled a crime such as killing as a societal problem that should be looked into and solved at a multi-punitive level (Oasey, 2017). It is believed that there are essential glitches with how South Africa engages with the delinquency data yearly (Sibisi and Warriia, 2020). This includes the fact that it is left to the South African Police Service (SAPS) to present the statistics. This replicates the certainty that SAPS is also accountable for all kinds of misconducts and that they could also fix the misconducts too. It is believed that the release of delinquent figures would be an inter-departmental chore, which includes the Departments of Health, Social Development and Basic Education and so on (Meth and Buthelezi, 2017). Crime is a problem that should be faced with unity, and not just left to the SAPS to deal with alone. It was suggested that anything that was measured in the statistics must change when it comes to the SAPS (Oasey, 2017). For as long as the police are measured on the basis of reductions in crime, there is a perverse incentive not to report. Too much emphasis has been put on features such as police's response period, the value of upkeep delivered by the SAPS and the occurrence with which accomplished, well-investigated unlawful markers spread law court (Sibisi and Warriia, 2020). The crucial way to confronting South Africa's misconduct problem could be by giving serious consideration to the custom where children devote their initial livings (Oasey, 2017).

### **3.5. The Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation in South Africa**

Ecotourism is realised as the speediest rising portion of the economy of South Africa (Van Loeper *et al.*, 2016). It is believed that ecotourism has the potential for poverty alleviation through the creation of employment and generation of income (Pinsof and Sanhaji 2006). The country saw it as a great opportunity to capitalise on ecotourism as a means to ensure that local communities visited during eco-tours are also beneficiaries

from the turnovers (Pinsof and Sanhaji 2006; Nedu, 2018). In South Africa, ecotourism creates more than five thousand job opportunities and benefits the local economy (Pinsof and Sanhaji 2006; Ochoa and Urbina-Cardona, 2017). Generally, these employment opportunities are seen as a great route to poverty alleviation. Ecotourism is seen as an activity linked with poverty alleviation as a result of its substantial enhancement of the infrastructure of South Africa (Das and Chatterjee, 2015). Ecotourism is often undertaken in poor local communities than most urbanised ones (Van Loeper *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, it gets to assist those poor local communities by improving their lives with the aim of addressing one of the country's poverty alleviation. In spite of all the positive effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation mentioned above, ecotourism still enables investors from developed countries to overuse and exploit natural resources necessary for poverty alleviation in South Africa (Pinsof and Sanhaji 2006). Literature reveals that many researchers have voiced out their views saying that, practically speaking, ecotourism often turns a blind eye on poor local communities and their livelihoods (Das and Chatterjee, 2015). The speedy development of environmental consciousness during the late twentieth century meaningfully prejudiced the industry of ecotourism (Hadavi, Rigolon, Gobster, and Stewart, 2021).

The legacy of apartheid in South Africa covered with slow economic growth has entrenched structural inequality and poverty (Mbaiwa, 2018). Ecotourism continues to make it difficult for poverty to be tackled. Local Economic Development approach was introduced over recent years in South Africa for the purpose of improving people's standards of living (Gardyne *et al.*, 2005; Korth, 2016). Theoretically, activities such as ecotourism are contributing significantly to the elites' economic growth while turning its back on the poor's economic development (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). Literature highlights that ecotourism should generate income that will help in ecological issues and paying attention to the standards of living of the residents (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014). Practically, since most nature reserves are private-owned, the main aim of those reserves is to make profit. This disadvantages most villages or local communities in South Africa because most of their assets and infrastructure are utilised with no benefit to their standards of living. Ecotourism should provide education not only to tourists but

also to people living in local communities (Dube *et al.*, 2018). However, in practice, local communities in South Africa are complaining about how ecotourism provides more education and skills to the tourists. This hampers the local communities in their poverty alleviation process since education and skills are known to be some of the strategies to help tackle poverty.

Literature purports that ecotourism should help local community members to generate income through employment and other ways (Ngidi, 2015; Berrian *et al.*, 2016). In practice, there have been complaints made by many communities in South Africa that the majority of employees hired during eco-tours or at the nature reserve are not poor and are not residents of the communities, to make matters worse, some are not even citizens of the country. Theoretically, ecotourism in South Africa is believed to be assisting in terms of sustaining the country's resources through giving residents access to see and experience those resources (Pinsof and Sanhaji, 2006). However, practically poor local communities are denied the opportunity to access conserved areas to fetch firewood, traditional medicine and other natural resources important for their living. As a result, the renunciation of poor local communities to use the conserved natural resources fights with the economic development of the poor local communities (Mbaiwa, 2018). Ecotourism is believed to have brought financial resources to tackle poverty in the country (Nicolson, 2015). Basically, ecotourism exploits the natural resources of the country for the purposes of satisfying tourists, and it tends to benefit the rich people and foreign investors. An assumption was made to say that since some of the strategies to poverty alleviation are education and employment, the introduction and promotion of ecotourism in the country could assist in terms of job creation and boosting the education system (O'Malley, 2006). Nevertheless, the country continues to suffer from a tripartite of challenges, namely: poverty, unemployment and inequalities (AstatsSA, 2008; Tella *et al.*, 2017).

Currently, the ecotourism segment in the country is increasingly an extra strategic and energetic character in the economic growth of the country (Wilson and Letsosa 2014). In the period of the country's self-governance, ecotourism is seen as an indispensable segment for nationwide rebuilding and expansion, and one that provides for commercial

and communal expansion all over the country (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). The ecotourism economy was seen as a main donor towards the nationwide job creation, GDP as well as external exchange incomes in the year 2004 (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). In a moment to provide care to the participation of underprivileged communities, the nationwide government revolutionised a sequence of interferences, containing back-up (Rogerson, 2006) cited in (Chifon, 2010). This was done through the Poverty Relief Fund for the delivery of the substructure venture and a new merchandise expansion together with extra back-up for rural infrastructural expansion through the database for the Spatial Development Initiative (Rogerson, 2006) cited in (Chifon, 2010). Additional degrees of care narrate to the exploration of an innovative marketplace and the expansion of innovative ecotourism products, including underprivileged societies with singular concentration in rural areas on educational tourism and handiwork.

Wildlife tourism is a more serious zone for the development connected to poverty alleviation in numerous rural communities in the country of South Africa (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Specific ecotourism enterprises in the country, such as Wilderness Safaris and Conservation Corporation Africa have committed to an obligation to increase the reimbursements of ecotourism advancement to underprivileged areas (Kuang and Lin, 2021). Elevation of minor industries and informal segments and the participation of communities in eco-lodges is a significant constituent of the happenings of these businesses (Das and Chaterjee, 2015).

South Africa received approximately 8.4 million travellers throughout the year 2006. This represented an important yearly rise related to the year 2000 (Kuang and Lin, 2021). Theoretically, ecotourism produced about 947,530 job opportunities for both skilled and unskilled people (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). In the same year, it demonstrated a rise of 9.6% (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2019). Ecotourism forms part of the ASGISA (Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa) which aimed to alleviate poverty and joblessness and to rise economic growth from 4.5% to 6% between 2010 and 2014 (Chifon, 2010; Das and Chaterjee, 2015). In 2006, the predicted input of ecotourism to the GDP improved from 4.6% in 1993 to 8.3% demonstrating an approximately 100% growth (Chifon, 2010). From the time when

South Africa hosted the Soccer World Cup in June 2010, it was predicted that more than 10 million overseas guests would visit the country which will be beneficial to the creation of employment, income generation, rise in GDP, all of which would be advantageous to poverty alleviation (Chifon, 2010). Ecotourism can never be encouraged and continued with the exclusion of some organisations and initiatives precisely directing the tourism segment (Chifon, 2010). This is believed to be authoritative if the country desires to enlarge the probable financial worth of this division.

Ecotourism was believed to be assisting less-privileged communities to interact with people of better standards of living (Pinsof and Sanhaji, 2006). In reality, the demarcation between communities became wider. In other words, poor communities are getting poorer while the rich ones are getting richer. It remains a serious concern that South Africa is still faced with high levels of poverty even after the so-called apartheid era is believed to have come to an end (Pinsof and Sanhaji, 2006; Van der Westhizen, 2015). This leaves the country with no choice but to remain a developing country. Literature found that ecotourism is linked with many difficulties where, instead of taking care of the nature, it brings harm to it and the society as a whole (Dube *et al.*, 2018). It restricts people in their villages from practicing livelihood diversification (Kirsten *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, there is an incessant uncovering of mangroves, waterholes drilling, building and clearance of jungles caused by the demands for original beaches and eco-tours by foreign tourists (Visser, 2004). Literature argued that ecotourism is very difficult to undertake, and it is often undertaken at the expense of underprivileged people (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014; Giampiccoli, 2015).

South Africa ushered in the democratic system with hopefulness (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). The president opted for a nationwide resolution and harmony to a slow revolution of the economic superlative to improve the standards of living of all the country's citizens (Kuang and Lin, 2021). One of the phases was to give rural communities an opportunity to be part of their development. Theories have been put forward as the best way to ensure better living terms of individuals but many of them failed (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Majority of the current authors on advancement agreed on the need for people to



be at the centre of their development (Kuang and Lin, 2021). Ecotourism, as one of the factors, is believed to be suitable for poverty alleviation and yet, it has failed many times. It has not affected only the processes of poverty alleviation, but also other processes such as community development and sustainable development (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Theoretically, ecotourism is believed to be of great assistance to rural communities as it is said to provide sources of livelihood diversification (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). However, it remains a shock to find out that there is still a huge number of rural communities faced with high levels of poverty.

Ecotourism focuses much on economic modernisation (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). For one to undertake ecotourism, he or she should have certain abilities or skills, education, guidance, and societal, monetary, anthropological, and corporal investment. Most communities rarely have people with such requirements which in turn affects the process of alleviating poverty in the communities (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Ecotourism hinders the creation of housing and profitable possessions for the majority of underprivileged individuals (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). For example, people in Nyongane Village would use the resources such as land used for ecotourism purposes to extend their agricultural activities for survival and commercial reasons that would in turn generate income for them. Most residents in Nyongane Village still rely on firewood to cook, warm up water, among others (Liu *et al.*, 2021). Had it not been for ecotourism utilising too much of the community's properties, life would be easier for the residents to live (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). Ecotourism leads to littering and it can cause health problems for the people living close to the nature reserves where ecotourism takes place (Kuang and Lin, 2021).

During eco-tours, wildlife gets disturbed and at some point, it gets angry and wants to react to the human beings. Most community members and their assets could be turned into attractions by nature reserves with an aim to generate profit that does not even benefit the community members (Das and Chaterjee, 2015). This could destroy the confidence of the local people as their privacy gets invaded (Henseler and Maisonnave, 2018). In South Africa, ecotourism has been seen as a crucial segment in the commercial expansion of the state (Perugini and Vladisavljevic, 2019). The basis for this

interpretation is that it is one of the finest and cautiously progressive strategies towards economic growth (Sarkodie, and Adams, 2020). However, the republic's apartheid system prohibited it from attaining its full potential and has thus resulted in extensive inequality and poverty which further escalated a high level of socio-economic inequality (Perugini and Vladisavljevic, 2019).

The South African administration publicised its ambitious campaign in 1994 with the aim to generate external exchange incomes by the year 2000 (Sarkodie, and Adams, 2020). World-wide ecotourism visits in South Africa rise enormously in actual relations, from 25 million in 1950 to 698 million in 2000, demonstrating a regular yearly economic development of 7% over time of 50 years (Chifon, 2010). In spite of the great level of poverty in South Africa, 18 million (45% of its population of 45 million), ecotourism has been seen as the budding instrument that could be utilised to alleviate poverty in the country for as long as it is organised in a manner that comprises and advantages the underprivileged (Senyolo *et al.*, 2018). Sustainable ecotourism initiatives in the country that have poverty alleviation sequencers as a precise spoken objective are a dire need (Chifon, 2010). Senyolo *et al.*, 2018 argued that a man called Spier foregrounds the necessity of participating in pro-poor schemes intended at alleviating poverty between its employees and the neighbouring local communities.

In spite of being categorised as an intermediate-income nation, SA still faces many challenges: poverty, disparities, HIV/AIDS, joblessness, an intensely ethnically twisted circulation of prosperity, and a mushrooming overflow of uneducated employees (Chifon, 2010; Senyolo *et al.*, 2018). There is an agreement between commercial and governmental forecasters that, around 45% of people are underprivileged in South Africa and among those people, about 15% are in a distressed scuffle to live. During the year 1997, approximately 2 million South Africans lived on less than US\$1 daily. This amount increased to 2.8 million in 2002. However, in 2005, the amount descended to 1.5 million. Another time in 2007, the number of individuals who live in life-threatening poverty decreased to 1 million (Chifon, 2010). The state of poverty in the country is, to a significant degree, being aggravated by the persistent joblessness (Mbaiwa, 2018).

The number of jobless individuals in the country, excluding disheartened people seeking employment, increased from nearly 2 million to 4.3 million individuals between 1994 and 2007 (Mbaiwa, 2018). The degree of joblessness increased from 20% to 25.5% over the same period. From the evaluation, the prevalence of joblessness and poverty in South Africa was observed from 1994 to 2003, although it propitiously began to decline in 2003 due to expanded economic growth that resulted in job creation. In addition, the form roll-out of communal donations in 2002 donated to a decline in poverty rates (Sibisi and Warri, 2020). Notwithstanding, the economic recession that the world went through could exacerbate current poverty and joblessness rates if nothing is not done (Mbaiwa, 2018). Apart from poverty and unemployment, the country is also wrestling with excessively high stages of disparity in its populace (Sibisi and Warri, 2020). The Gini coefficient of 60% in 2004 graded it internationally as one of the greatest inadequate civilisations. Nevertheless, May and Hunter (2004:2) cited in Chifon (2010:24), suggested that “the Gini coefficient could remain as extreme as 0.68%, which was worse than that of Brazil, the Bahamas, Jamaica and 33 other developing countries”.

The public sector, some would contend, was never a success in its sweats to address the above-mentioned socio-economic issues and glitches faced by South Africa (Simoes, and Santos, 2014). However, from the time of the fresh autonomous indulgence, the state has developed guidelines that are focusing on poverty alleviation, enlightening economic growth, calming import panels and decreasing the budget shortfall (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Post-1994, the country’s government has espoused strategies geared towards making an alteration in the livelihood of the underprivileged (Sibisi and Warri, 2020). Majority of the pro-underprivileged guidelines have been intensive on the distribution of housing and straightforward amenities such as social services and social security (Simoes, and Santos, 2014). In addition, the development of the social funding scheme became a basis of poverty alleviation for millions of susceptible and penurious South Africans. There has also been an extraordinary development of social grants over the historical 4 years of almost 22 billion rands (Chifon, 2010). Social grants have delivered significant poverty reprieve to prolonged

families, predominantly in the rural areas (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, the joblessness assurance scheme was rehabilitated to maintain people from monetary emergency throughout stages of spontaneous temporarily unemployment (Wilson and Letsosa 2014). Nevertheless, dejectedly, extensive poverty remained obvious in the country's society.

The state of poverty in the country has a significant impact, a negative at that. Approximately 95% of the country's underprivileged people are African, 5% Coloured, less than 1% are Indians or White people (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Majority of the underprivileged individuals in the country are living in rural communities and the rural parts comprise of 72% of the overall population of those who are underprivileged (Chifon, 2010). The rate of poverty, that is, the number of individuals in a specific area who are under the poverty line, is 71%. Poverty is dispersed unequally among the 9 provinces of South Africa (Chifon, 2010).

### **3.6. Conclusion**

Ecotourism is believed to be a growing industry in South Africa. Theoretically, ecotourism has been argued to have the ability to create employment opportunities and providing education for local communities to help in alleviating poverty. Literature argues that ecotourism generates revenue from tax and the tax could be used by the government to improve the standards of living of disadvantaged people in local communities. Most people in South Africa are faced with poor socio-economic status. Occupation is also one of the most difficult factors to deal with when trying to create better socio-economic status for communities practicing ecotourism. Most people are still finding it difficult to get secure occupations in most communities practicing ecotourism. It is believed that about 72% of people are dependent on grants while about 7% are unemployed, 5% are dependent on their families and 8% have no occupation. South Africa is still faced with issues of inequality, lack of skills and basic services, ineffective and inefficient agricultural extension system, crime and low-income levels. Ecotourism continues to make it difficult for poverty to be tackled as it is mostly turning a blind eye on poor local communities and their livelihoods. Poor local communities are

denied the opportunity to access conserved areas to fetch firewood, traditional medicine and other natural resources important for their living. As a result, the refusal for poor local communities to use the conserved natural resources fights with the economic development of the poor local communities. This chapter concludes by stating that ecotourism has negative effects on poverty alleviation in South Africa. The next chapter is based on the the research findings, analysis and interpretation of the demographic profile of heads of household representing their households and the socio-economic statuses of communities practicing ecotourism, the nature of ecotourism, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation as well as the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

The study aimed at investigating the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village. For the purpose of this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were adopted. The research findings, analysis and interpretation consist of four themes, which are: demographic profile of participants, the nature of ecotourism: responses from the participants, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, a collection of responses from the participants, and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation: a synopsis of the respondents' views.

#### **4.2. The Demographic Profile of Participants**

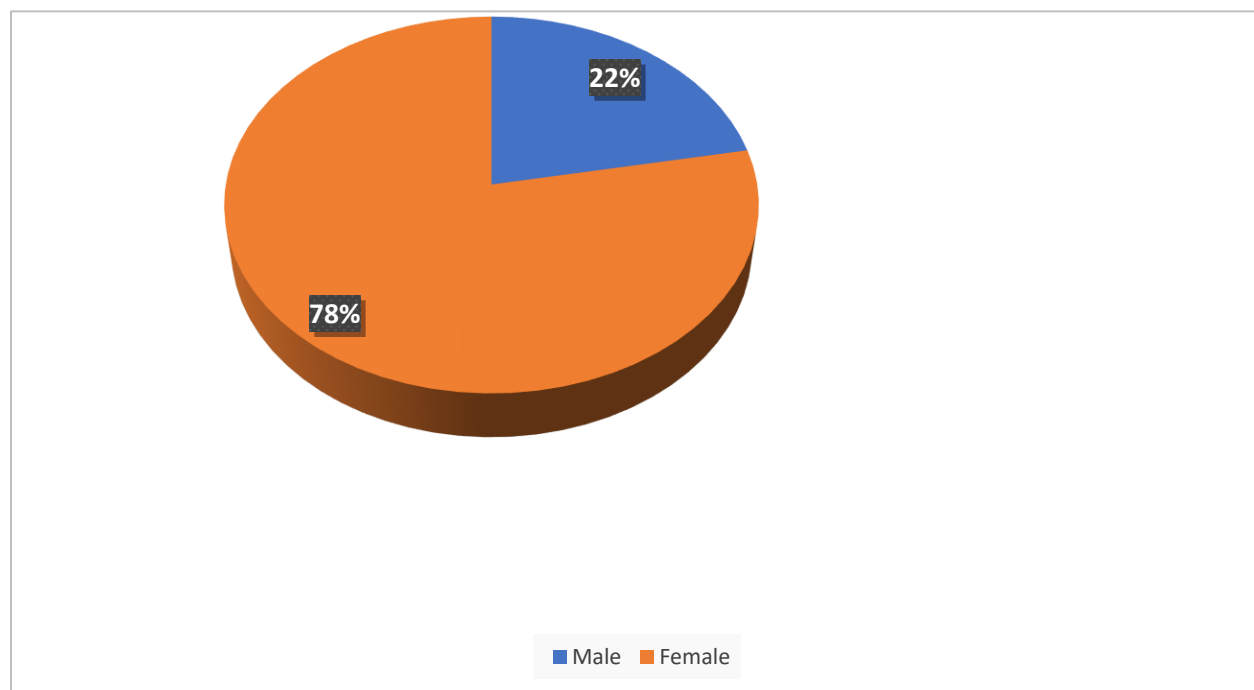
This section indicates the demographic profile of the participants. The participants are the heads of households representing their households. Generally, the level of income, employment status, level of education and access to social services could be used to measure the level of poverty in a community. The demographic profile of the respondents was significant to the study because it gave a clear indication of how the poverty alleviation process is operated in Nyongane Village. The section demonstrates the range in which the respondents influence the study. The sub-themes under this section are gender categories of the respondents, respondents' age categories, education category of respondents, employment status of the respondents, heads of households' occupation category, households' overall income category, households' sources of additional income, and households' access to social services.

##### **4.2.1. Gender Categories of Respondents**

The study found it paramount to consider and include the gender of the heads of households in order to know if the Nyongane Village is dominated by males or females. Revealing the gender that is dominant in the village is important because it will give a prediction of the status of poverty in the village. For example, in literature, it is believed

that where there are many women, the level of poverty tends to be high (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2015). This is because women are believed to easily get injured and are vulnerable to diseases, which leaves them with no chance but to quit jobs and lose income (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015).

**Figure 4.1 Gender of The Heads of Households**

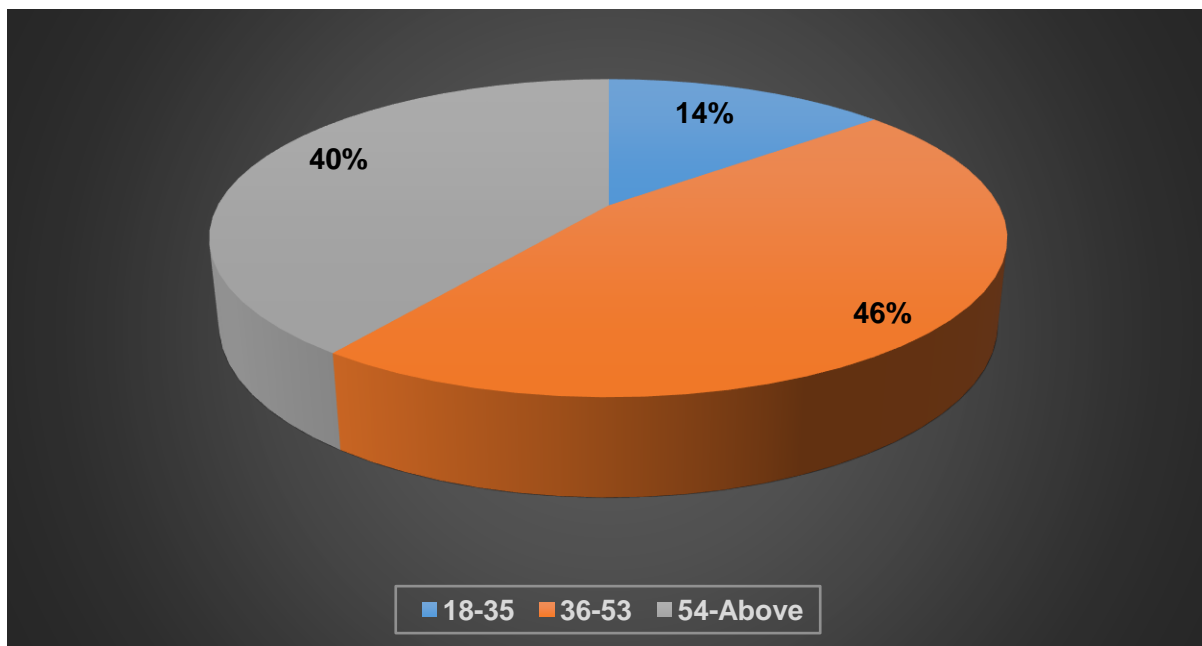


The findings revealed that 78% of the participants were females (Figure 4.1). This is mainly because of the fact that the majority of houses, be it in rural or urban areas, are female headed. Literature supports this by highlighting that most houses are left female or children-headed due to the passing of husbands or parents (Kruger and Steyn, 2019). The findings further show that 22% of the participants were males (Figure 4.1). Literature supports the findings by arguing that most houses are left female or children-headed in most rural areas (Kruger and Steyn, 2019). This is mostly because of divorces and death that could be caused by different diseases (Kruger and Steyn, 2019).

#### 4.2.2. Respondents' Age Categories

The study found it necessary to consider the age of the heads of households in the Nyongane Village. This is because it is believed that the age category gives readers an indication of the age group that is dominant at the village. Revealing the age of the respondents could assist in finding out the reason poverty is still high in the village. For instance, if the village is dominated by an old-age group, the reason behind the high level of poverty could be that the old-age people are no longer fit to work due to their age, which in turn affects the generation of income.

**Figure 4.2. Age of The Heads of Households**



According to the findings, 46% of the heads of households in the Nongane Village are between the age of 36 and 53 years (Figure 4.2). It proceeds to demonstrate that 40% of the heads of households are 54 years old and above (Figure 4.2). Meanwhile, 14% of the heads of households are between 18 and 35 years old (Figure 4.2). In most times, people who are aged from 54 years and above are perceived as the “free bees” (meaning they are mostly free due to retirements, unemployment, health conditions, just

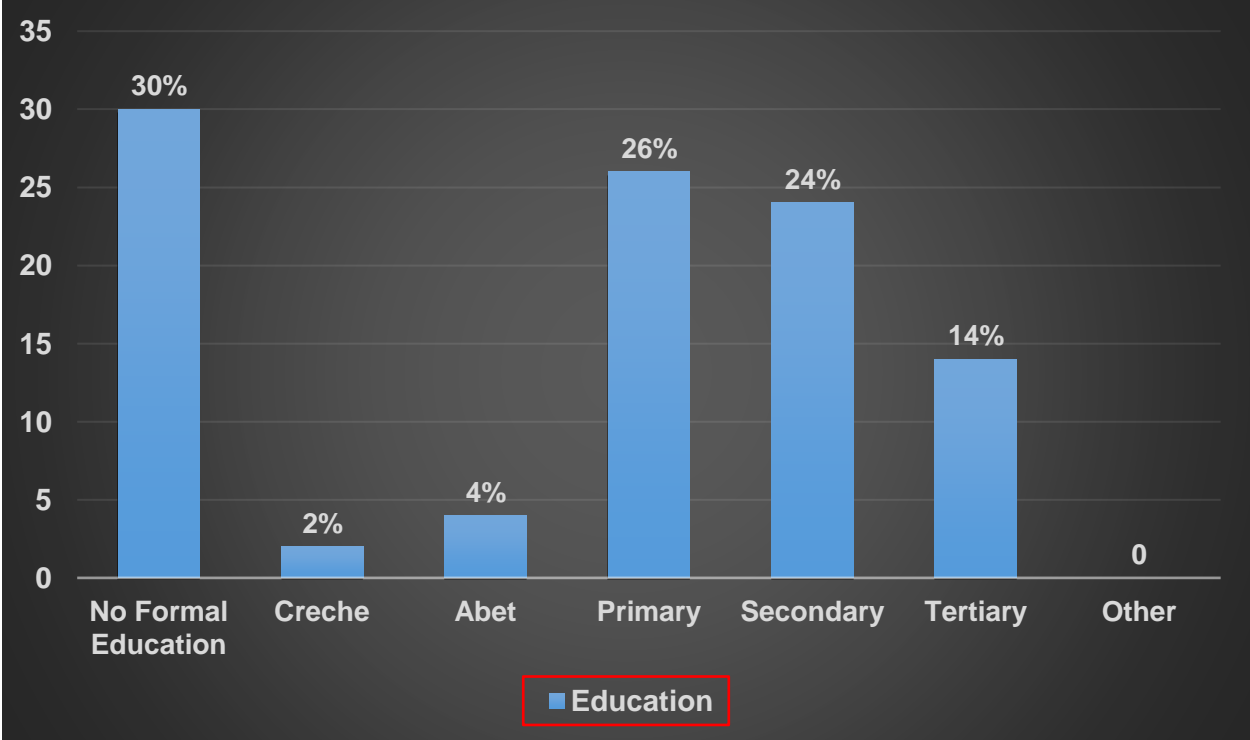


to mention a few). Surprisingly, instead of having the 54 years and above age group as the dominant group of respondents that participated, the 36 to 53 years age group that participated the most. This could be because majority of the 36-53 years respondents are economically active. Literature supports the findings by stating that, whenever youth and adults not older than 55 years are empowered, they develop a sense of ownership and independence, which makes them to become economically active in their country (Wang, Zhang, Worden, Cao and Li, 2021). They start to own businesses and projects that help them to generate the income required to have decent standards of living (Wang *et al.*, 2021).

4.2.3. Education Category of respondents

Lack of education is often linked with the causes of poverty. It is believed that education is a key to a better standard of living, which makes it essential to every individual (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018).

Figure 4.3. Education Category of Heads of Households

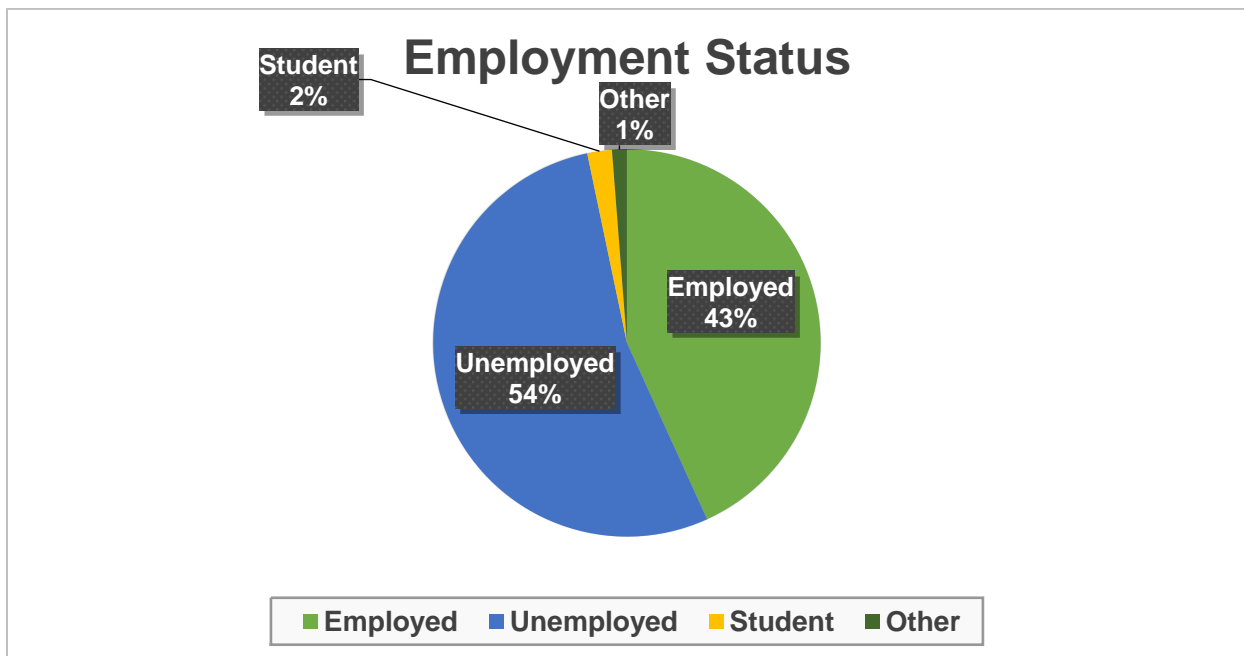


Literature found that one of the keys to alleviating poverty is education. Education in public schools of South Africa is free (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). Education enables and develops people's capability to reason. The findings demonstrate that 30% of the respondents do not have formal education; 26% of the respondents have attended school up to primary level; 24% of the respondents attended up to secondary level; 14% of the respondents attended up to tertiary level; 4% attended ABET and 2% attended only crèche (Figure 4.3). It is clear that most of the respondents do not have formal education. The study found that most of the heads of households argued that in the previous years, education was not free as it is currently. Every learner was required to pay a certain amount of school fees either monthly or yearly and looking at the challenges in finding employment and generating income, the majority were unable to afford education. Literature supports the findings by stating that, in the past years, there was a high number of people who dropped out of schools and the quality of education provided in most local communities practicing ecotourism was of poor quality (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). Majority of families were unable to even sacrifice part of their salaries for education due to the fact that they did not have enough (Sunderland *et al.*, 2018). Lastly, in terms of the option for other, there was a 0% response (Figure 4.3). The community members did not have any other form of education besides the ones listed in the figure. There are many things showing that education in South Africa is failing (Modisaotsile, 2012). For instance, there is often a high number of grade 12 learners enrolling each year, and yet there is a small number of those grade 12 learners passing (Shareef *et al.*, 2016).

#### 4.2.4. Employment Status of Respondents

Employment is believed to be one of the factors that contribute to poverty alleviation. Therefore, the study found it necessary to look at the employment status of the heads of households in Nyongane Village.

**Figure 4.4. Employment Status of Heads of Households**



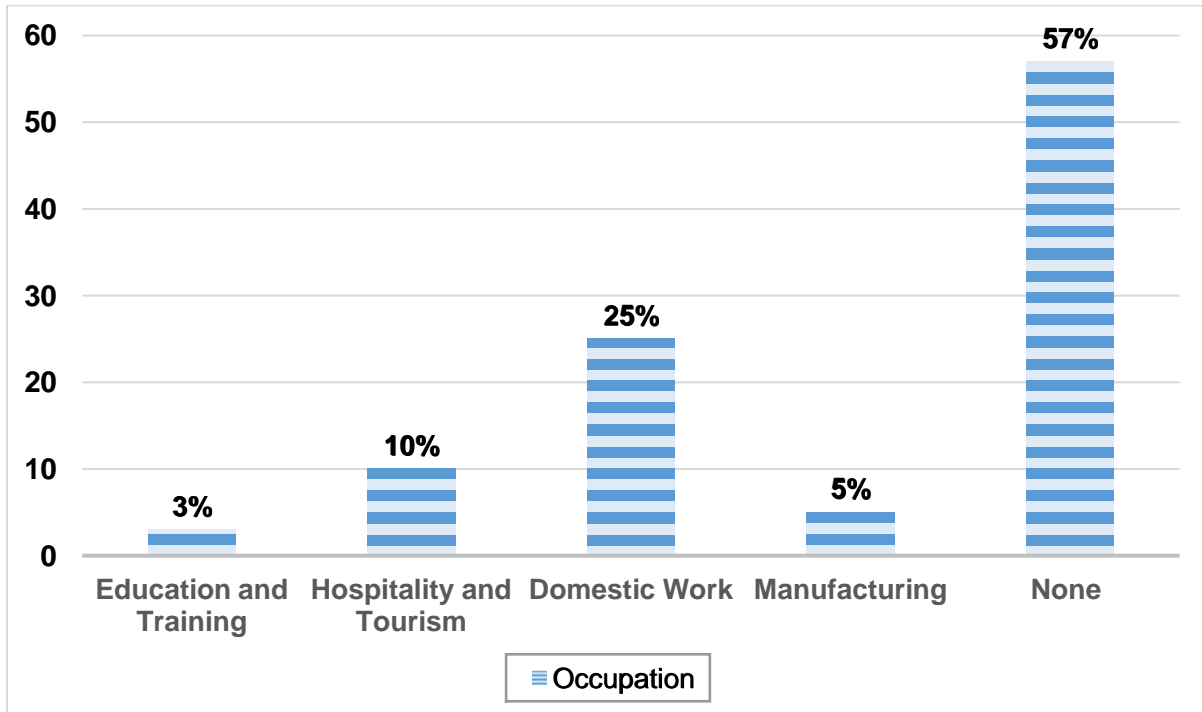
The findings demonstrate that 54% of the respondents are unemployed while only 43% of the respondents are employed (Figure 4.4). Literature found that South Africa is still faced with high levels of unemployment (Tella *et al.*, 2017). Most graduates from tertiary institutions are currently sitting at their homes with no job opportunities for them (Republic of South Africa, 2011; StatsSA, 2019). It is quite a disgrace how education and qualifications are unable to address the problem of unemployment (Tella *et al.*, 2017). Many companies have retrenched employees due to the losses they are experiencing in their turnovers. The unemployment rate increased from 27.1% to 27.6% in the first quarter of the year in 2019 (StatsSA, 2019). Most people are hired temporarily during festive seasons to help since there are many customers to be served within a short period of time. The findings proceed to demonstrate that only 2% of the respondents are still students at universities and ABET institutions, among others, meanwhile 1% of the participants are self-employed (Figure 4.1). The study proffers that Nyongane Village is dominated by unemployment. The level of unemployment in the village has affected the majority of the residents' economic status and ability to access and maintain decent or improved standards of living.

The increase in the level of unemployment proceeds to affect the local economy of the community even negatively. Some of the unemployed heads of households argued that they do not have formal education (Figure 4.3), which makes it difficult for them to be employed. On the other hand, other unemployed respondents argued that their age does not allow them to be employed, hence they are unemployed and rely on remittances and social grants for survival. Some of the respondents also argued that their health conditions make them unable to work. This is why they also rely on other sources of income for a living. Literature supported the findings by stating that majority of the communities are challenged with extreme percentages of hazardous and transmittable diseases such as the Human Immune Virus (HIV), Malaria and Tuberculosis (TB), among others (Van de Poel *et al.*, 2008). Poverty is also caused by ill-health. In other words, most people are unable to work when they are faced with ill-health (Rawatlal *et al.*, 2015). This leaves them with no choice but to lose the income mostly essential for a decent standard of living (Van de Poel *et al.*, 2008).

#### 4.2.5. Heads of Households' Occupation Category

Different types of occupations that the heads of households in Nyongane Village are falling under are discussed in this sub-section. According to literature, occupation is also one of the most difficult factors to deal with when trying to create better socio-economic status for communities practicing ecotourism. Most people are still finding it difficult to get secured occupation in most communities practicing ecotourism (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020).

**Figure 4.5. Occupation Category of Heads of Households**

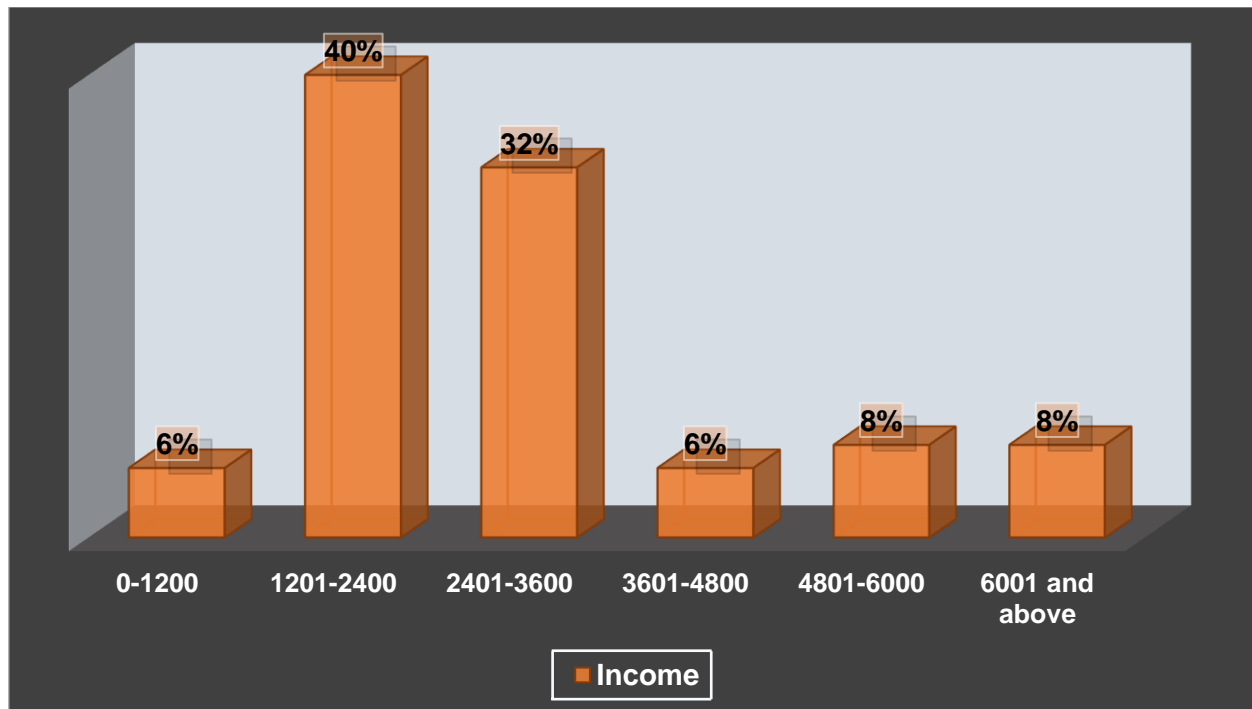


The findings show that 57% of the heads of households do not have occupations (Figure 4.5). The findings proceed to show that 3% of the respondents fall under the occupation of education and training (Figure 4.5), that is, they work as teachers, school governing bodies and so on. The findings also show that 10% of the respondents fall under the occupation of hospitality and tourism (Figure 4.5). They could be working as waiters and waitresses, and tour guides, just to mention a few. Another 25% on the figure above demonstrates that the heads of households fall under the occupation of domestic work (Figure 4.5). Lastly, 5% of the respondents in Nyongane Village fall under the occupation of manufacturing (Figure 4.5). The reason behind the 5% people is that there are only a few people with skills that qualifies them to work at manufacturing companies. Literature supports these findings by stating that, around 2014, about 8% of employers plotted the difficulties of filling many job vacancies due to the insufficiency of essential capability (Jinyu *et al.*, 2015).

#### 4.2.6. Households' Overall Income Category

In most cases, the overall income of a household determines their standard of living. It is likely for a household without an income to face poverty. This is why there is what is called income poverty.

**Figure 4.6. Overall Income Category of Households**



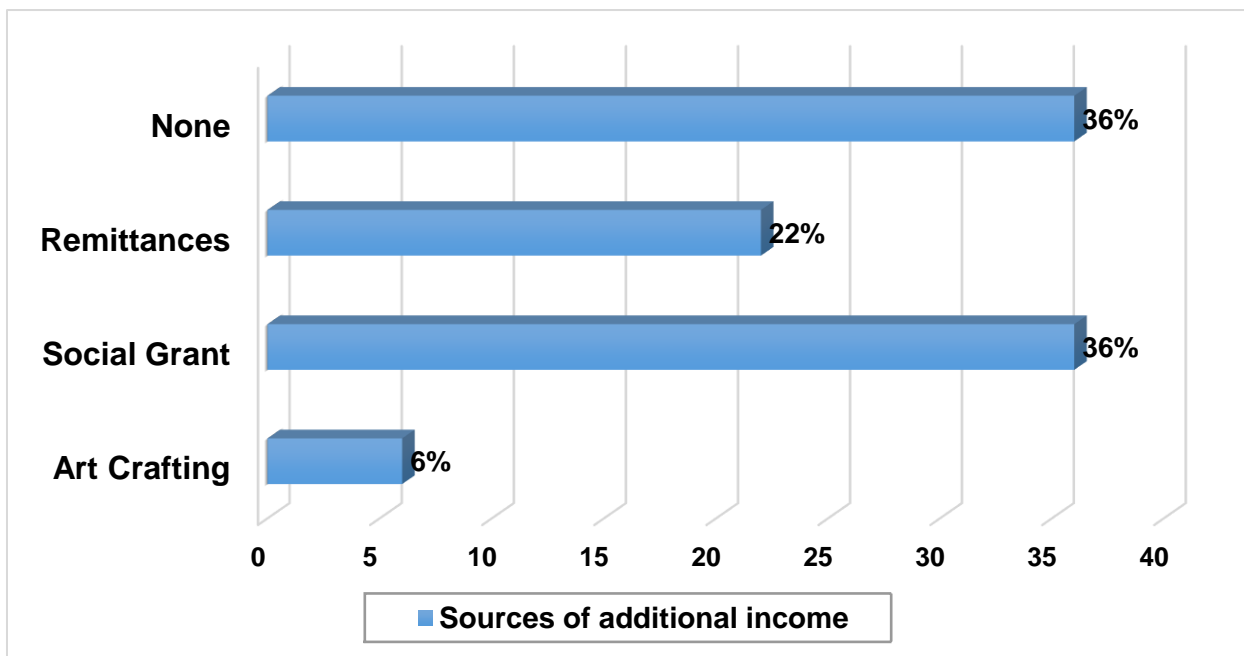
According to Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu (2017), income poverty is still one of the serious problems in South Africa. It has gotten to a point where it evokes other problems such as urbanisation. People are fighting to leave rural areas to urban areas with hopes that they will get employed and overcome income poverty (Alba-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2021). The findings of this study indicate that 40% of the heads of households have an income that ranges between R1201 and R2400 (Figure 4.6). About 32% of the research population have income that ranges between R2401 and R3600 (Figure 4.6). The findings continue to indicate that there is 8% of respondents who have an income that ranges between R4801 and R6000 while respondents earning R6001 and above are also 8% (Figure 4.6). Respondents who have an income ranging between 0 and

R1200 are only 8% while those earning between R3601 and R4800 are 6% (Figure 4.6). According to what the study found, the level of low income has been influenced by unemployment (Figure 4.4); lack of formal education (Figure 4.3) and health conditions, among others. Literature supports the findings by stating that education benefits individuals in such a way that they become able to manage their finances in an organised manner that will in turn be fruitful to them (Wright, Dominick, Kunene, Kapwata and Street, 2017). This also positively benefits the process of poverty alleviation.

#### 4.2.7. Households' Sources of Additional Income

Generally, rural areas are characterized by problems such as poverty and unemployment. This is because people living in rural areas are known to be unemployable due to illiteracy, lack of skills and incompetence (Steyn, 2019). It is not everyone who depends on the social grant, remittances, etc., as sources of additional income. Instead, others have their own main sources of income and very few people are using art crafting as their source of additional income.

**Figure 4.7. Sources of Additional Income of Households**



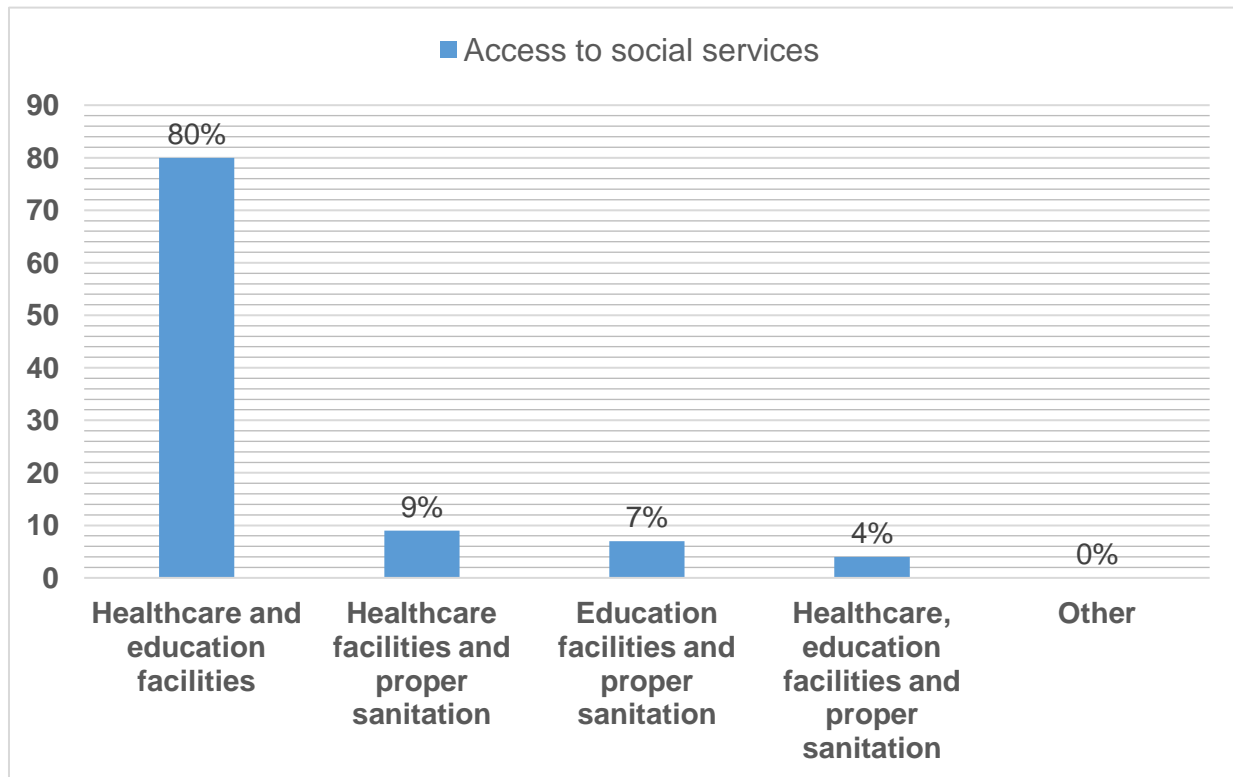
The findings of the study demonstrate that 36% of the respondents do not have sources of additional income (Figure 4.7). This could be because they do not qualify for social grants and do not have relatives to send them allowances. They could also lack assistance and encouragement in doing art crafting and starting informal businesses. Such people are more likely to rely on food parcels from their neighbours and Non-Governmental Organizations. The findings proceed to show that another 36% of the respondents are heavily reliant on the social grant (Figure 4.7). These types of respondents are either receiving an old age grant, children's grant, foster care and or disability grant. The findings show that 22% of the respondents are receiving their income from remittances (Figure 4.7). Lastly, the findings show that only 6% of the respondents receive their income from art crafting. This low number of respondents doing art crafting is because of limited access to do art crafting around Phabeni Gate; lack of skills or encouragement to do art crafting. Literature supports the findings by stating that lack of skills remains a problem in South Africa (Jinyu *et al.*, 2015). This has worsened to a part wherein majority of individuals in the republic are incapable of filling in diverse job positions which also has a bad effect on poverty alleviation (Steyn, 2019).

#### 4.2.8. Households' Access to Social Facilities

The reason why the majority of the respondents do not have formal education is that in the previous years, access to education was not free and looking at the financial status of majority, it was quite impossible for them to attend school. Currently, education is free, but some of the respondents are too old or sick to go back to school.



**Figure 4.8. Household's Access to Social Facilities**



The findings show that 80% of the respondents have access to healthcare and educational facilities (Figure 4.8). There is a primary school called Ifa lethu Primary School and a secondary school called Khetsalwati High School in Nyongane Village. These schools are both public institutions. There is no learner who pays school fees. Everything is free and they have access to food.

The findings proceed to demonstrate that 9% of the respondents have access to healthcare facilities and proper sanitation (Figure 4.8). Nyongane Village has one clinic that is available to every resident. There has been a complaint that the quality of healthcare received by the respondents is compromised. The residents argued that their voice was not recognised by the government. This is why they said that they do not have access to healthcare facilities. The findings proceed to reveal that 7% of the respondents have access to education and proper sanitation (Figure 4.8). The reason

behind this low number of respondents is because some community members reside far from schools. As such, they end up lacking transportation to travel to school. They also often face problems with regards to poor sanitation due to not having toilets. Sometimes, pipes containing waste burst and the water flows into their streets and causes diseases because of the environmental contamination such as air pollution (Luthango *et al.*, 2017).

The findings reveal that only 4% of the respondents have access to healthcare and education facilities as well as proper sanitation (Figure 4.8). These are the high- and middle-class families living in the village. Literature supports the findings by stating that access to social facilities is mostly obtained by the high- and middle-class income earners (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). Lastly, the findings show that in terms of the option for 'Other', there were 0% responses (Figure 4.8). It is believed that rural people are mostly exposed to educational and healthcare facilities that are of poor quality (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018).

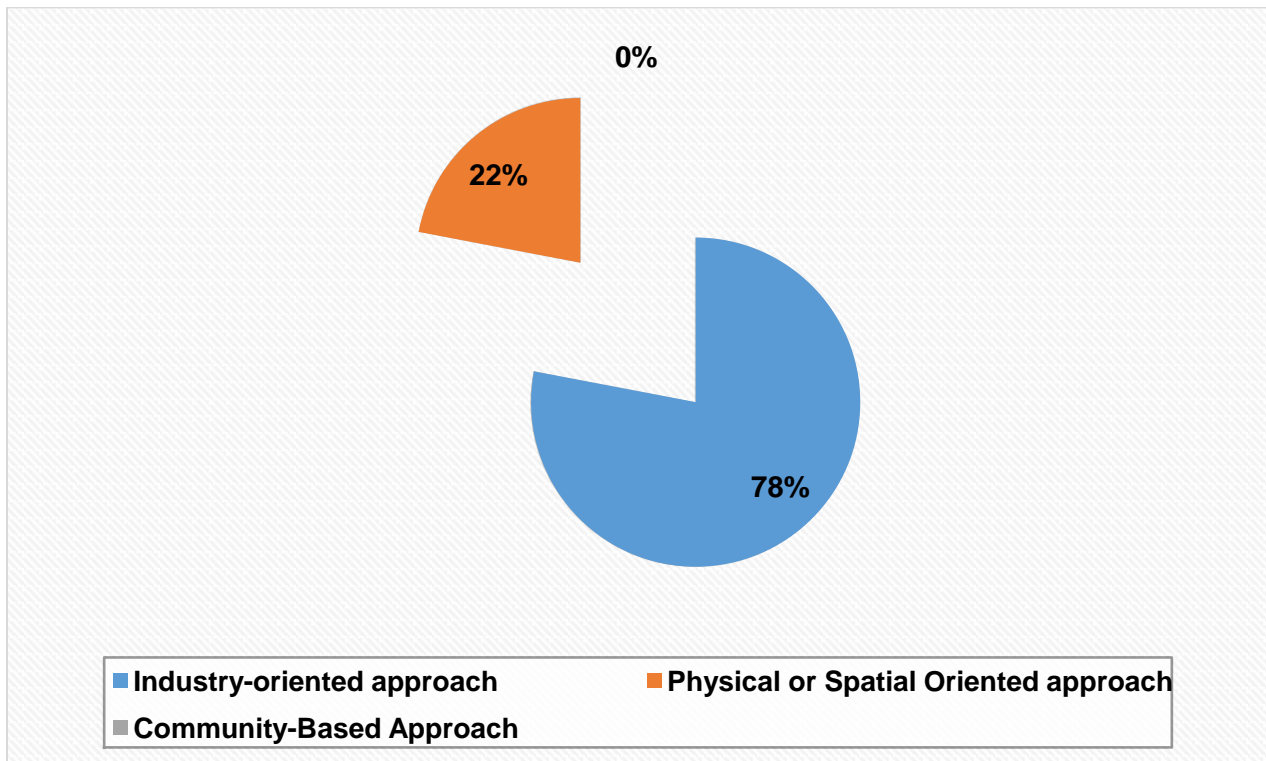
### **4.3 The Nature of Ecotourism: Responses from the Participants**

This section focuses on the nature of ecotourism in light of the following sub-themes: approaches to ecotourism; households' access to resources in the reserve, households' communication category with the reserve and community methods.

#### **4.3.1. Approaches to Ecotourism in Nyongane Village**

The level of participation of community members in a nature reserve is determined by the type of approach used for ecotourism.

**Figure 4.9 Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve's Approaches to Ecotourism**



The study found that the Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve turned a blind eye on community participation. The findings reveal that 78% of the respondents in Nyongane Village argued that ecotourism is undertaken using the Industry-Oriented Approach (Figure 4.9). This approach promotes private ownership. It neither encourages community participation nor the development of rural areas. Literature supports the findings since it found that the Industry-Oriented Approach is used where fiscal inducements, secluded marketplaces and other fragments of government could attain their purposes (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). This approach is assumed to be mainly focusing on making profit and it views ecotourism as an export industry (Lee, 2019).

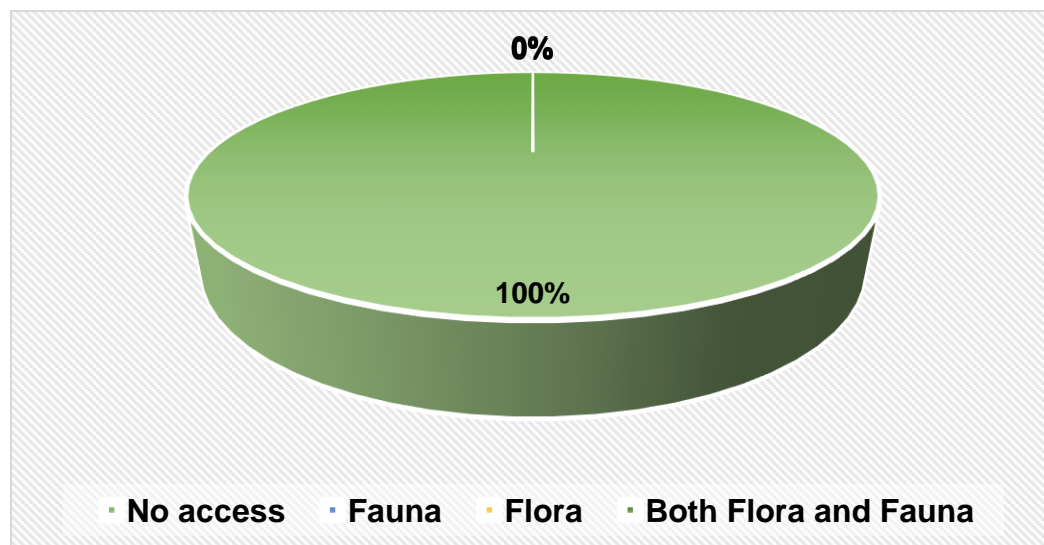
The findings show that 22% of the respondents argue that the nature reserve undertakes ecotourism using the Physical or Spatial Oriented Approach (Figure 4.9). This approach places importance on the essential to give superior consideration to the societal, corporeal and conservational volume when undertaking ecotourism. It does not

promote the development of people in rural areas. Literature supports the findings by stating that the assumption of this approach to ecotourism was that too much attention should be put on the protection of the environment (Mosammam *et al.*, 2018). The Physical Approach to ecotourism advocated the need to focus ecotourism on spatial patterns in order to diminish negative impacts on the environment (Phiri, and Okeyo, 2015; Lee, 2019). Lastly, the figure shows that in terms of the option for Community-Based Approach, there was a 0% response (Figure 4.9). The reason behind the 0% response is that, according to literature, Community-Based Ecotourism stressed the necessity for the growth of the underprivileged residential societies and called for the necessity to permit community members to be involved in ecotourism matters distressing them (Eshun and Eshun, 2014). However, in practice, the Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, did not adopt the approach to ecotourism.

#### 4.3.2. Households' Access to Resources in the Reserve

The nature reserve uses approaches that ignore the development and participation of the community at Nyongane Village. The approaches are: Industry-Orientated Approach and Physical or Spatial Oriented Approach (Figure 4.9). The use of the two approaches has affected the respondents' access to resources in the nature reserve.

**Figure 4.10 The Community's Access to resources in the Reserve**

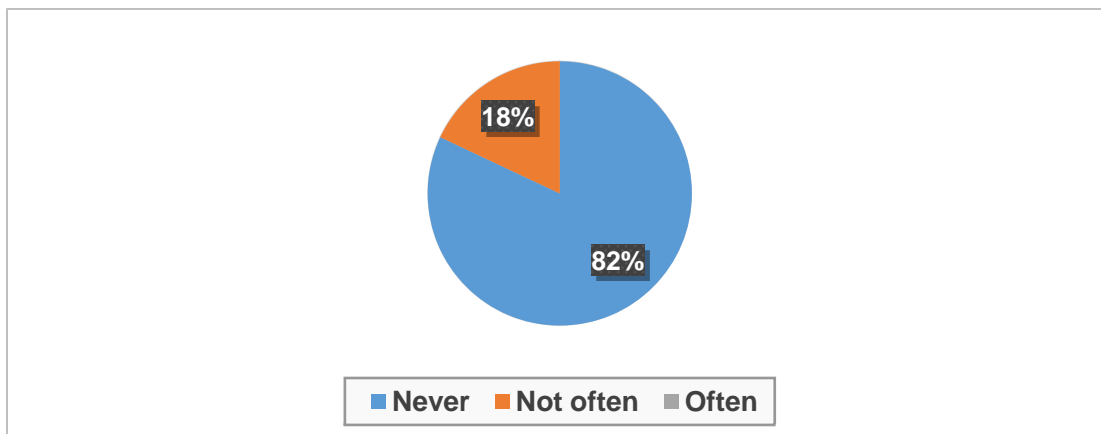


According to literature, the refusal for poor local communities to use the conserved natural resources fights with the economic development of the poor local communities (Mbaiwa 2018). Therefore, most local communities are still faced with high levels of poverty. The findings show that 100% of the respondents do not have access to resources in the reserve (Figure 4.10). This has somehow affected the process of poverty alleviation in the reserve. Part of the land used by the nature reserve could be of use to uplift the community members in Nyongane Village. Resources are conserved for monetary purposes at the reserve. The money made from ecotourism is not shared with the residents of Nyongane Village. Lastly, the figure shows that in terms of the options for fauna, flora and both flora and fauna, the responses were 0% (Figure 4.10). Literature supports the findings by stating that access to resources in nature reserves is mostly given to elites (people who are rich or financially stable) and people of high profiles (Berrian *et al.*, 2016).

#### 4.3.3. Households' Communication Category with the Reserve

Communication is believed to be key in building a good relationship between a leader and his or her followers. However, majority of the residents from the village argued that they do not receive any form of communication from the nature reserve.

**Figure 4.11. The Community's Communication with the Reserve**

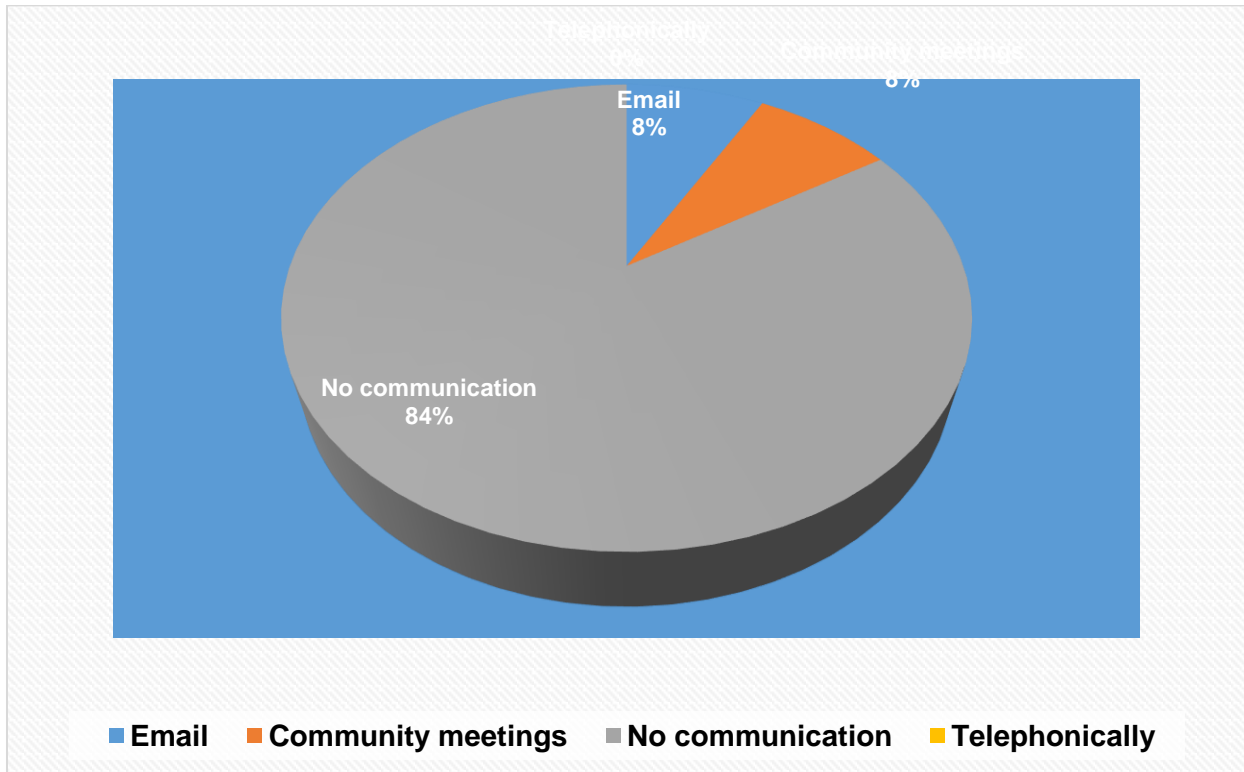


Literature found that many researchers have voiced out their views saying that practically, ecotourism is mostly turning a blind eye on poor local communities and their livelihoods (Das and Chatterjee, 2015). The findings show that 82% of the respondents made it clear that they never receive any communication from the reserve (Figure 4.11). The findings proceed to show that 18% said they do receive communication, but not often (Figure 4.11). These respondents who receive communication from the reserve are the people who do art crafting, work as tour guides and securities around the reserve. Lastly, the figure shows that in terms of the option for 'often', there was a 0% response (Figure 4.11). The respondents did not choose the option 'often' because they argued that the Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve adopted the Industry-Oriented Approach which does not even consider the development of rural areas. Literature supports the findings by stating that the Industry-Oriented Approach is believed to be mainly focusing on making profit and views ecotourism as an export industry (Lee, 2019).

#### 4.3.4. Communication Methods

There were respondents who stated that there is no communication between the reserve and the Nyongane Village residents meanwhile other respondents stated that they do have communication with the reserve, but not often.

**Figure 4.12. Communication Methods Used by the Reserve with the Community**



The findings show that 84% of the respondents do not have any methods of communication used with the reserve (Figure 4.12). The remaining 8% of the respondents stated that they communicate with the reserve using email while the other 8% stated that they communicate with the reserve telephonically (Figure 4.12). Lastly, the figure shows that with the option 'telephonically', there was a 0% response (Figure 4.12). Most of the respondents emphasised lack of communication between the community of Nyongane Village and the Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve. Literature supports the findings by stating that generally, most nature reserves engage mostly with people who directly generate profit for the reserves (Osman *et al.*, 2018).

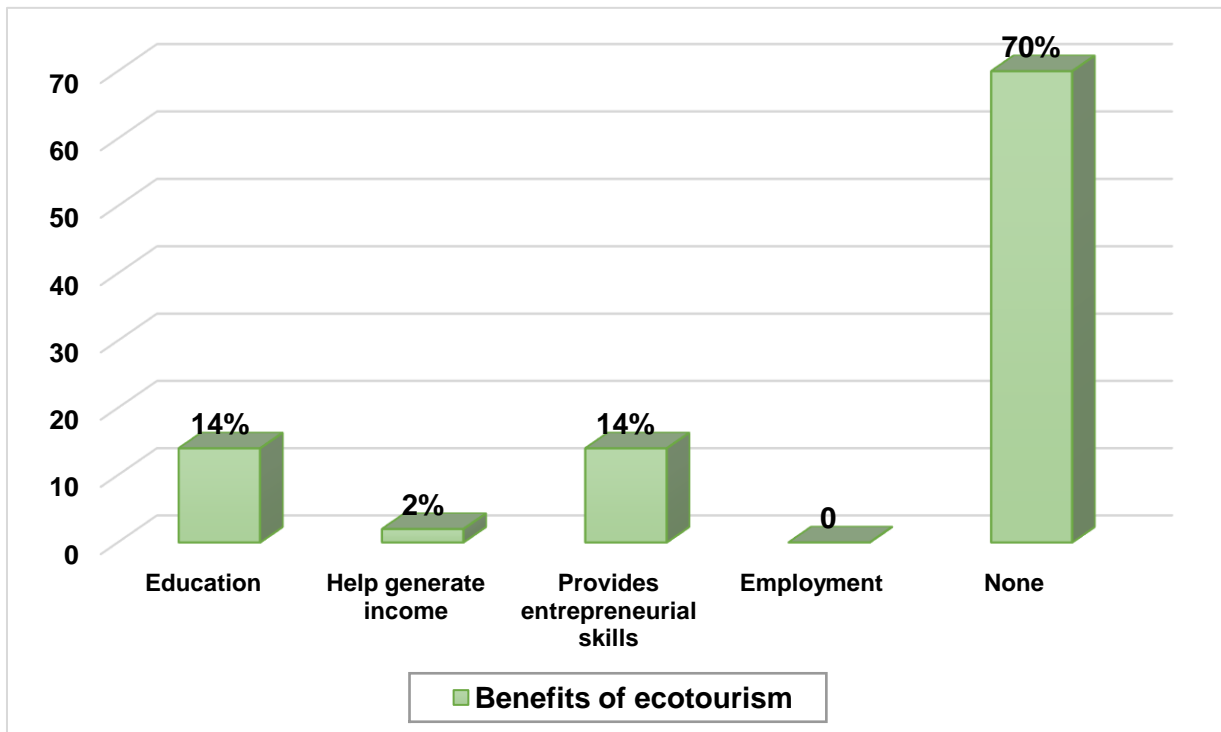
#### 4.4. The Role of Ecotourism in Poverty Alleviation: A Collection of Responses by the Participants

This section provides information on the role of ecotourism on poverty alleviation, as opined by the respondents from Nyongane Village. The sub-themes are benefits associated with ecotourism, ecotourism in education, ecotourism in employment, ecotourism in income generation and participation level in the reserve.

##### 4.4.1. Benefits Associated with Ecotourism

The foundation of ecotourism is associated with poverty alleviation all over the world (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018; Ma *et al.*, 2019). That is, ecotourism is believed to be significant in income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies as well as in educational purposes (Osman *et al.*, 2018).

**Figure 4.13. Ecotourism's Benefits to Nyongane Village**





Literature argued that ecotourism should generate income that will help in ecological issues and paying attention to the standards of living of the residents (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014). However, the study found that 70% of the respondents stated that they do not receive any form of benefit from the nature reserve (Figure 4.13). The respondents who stated this, are mostly those that are unemployed with no form of income at all and those who are heavily reliant on social grants and remittances. The findings proceed to show that 14% of the respondents stated that ecotourism does provide education to some of the community members, but in a small and rarely extensive manner (Figure 4.13). Illiteracy is still dominant in Nyongane Village. This makes it difficult for poverty alleviation to be achieved. In addition, the majority of illiterate residents rarely notice information that is useful to them. They still require guidance from learned or experienced people. Another 14% of the respondents stated that ecotourism provides entrepreneurial skills to some of the community members (Figure 4.13). However, the provision of entrepreneurial skills is done at a very limited scale. The findings show that 2% stated that ecotourism helps some of the residents to generate income (Figure 4.13). This statement was made by the 2% residents who are employed by the reserve and those doing art crafting around the reserve. Ecotourism has the ability to produce income from sources such as foreign exchange remunerations. Ecotourism was regarded as one of the sources of foreign exchange remunerations significant for community development (Dube *et al.*, 2018). However, the community of Nyongane Village is still faced with low-income levels.

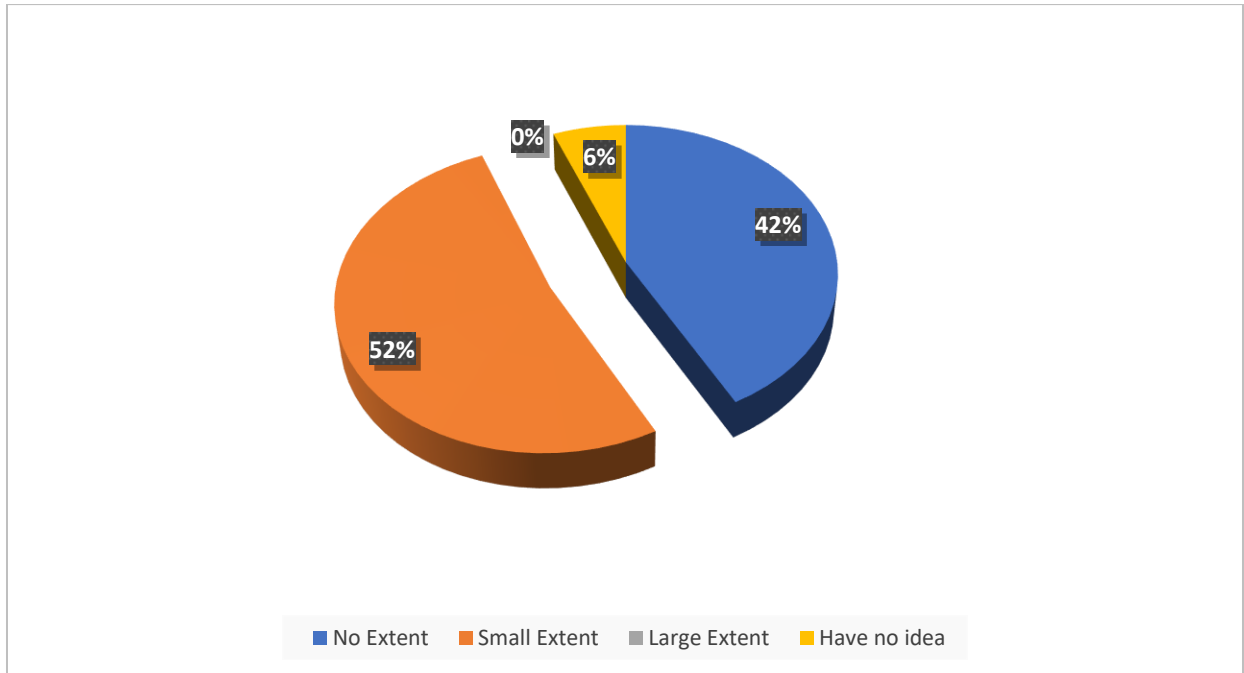
Lastly, the figure shows that in terms of options for employment, there was a 0% response (Figure 4.13). This is because about 54% of the respondents are unemployed (Figure 4.4), and some of the respondents mentioned that the Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve does not provide them with job opportunities. Literature supports the findings that South Africa is still faced with high levels of unemployment (Tella *et al.*, 2017).

#### 4.4.2. Ecotourism in Education

Ecotourism provides sustainable education that could assist in terms of improving the standards of living of communities (Giampiccoli, 2015). It is believed that ecotourism

educates local communities to start up local businesses that would attract tourists for the purpose of generating income (Adom, 2019).

**Figure 4.14: Ecotourism’s Provision Extent to Households’ Education**

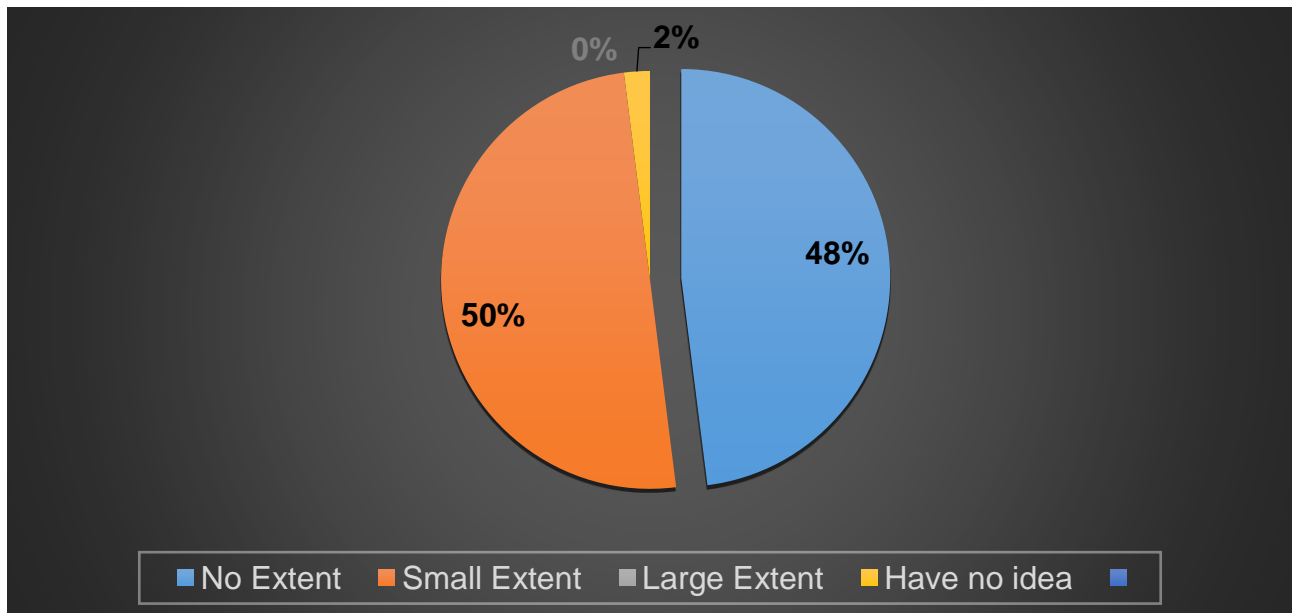


The findings demonstrate that 52% of the participants mentioned that ecotourism provides education to their community to a small extent (Figure 4.14) which disables them to realize and feel educated. According to literature, ecotourism provides education on how natural resources could be utilised without any form of waste (Arsic *et al.*, 2017). The findings reveal that 42% of the participants mentioned that ecotourism does not provide education at all (Figure 4.14). The findings reveal that 6% of the participants mentioned that they have no idea whether ecotourism provides education to their community or not (Figure 4.14). Lastly, there was a 0% response in terms of whether ecotourism provides education to a large extent or not (Figure 4.14). Literature supports the findings by stating that ecotourism is significant because of its ability to provide education to the communities (Bekker and Mashaba, 2018).

#### 4.4.3. Ecotourism in Employment

Ecotourism is believed to have created about 107 million jobs around 2015 in many countries (ILO, 2016:np). It offers work opportunities through spreading and accumulating earnings that could be of assistance in terms of reducing the exposure of the deprived (Das and Chaterjee, 2015).

**Figure 4.15. Ecotourism's Provision Extent to Households' Employment**



It is believed that ecotourism is labour-intensive in that the majority of the activities associated with it are suitable for disadvantaged people, women together with young people. It allows individuals to plunge themselves into philosophies and other individuals' regimes. Nyongane Village is characterised by a high level of unemployment that has in turn contributed to the poverty level faced by the residents. It is believed that illiteracy and lack of required skills, just to mention a few, prompted the increase in the level of unemployment in the village.

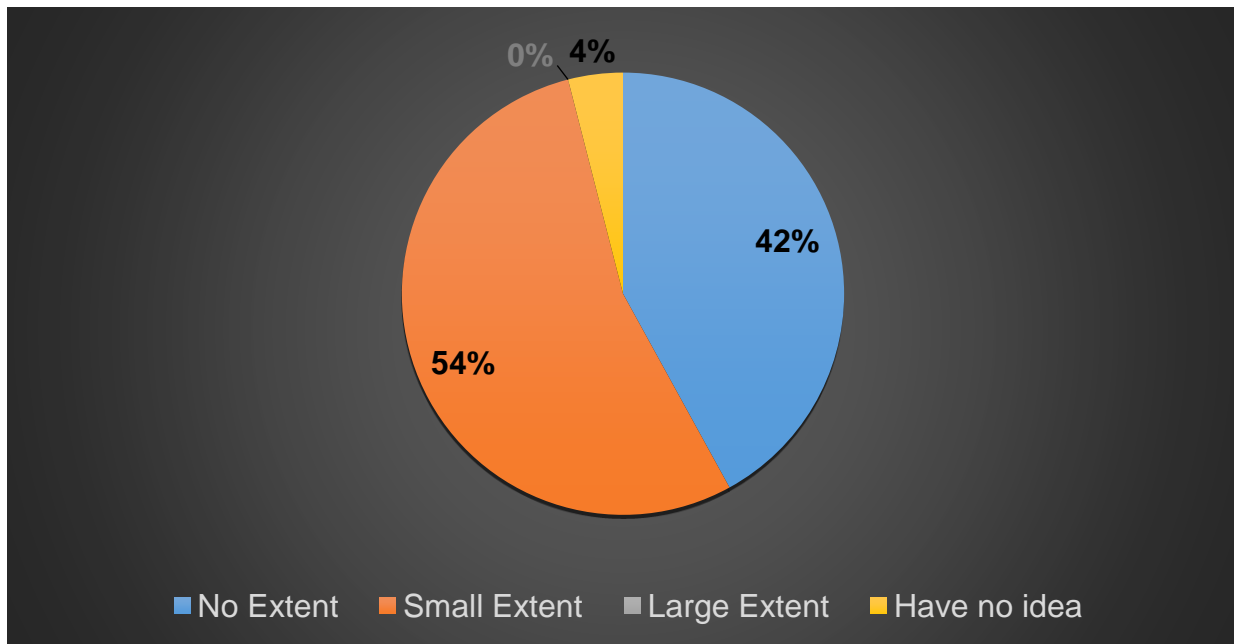
Theoretically, ecotourism is believed to have the ability to create a platform for community members to generate income that will assist in terms of poverty alleviation (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018). The findings demonstrate that 50% of

the respondents argued that ecotourism provides employment to the community members of Nyongane Village to a small extent (Figure 4.15), which unable the community members to have better or improved standards of living. The findings reveal that 48% of the respondents argued that ecotourism does not provide any form of employment to the community (Figure 4.15), because they are not employed. The findings also show that 2% of the respondents said that they do not know if ecotourism provides employment to the community members of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.15). Lastly, the figure shows that there was a 0% response in terms of whether ecotourism provides employment to a large extent or not (Figure 4.15). Literature supports the findings by mentioning that South Africa continues to suffer from high levels of unemployment (Tella *et al.*, 2017).

#### 4.4.4. Ecotourism in Income Generation

According to literature, ecotourism creates a platform for community members to generate income that will assist in terms of poverty alleviation (Das and Chaterjee, 2015; Osman *et al.*, 2018).

**Figure 4.16. Ecotourism's Provision Extent to Households' Income Generation**

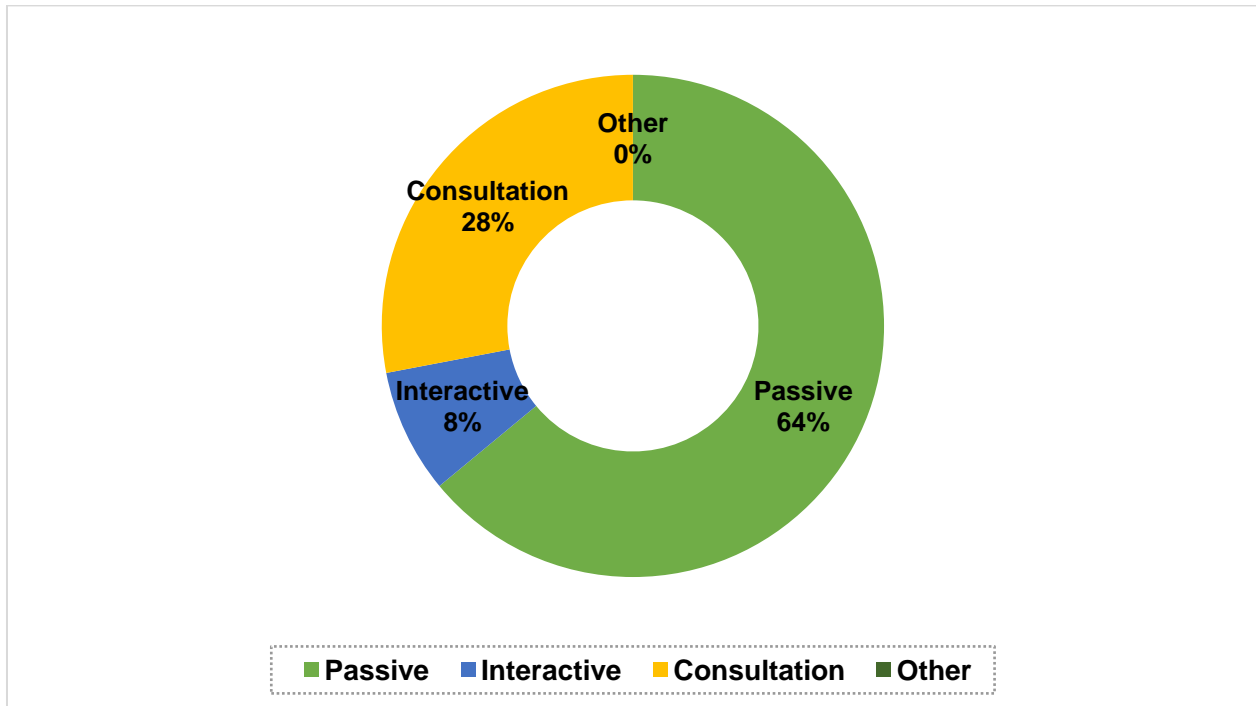


The findings show that 54% of the participants mentioned that ecotourism provides sources of income generation to the community to a small extent (Figure 4.16). The findings proceed to show that 42% of the participants mentioned that ecotourism does not provide sources to generate income at all (Figure 4.16). Literature supports the findings by stating that, income poverty affects most people to a point where they become food insecure and malnourished. Income poverty is linked with food insecurity (French *et al.*, 2019). Due to lack of enough money, it is rare for local communities to purchase healthy food or adopt a healthy lifestyle (Grabruker and Grimm, 2018). The findings demonstrate that 4% of the participants mentioned that they have no idea whether ecotourism provides sources of income generation to the community of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.16). Lastly, there was a 0% response in terms of whether ecotourism provides sources of income generation to the community members or not (Figure 4.16). Literature supports the findings by mentioning that South Africa is still faced with high level of income poverty (Luthango *et al.*, 2017). Most people in rural areas are not financially stable which affects their standards of living (Luthango *et al.*, 2017).

#### 4.4.5. Participation Level in the Reserve

Community participation has always been one of the difficult goals to achieve. The study found that most of the respondents complained about being excluded from most activities that could be beneficial to their survival.

**Figure 4.17 Communities' Participation Level in the Reserve**



It is worth reiterating that community members should be included in decision making processes concerning matters of ecotourism that affect their ways of living (Prinsloo, Marokane and Street, 2018); respect should be accorded to the livelihoods and beliefs of people in different communities (Santarem *et al.*, 2019). More emphasis has been put on the need to ensure that local communities benefit from ecotourism. Yet, 64% of the respondents argued that the nature reserve uses a passive level of participation (Figure 4.17). This means that the community members are not considered in decision making. Information is only passed through any channel. The nature reserve gives announcements to the community residents without seeking their contributions and apprehensions first. This level of participation is frequently utilised by non-self-governing nations such as Morocco and the United Kingdom.

There are different types of participation used in different countries. Participation by consultation is one of the levels used (Arndt *et al.*, 2020). The findings demonstrate that 28% of the respondents argued that the nature reserve uses the consultation level of

participation (Figure 4.17). This means that the reserve allows consultation with some of the residents of the community. These residents are more likely to be those working at the reserve and those doing art crafting around the reserve. The findings show that 8% of the respondents argued that the nature reserve uses the interactive level of participation (Figure 4.17). This group of respondents is most likely to be residents employed by the reserve too. Ineffective community participation is still a major problem in most developing countries. People are still denied opportunities to take part in matters affecting them (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020). Lastly, the findings show that there was a 0% response in terms of the option for 'other' (Figure 4.17). Majority of the respondents mentioned that the reserve preferred the community members' passive participation. This type of participation does not prioritise the welfare of the community. Literature supports the findings by alluding that passing participation stresses the need for public officials to make a declaration to let the individuals know of the decisions that would have been made without necessarily hearing their efforts and apprehensions first (Meier, Lagemann *et al.*, 2013).

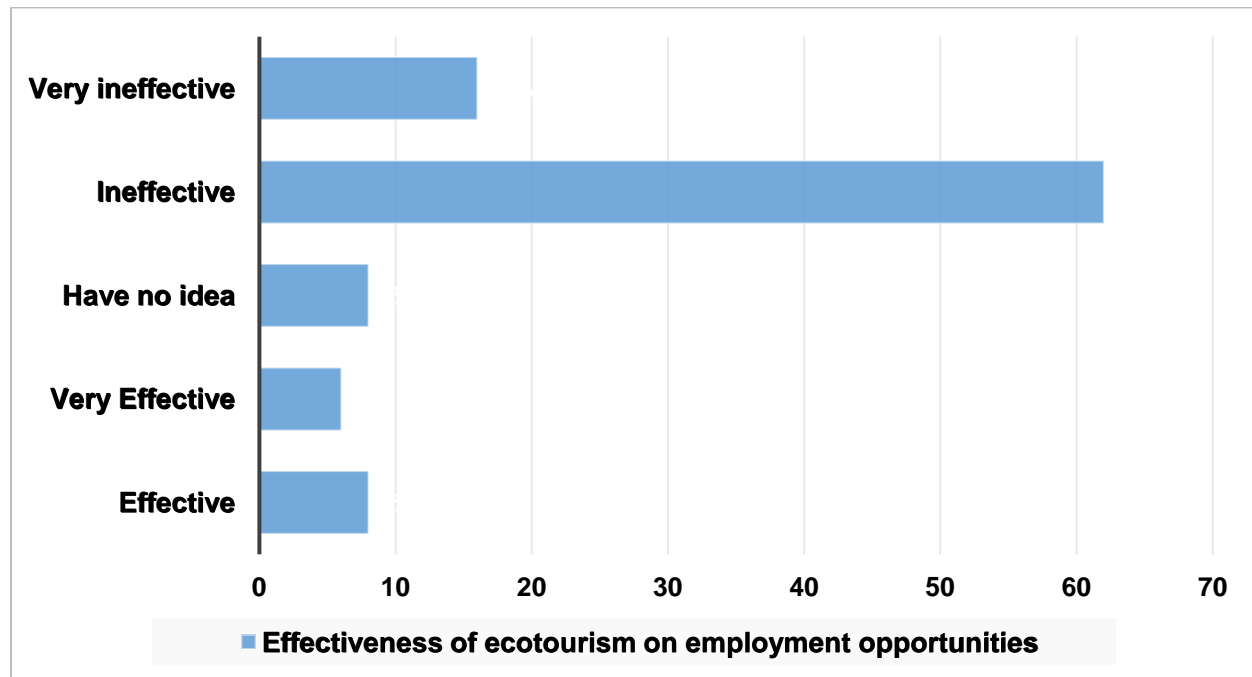
#### **4.5. The Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation: A Synopsis of the Respondents' Views**

This section focuses on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. The subsections are ecotourism on employment opportunities, ecotourism on entrepreneurial opportunities, ecotourism on the local economy, ecotourism on income generation, the nature reserve's positive effects on the community and the nature reserve's negative effects on the community.

##### **4.5.1. Ecotourism on Employment Opportunities**

The community of Nyongane is characterised by a high level of unemployment (Figure 4.4). The following graph gives numerical support to the statement. A large number of the respondents attested to the ineffectiveness of ecotourism to provide employment opportunities for the community members of Nyongane Village.

**Figure 4.18. Effectiveness of Ecotourism on Employment Opportunities**



Literature believes that ecotourism should help local community members to generate income through employment and other ways (Berrian *et al*, 2016). However, practically, most respondents mentioned that majority of the workers in Phabeni Gate are not from Nyongane Village. The findings show that 62% of the respondents are the ones who stated that ecotourism does not provide employment opportunities to the village residents (Figure 4.18). These respondents are more likely to be those who are not employed at the reserve together with those who are not employed anywhere. The figure proceeds to demonstrate that 16% of the respondents strongly emphasised that ecotourism is ineffective in providing employment opportunities for the community members of the village (Figure 4.18). However, 8% of the respondents stated that they have no idea whether ecotourism is effective or ineffective in providing the Nyongane Village residents with employment opportunities (Figure 4.18). In the same breath, another 8% of the respondents highlighted that ecotourism is effective in providing employment opportunities, but only to a small extent (Figure 4.18).

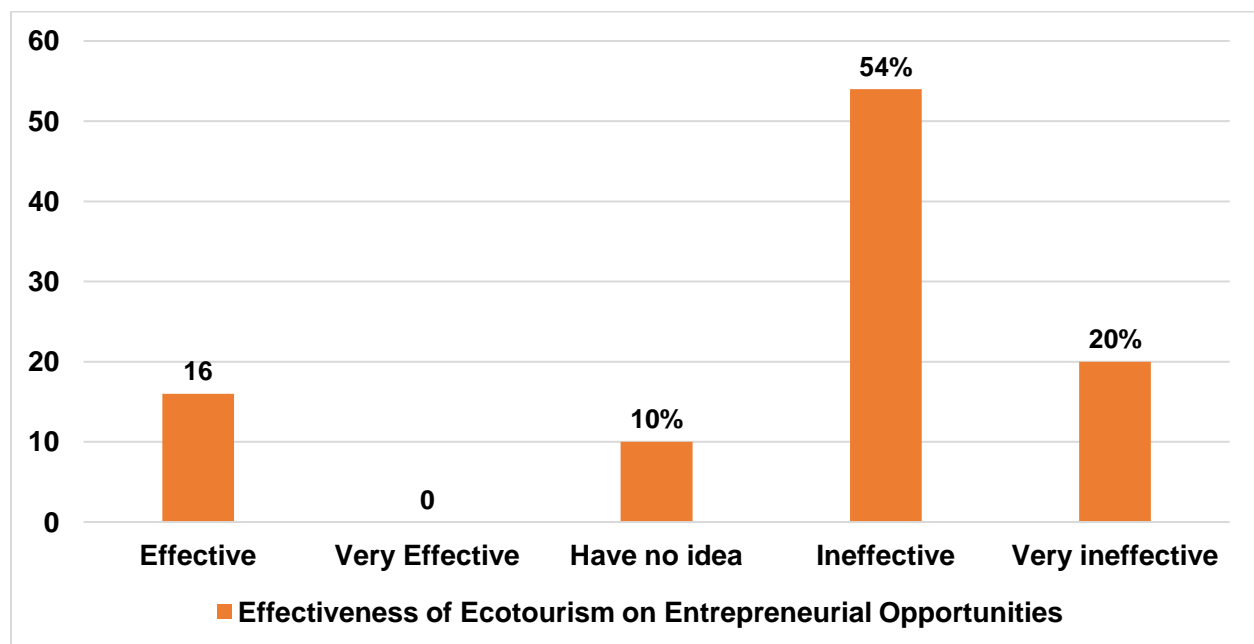


Lastly, the findings show that 6% of the respondents highlighted that ecotourism is very effective in terms of providing employment to some of the residents of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.18). The respondents who stated this were mostly those who are currently employed by the nature reserve. Literature supports the findings by mentioning that ecotourism offers work opportunities by spreading and accumulating earnings that could be of assistance in terms of reducing the exposure of the deprived (Das and Chaterjee, 2015).

#### 4.5.2. Ecotourism on Entrepreneurial Opportunities

From observations, Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve rarely host skills development programmes in the village. By the time they use their short time to host programmes is when they want to create a good image for their reserve. The reserve also hosts programmes just to attract tourism from other communities. The main aim of the reserve is to generate income benefits to the owners. A key informant mentioned that the nature reserve does provide entrepreneurial skills and opportunities to the community members in the village.

**Figure 4.19. Effectiveness of Ecotourism on Entrepreneurial Opportunities**

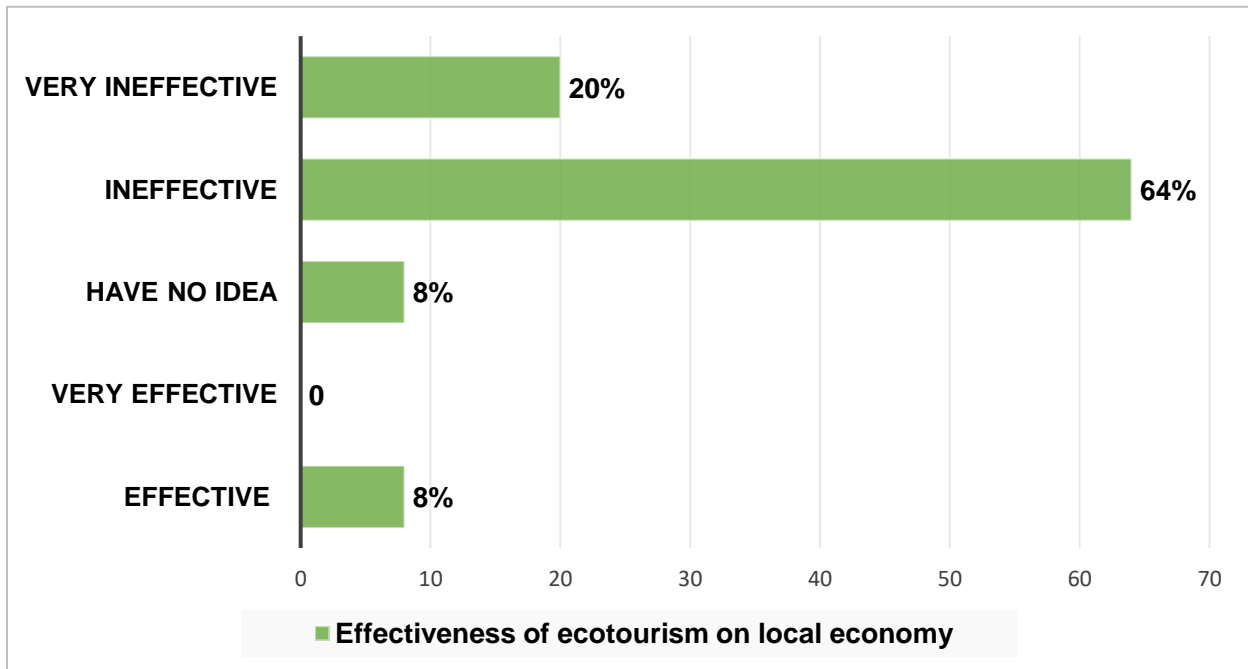


The study found that 54% of the respondents mentioned that the reserve is ineffective in providing entrepreneurial opportunities (Figure 4.19). The findings demonstrate that 20% of the respondents supported the 54% on the foregoing notion by mentioning that ecotourism is very ineffective in providing entrepreneurial opportunities. However, 16% of the respondents mentioned that ecotourism is effective when it comes to the provision of entrepreneurial skills (Figure 4.19). The findings further show that 10% of the respondents mentioned that they have no idea of whether ecotourism is effective or ineffective in providing entrepreneurial opportunities (Figure 4.19). Lastly, the findings show that there was a 0% response on whether ecotourism is very effective to entrepreneurial opportunities or not (Figure 4.19). This is because there are quite a few people with entrepreneurial skills in Nyongane Village. Literature supports these findings by mentioning that South Africa is also faced with a lack of skilled artisans. It continues to suffer a scarcity of a qualified and experienced generation to help fight against poverty (Bohlmann and Inglesi-Lotz, 2020).

#### 4.5.3. Ecotourism on the Local Economy

Generally, most nature reserves often promise their nearby communities that they will create employment whenever they have access to land that belongs to the communities around. In addition, the reserves argue that the creation of employment would be beneficial to the local economy. However, the study found the opposite of what most reserves claimed. The figure below shows the effectiveness of ecotourism on the local economy.

**Figure 4.20. Effectiveness of Ecotourism on the Local Economy**



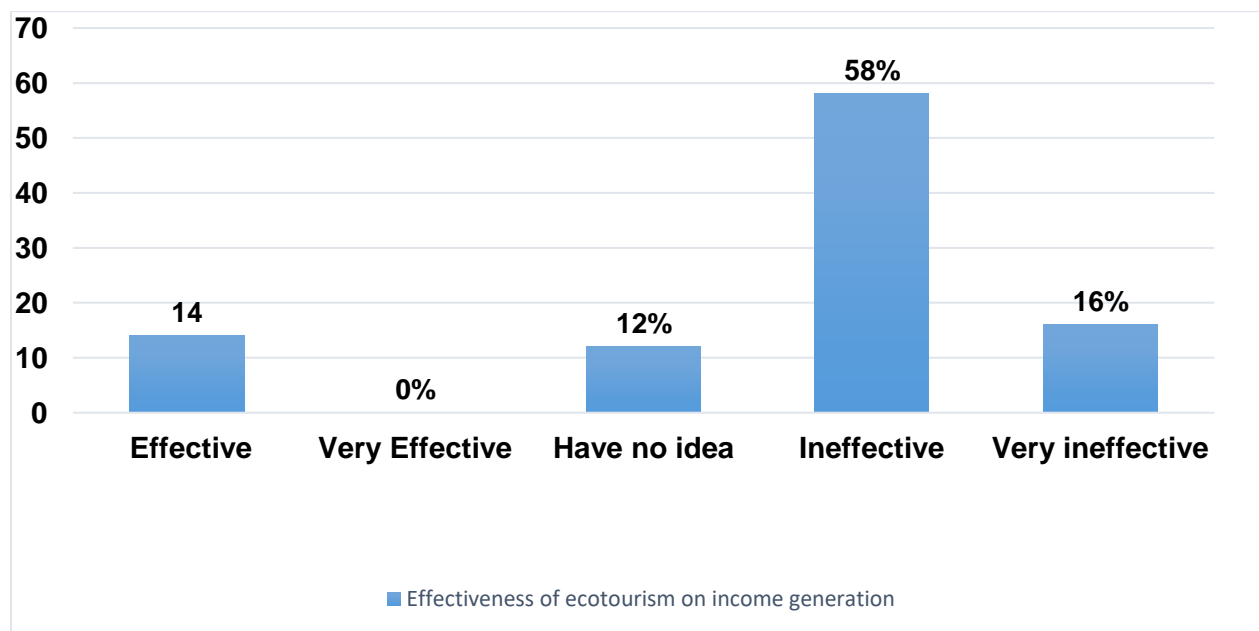
Literature reveals that ecotourism aids in foreign exchange remuneration. The remunerations also have a direct effect on the economy of the country (Walter *et al.*, 2018). It serves as an important instrument necessary for poverty alleviation. Foreign exchange remunerations make it simpler for the exportation and importation events to be supple (Meluddi and Pulina, 2016). The study found that in Nyongane Village, 64% of the respondents detested what most reserves say about uplifting the economies of local communities (Figure 4.20). To be specific, 64% of the respondents mentioned that ecotourism is ineffective when it comes to uplifting the local economy of Nyongane Village. At the same time, 20% of the respondents strongly agreed with 66% by saying that ecotourism is very ineffective in the development of the local economy of the village (Figure 4.20). The findings further demonstrate that 8% of the respondents mentioned that they have no idea whether ecotourism is effective or ineffective on the local economy of the village (Figure 4.20). Only 8% of the respondents argued that ecotourism is effective in the development of the local economy of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.20). Lastly, the figure shows that there was a 0% response on the option of

whether ecotourism is very effective in the development of the local economy (Figure 4.20). This is because the community of Nyongane Village is still faced with issues of poverty, unemployment, lack of income, among others, which in turn affects the local economy. Literature supports the findings by mentioning that the availability of employment, income generation and poverty alleviation are some of the keys to economic growth (Wilson and Letsosa, 2014).

#### 4.5.4. Ecotourism on Income Generation

The increase in the level of unemployment has a negative effect on income generation. The level of income is perceived as one of the measures of poverty.

**Figure 4.21. Effectiveness of Ecotourism on Income Generation**



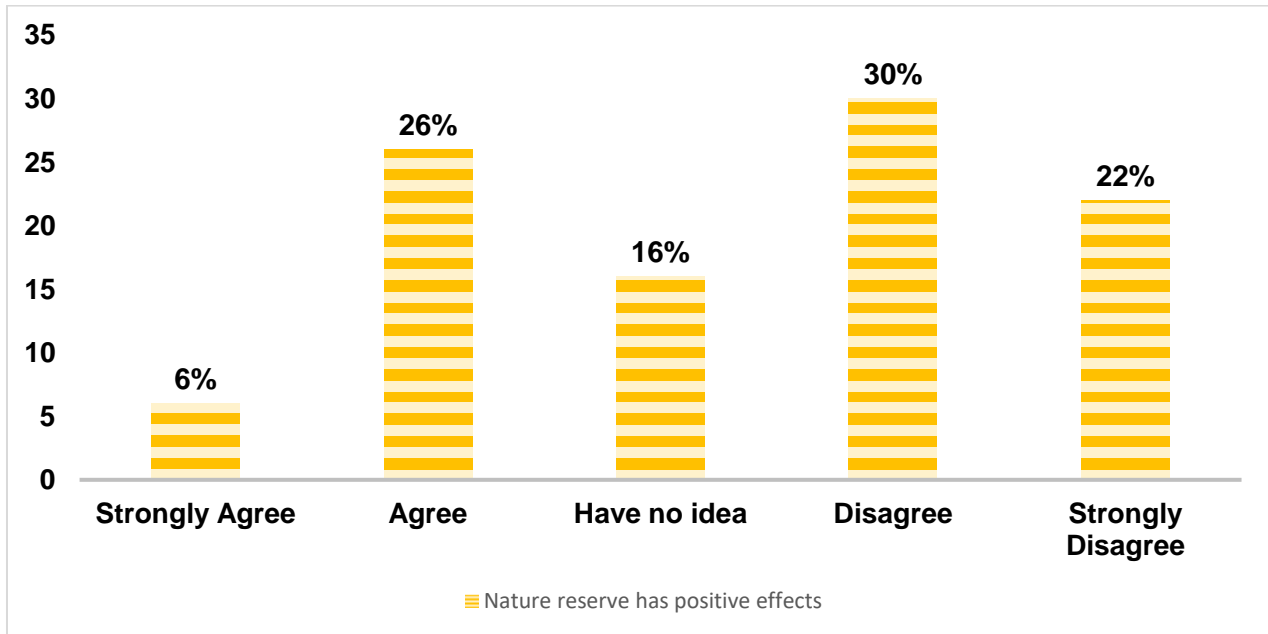
Based on literature review, nature reserves that practice ecotourism pay taxes (Van Heyningen *et al.*, 2017). These taxes could be used to improve the standards of living of disadvantaged people in local communities (Rogan, 2016). Despite that, 58% of the respondents mentioned that ecotourism is ineffective in generating income for the community of the village (Figure 4.21). The findings demonstrate that 16% of the respondents agreed with the 58% of the respondents that ecotourism is very ineffective

in helping the community members in terms of generating income (Figure 4.21). The findings proceed to demonstrate that 14% of the respondents mentioned that ecotourism is effective on income generation for the residents of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.21). The study found that 12% of the respondents stated that they do not have any idea whether ecotourism is effective or ineffective in the development of income generation for the residents of the village. Lastly, the figure shows that there was a 0% response in terms of the option of whether ecotourism is very effective to income generation (Figure 4.20). This is because most residents of Nyongane Village are still struggling with income generation. Literature supports these findings by mentioning that income poverty is still one of the serious problems in South Africa. It has gotten to a point where it evoked other problems such as urbanisation (Luthango, Reyes and Gubevu, 2017). People are fighting to leave rural areas to urban areas with hopes that they will get employed and overcome income poverty (Alba-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2021).

#### 4.5.5. The Nature Reserve's Positive Effects on the Community

Ecotourism has been regarded as a mechanism to lure financial resources that could assist the government of South Africa in improving the local economic development amongst civilisations formerly impoverished within the parks of tourist places. Corruption and nepotism are still part of the major difficulties that South Africa is faced with.

**Figure 4.22. The Nature Reserve's Positive Effects on the Community of Nyongane Village**



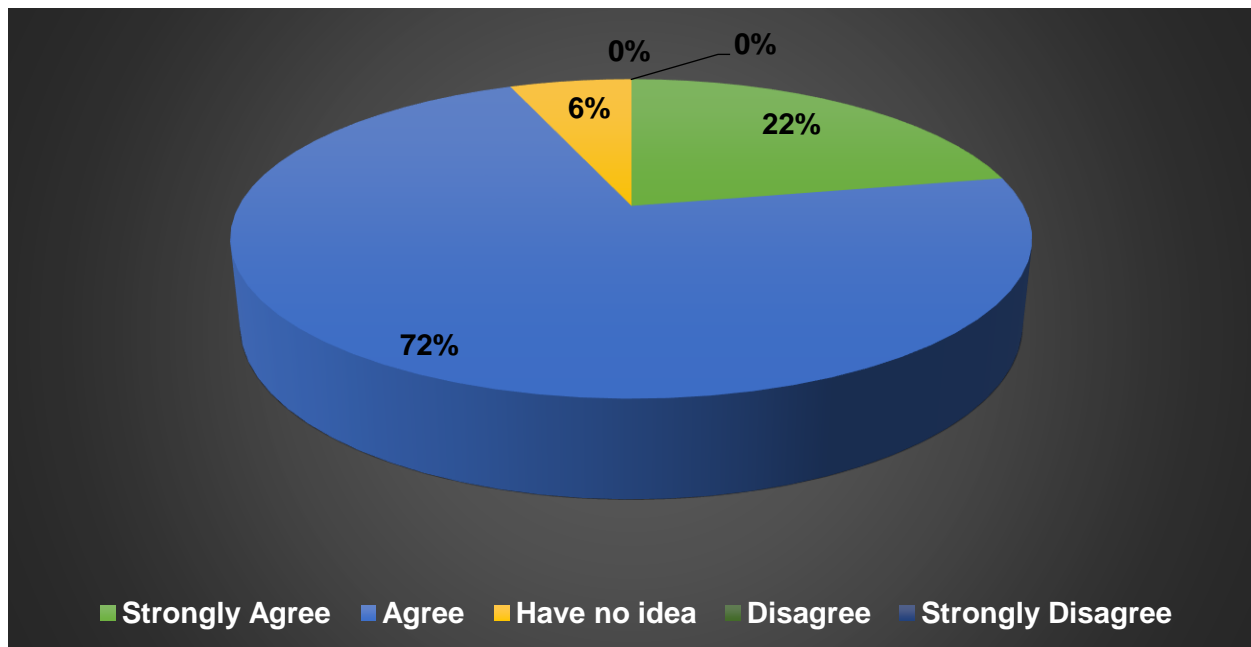
Literature believes that the basis of ecotourism is associated with poverty alleviation all over the world (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018; Ma *et al.*, 2019). It is thought to be significant in income generation, improvement of people's standards of living, sustainability of the environment, political enablement of local societies as well as in educational purposes (Osman *et al.*, 2018). Yet, the study found that 30% of the respondents mentioned that the nature reserve does not have any positive effects on the community (Figure 4.22). The findings show that 22% of the respondents strongly agreed with 30% of the respondents (Figure 4.22). However, 26% of the respondents agreed that the nature reserve does have positive effects on the community of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.22). They also emphasised that the positive effects of the reserve on the community are only to a small extent. Lastly, 6% of the respondents strongly agreed with the 26% that, the PGNR does have a positive effect on the community (Figure 4.22). Literature supports these findings by mentioning that ecotourism is significant in income generation, enhancement of society's ideals of living, sustainability of the atmosphere, radical

enablement of residential civilisations as well as in educational purposes (Osman *et al.*, 2018).

#### 4.5.6. The Nature Reserve's Negative Effect on the Community

The figure below demonstrates the percentages of the respondents who either agree, have no idea or disagree with whether the nature reserve has negative effects on the well-being of the community members of the village.

**Figure 4.23. The Nature Reserve's Negative Effect on the Community of Nyongane Village**



The land used by PGNR to undertake ecotourism activities could be used by the community of Nyongane Village to practice livelihood diversification. However, looking at the fact that the community is even restricted from having access to the resources in the reserve, the poverty level is far from being alleviated. From observations, most residents in the village are unable to practice subsistence farming in a larger extent that could even turn into commercial farming due to inadequate access to land. The findings

show that 72% of the respondents agree that the nature reserve has negative effects on the well-being of the community of Nyongane Village (Figure 4.23).

The findings show that 22% of the respondents strongly agree with the 72% by saying that the nature reserve yields a negative effect on the welfare of the residents of the village (Figure 4.23). Ecotourism is one of the factors believed to be suitable for poverty alleviation but has failed many times. It has not affected only the processes of poverty alleviation, but also other processes such as community development and sustainable development (Hasan *et al.*, 2019). Theoretically, ecotourism is believed to be of great assistance to rural communities as it is said to provide sources of livelihood diversification (Ernst and Sharmon, 2020). However, it remains a shock to find that there is still a huge number of rural communities faced with high levels of poverty.

The findings proceed to demonstrate that 6% of the respondents mentioned that they do not have any idea of whether the nature reserve has negative effects on the community members of Nyongane Village or not (Figure 4.23). Prior to the apartheid era in South Africa, black communities had access to the ecosystem without restrictions (Ocampo *et al.*, 2018). In addition, black communities used the forests to fetch firewood, traditional medicine and hunting animals (Osman *et al.*, 2018). During the apartheid era, black communities were detached compulsorily from their land to an unproductive one (Kangalawe and Noe, 2012). Parks were established with an idea of ecotourism (Jones and Lalley, 2013). The rationale behind the establishment of parks was to generate income for the economy. However, this has led to black communities losing their livelihoods as they were deprived of access to their land since it was their main source of decent standards of living (Kepe, 2016; Blackmore, 2017). After the year 1994, when the country became independent, there were policies such as RDP introduced and implemented but in reality, or practically too many communities in the country, especially those next to nature reserves are still facing high levels of poverty.

Lastly, the figure shows that there was a 0% response in terms of the option for participants who were either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (Figure 4.23). This is also supported in literature as a number of researchers voiced out their views saying



that practically ecotourism is mostly turning a blind eye on poor local communities and their livelihoods (Das and Chatterjee, 2015).

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

Chapter 4 was interpreting the findings from the participants in Nyongane Village. The findings were based on the gender of the heads of households, age of the heads of households, education category of heads of households, employment status of heads of households, occupation category of heads of households, overall income category of households, sources of additional income of households, households' access to social services, Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve's approaches to ecotourism, the community's access to resources in the reserve, the community's communication with the reserve; the reserve's communication methods with the community, ecotourism's benefits to the community, ecotourism's provision extent to education, ecotourism's provision extent to employment, ecotourism's extent to income generation, the community's participation level in the reserve, effectiveness of ecotourism on employment opportunities, effectiveness of ecotourism on entrepreneurial opportunities, effectiveness of ecotourism on local economy, effectiveness of ecotourism on income generation, the nature reserve's positive effects on the community of Nyongane Village, and the nature reserve's negative effect on the community of Nyongane Village.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter summarises the study, provides recommendations and draws a conclusion for the entire study. It thus consists of three sections, namely, summary of the study, key findings of the study and the recommendations based on the findings.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

Chapter one presented the introduction and background of the study. It proceeded to the presentation of the general and specific research questions of the study. The general research question was: 'How does ecotourism affects poverty alleviation?' The specific research questions were: 'What is the nature of ecotourism?', 'What is the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation?', 'What is the socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism?' and 'What are the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation?' The chapter mentioned the aim of the study which was to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Furthermore, it outlined the objectives of the study which were: to reveal the nature of ecotourism, to find out the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, to disclose the socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism, to investigate the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation and to investigate measures that address the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Lastly, the study discussed the research design and methodology that were used. The section focused on the research design, description of the study area, kinds of data required, target population, the unit of analysis, sampling design, data collection tools, data analysis tools, validity and reliability and the significance of the study.

The study was based in Nyongane Village under the Mbombela Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Nyongane Village is about 10 kilometers away from Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. This area is believed to be characterized by high levels of poverty (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017). This might also be due to

the problem of unemployment, illiteracy and lack of skills dominating in the village. Most houses are female-headed and there are also few houses that are children-headed. The village is characterized also by the shortage of clean water and proper sanitation. About 90% of the households are still using pit toilets with a few houses which are properly structured (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017).

The study targeted community members of Nyongane Village, Mbombela Municipality officials, the Department of Tourism and the representatives of the Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate. The unit analyzed under community members were heads of households representing families of Nyongane Village, those who engage in ecotourism in KNP (coming from Nyongane Village), the community development facilitator of Kruger National Park in Phabeni Gate and the manager from Mbombela Municipality under the Ehlanzeni District, Unit 8 of LED, Tourism and Rural Development and community development practitioner from the Department of Tourism. The Nyongane Village had about 500 households (Mbombela Local Municipality, 2017). The study sampled 10% of the households, which were 50 heads of the households using the systematic sampling design. Every 10<sup>th</sup> household in the village was requested to participate in the study. Since Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate has more than 5 sections headed by different community development facilitators, the study sampled one community development facilitator under the division of ecotourism and conservation using judgmental sampling. The study also surveyed all the 10 workers from Nyongane village.

Chapter 2 provided a discussion on findings from literature review concerning the nature of ecotourism, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in an international context. This assisted the researcher in testing different ideas against each other. It has aided the researcher to locate what other countries are saying about the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Ecotourism has the most effective ability to assist in terms of fighting against poverty across the world. It serves as an important strategy for poverty alleviation in most developing countries in terms of foreign exchange remunerations, sustainable education, tax revenue, job opportunities and

improved infrastructure. Nevertheless, most communities in developing countries are still facing socioeconomic issues such as ill-health, gender inequality, lack of effective community participation, to name but a few.

Chapter 3 provided information based on the discussion of the nature of ecotourism which covered the principles, approaches and activities of ecotourism, the role of ecotourism on poverty alleviation, the socio-economic status of communities practicing ecotourism and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in a South African context. This has brought a highlight and a clear picture of what South Africa is saying about the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. Ecotourism is believed to be a growing industry in South Africa. Theoretically, ecotourism has been argued to have the ability to create employment opportunities and provide education for local communities to help in alleviating poverty. However, the country still faces issues of inequality, lack of skills and basic services, ineffective and inefficient agricultural extension system, crime and low-income levels.

Chapter 4 provided the research findings, analyzed and interpreted the figures that illustrated the data. The chapter consisted of four themes, which were: (1) demographic profile of participants, (2) the nature of ecotourism – responses from the participants, (3) the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation – a collection of responses by the participants and (4) the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation – a synopsis of the respondents' views. The demographic profile of the participants assisted the researcher to know the gender, age, education level, employment status, occupation of the heads of households, overall income category of households, sources of additional income of households and households' access to social services.

Identifying the nature of ecotourism provided knowledge about the approaches to ecotourism employed by Phabeni Gate Nature approaches in Nyongane Village, households' access to resources in the reserve, the communication between the reserve and the community members as well as the communication methods used by the reserve to interact with the community. Finding out the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation revealed the benefits of ecotourism to the community, the extent to which

ecotourism provide education to household, the extent of ecotourism's provision to households' employment, ecotourism's extent in relation to the provision of households income generation and the communities' participation level in the reserve. Lastly, the data on the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation provided information about the effectiveness of ecotourism in creating employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, developing the local economy, aiding income generation, as well as both the positive and negative effects of nature reserves on the community of Nyongane Village.

### **5.3. Key Findings of the Study**

This section presents the findings on the nature of ecotourism, the role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation, socio-economic status of the communities practicing ecotourism and the effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village.

#### **5.3.1. The Nature of Ecotourism**

The study found that Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve uses approaches that ignore the development and participation of the community in Nyongane Village, i.e. the Industry-Orientated Approach and Physical and/or Spatial Oriented Approach to ecotourism. The former is believed to be ignoring the process of improving the standards of living of poor local communities. It promotes private ownership of nature reserves. It has been found that the approach delivers an extensive separation development of communities and the environment. The approach proceeds to put emphasis on the need to promote a bureaucratic way of decision making. It ignores the need to include local communities in decision making processes. On the other hand, the latter holds that too much attention should be put on the protection of the environment. The approach has also put emphasis on the need to pay special attention to the social, physical and environmental capacity when undertaking ecotourism. It advocated the need to focus ecotourism on spatial patterns in order to diminish negative impacts on the environment. It called for a need to raise environmental awareness while ignoring development.

The study found that the community members of Nyongane Village do not have access to resources in the reserve as they are denied the opportunity to consume resources

that are necessary for their survival. In addition, they are also denied the opportunity to participate in resource management authority. The belief is that decision making processes concerning the resources in the reserve should only include the reserve's representatives. The reserve argued that the smaller the decision-making process, the easier it becomes to take informed decisions and reach conclusions within a very short period of time. Majority of the residents from the village argued that they do not receive any form of communication from the nature reserve while others argued that they are hardly communicated with.

From observations, the PGNR (Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve) is still biased towards a certain group of people. To some extent, it is still dominated by racism. Inequality and discrimination are still a problem in many parts of Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve. The small group of residents of Nyongane Village employed during eco-tours complained about being discriminated based on gender and race during working hours. Some of the women stated that they are still denied certain job positions because of their gender. The reserve focuses more on generating profit and attracting the elite. The rich are getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. The reserve is turning a blind eye on the development of the village.

### 5.3.2. The Role of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation

Theoretically, it is believed that ecotourism educates local communities to start up local businesses that would attract tourists for the purpose of generating income (Giampiccoli, 2015). However, according to most of the respondents, ecotourism provides entrepreneurial skills to only a few community members. The provision of the entrepreneurial skills is done at a very limited scale. In addition, the residents of Nyongane Village complained that ecotourism provides more education and skills to tourists. Illiteracy is still dominant in Nyongane Village. This makes it difficult for poverty alleviation to be achieved. The majority of the residents are too old to go to school and are often unable to notice information that is useful to them. They still require guidance from learned or experienced people. In South Africa, National Parks are known to be

the main role players in providing nature-based education (Menzies, 2013). However, most residents in communities next to nature reserves do not understand ecotourism.

Ecotourism should play a significant role in poverty alleviation because it can create jobs in distant areas that profit fewer people from economic development agendas than in more crowded areas (Arriet and Chasemoris, 2015). However, the study found that majority of the community members of Nyongane Village are still without jobs, which affects their income generation. Unemployment affects not only the generation of income, but also other necessary aspects of livelihood such as food security. It is difficult for most people without employment and/or sustainable incomes to attain food security.

The study found that most schools do not have appropriate leadership, and this affects the educational system in those schools. Nepotism is dominating in terms of hiring teachers. Most teachers are hired without the necessary skills and qualifications. There are too many dropouts from schools because of lack of motivation. Most of the school dropouts mentioned that they do not see any reason to be educated because there is a high percentage of educated people who are still unemployed and live-in abject poverty.

According to literature, ecotourism provides funding that could be used by the state to improve local communities' infrastructure (Von Fintel and Fouriea, 2019). The capitals are also utilised for improving tourists' attraction areas (Graham, 2020). The study found that the village is still dominated by poor infrastructure. There are no tar roads while bridges are of poor quality. When there is heavy rain, the residents find it hard to use bridges to cross from one place to another. They sometimes have to take off their shoes and some of their clothes to cross the bridge(s).

### 5.3.3. The Socio-economic Issues of Communities Practicing Ecotourism

The study found that the Nyongane Village is still facing high levels of poverty. Lack of skills remains a problem in the village and across South Africa. This has escalated to a point where most people in the country are unable to occupy different job positions, which ultimately hinders poverty alleviation. Majority of employers plotted the difficulties of filling many job vacancies due to the inadequacy of necessary skills. The standards

of living of the residents of Nyongane Village are both unacceptable and unpleasant. Most of the residents are unable to sustain themselves. In addition, their living conditions evince the fact that the goal of zero-hunger is still a farfetched dream.

From observations, most residents in the village are unable to practice subsistence farming in a larger extent which could even turn into commercial farming due to inadequate access to land. Effective and efficient agricultural systems in the village are still a dream that is not coming to reality. The income level of the majority is very low. People are heavily reliant on social grants. The South African government still battles the imbalances caused by apartheid in workplaces. There are still employees who are discriminated based on gender and race in workplaces. There are still women who are not allowed to do certain jobs because they are believed to be without necessary capabilities.

The study found that most heads of households in Nyongane Village are unable to provide basic needs for their families such as food and clean water. They mostly depend on social grants to run their households and maintain their children. People from rural areas are exposed to unclean water as a result of not having access to good quality water pipes. The community members end up depending on water from the rivers which is unhealthy because the same water they draw to cook and drink is also used by some people to wash their laundry. Children play in the rivers and eventually, the water gets contaminated. Having to survive on social grants and provisions from the state is quite a challenge because the money is usually not even enough to cater for their daily needs. This forces them to depend on hand-outs and drop-in centres from which they sometimes receive expired food that tampers with their health.

#### 5.3.4. The Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation

The study found that during eco-travels, tourists tend to visit the Nyongane Village and cause problems such as pollution, destroying the residents' areas conserved for spiritual purposes, pick flowers planted for adornment at yards as well as stealing other material. According to literature, during eco-tours, ecotourism strives to ensure protection of sacred places as well as exploring spiritual customs and or assist in terms of preserving cultural traditions (Gardyne *et al.*, 2005; Korth, 2016). Ecotourism enable



tourists to obtain information about communities across South Africa but the study found that they do not even take care and or respect the Nyongane Village. They act irresponsibly because they paid for the eco-tour. The residents of Nyongane Village lodged a number of complaints that majority of the employees hired at Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve to facilitate eco-tours are not residents of the Nyongane Village. Unemployment is still high in the village. According to (figure 5.18), 62% of the respondents stated that ecotourism does not provide employment opportunities to the village's residents and this was supported by 16% more of the respondents who stated that ecotourism is ineffective when it comes to providing employment.

The study found that ecotourism exploits the natural resources of the country in an effort to satisfy tourists, and it tends to benefit rich people and foreign investors than the local residents. However, since some of the strategies to alleviate poverty are access to education and creating employment opportunities, the introduction and practice of ecotourism should assist in fighting against poverty.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

The study found several effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation. As a result, it came up with recommendations that could help in addressing the effects of ecotourism in poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village. The recommendations are:

##### **5.4.1. Purifying the Nature of Ecotourism**

The study recommends that PGNR should adopt the Community-Based Approach to ecotourism which stresses the need for the development of the poor local community of Nyongane Village and emphasises that community members should be involved in ecotourism matters affecting them. Ecotourism should provide education not only to tourists, but also to the people living in Nyongane Village. The PGNR representatives should ensure that ecotourism creates a balance between the bio-centric and anthropocentric views for the purpose of ensuring long-term sustainability. Experiences should not be provided to tourists only, but also to local communities. This will aid in the provision of full and important knowledge concerning ecotourism as well as serving as a

way of promoting environmental awareness. This approach embraces individual initiatives in the local communities and fosters sustainable use and collective responsibility in matters involving both protected areas and local communities. With this approach to ecotourism, local communities will share some of their daily activities with the tourists.

Access to the reserve should be given to community members with continuous monitoring to avoid a situation where community members might start poaching or overusing the resources. Providing the community with access to resources in the reserve will enable them to learn the importance of conservation. This will be advantageous in that community members will not feel excluded. Admittedly, giving the residents of Nyongane Village full access to the reserve could cause overconsumption and/or exploitation of the resources. Therefore, the reserve should ensure that access to the reserve is continuously monitored and that there should be a specific time when the residents are given access.

The study also recommends that Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve should develop continuous communication with the community of Nyongane Village. Communication should not be done through passive participation and consultation, but through interactive participation. Communication channels between the reserve and the Nyongane Village residents should be made available and easily accessible. Meetings between the representatives of the reserve and community members should be scheduled and held. This will create a robust relationship between the reserve and the residents of the village.

The study recommends the need for the reserve to host team building programmes where white people meet non-white people and relate. It will establish good relations between white people and non-whites. The PGNR representatives and local government should stress the need to prioritise unity among community members of the village. Job positions should not be given based on gender but on skills and experiences.

#### 5.4.2. Strengthening Ecotourism's Role on Poverty Alleviation

The study recommends the need for the reserve to extend its skills development channels to accommodate the residents from Nyongane Village. Skills development programmes should be hosted by the reserve in Nyongane Village at least once in 6 months. This will enable most people to be independent when it comes to generating income for livelihood diversification. The nature reserve should ensure that ecotourism provides skills that can help the residents of Nyongane Village to have improved standards of living. This will also assist the residents in developing the necessary skills required for certain job positions.

The study recommends that the reserve should consider the residents from the village when it comes to the provision of education and skills. This can be done by hosting programmes strictly designed for educational purposes. The PGNR representatives should make sure that ecotourism provides education to the residents of the village about the uses and benefits of natural resources. This could bring about sustainable development.

The PGNR should allow local communities to participate in the decision making process and also empower them to meet their basic needs. When people are empowered, they develop a sense of ownership and independence. They start to own businesses and projects that help them generate income required to have decent standards of living. Therefore, the consideration of community participation should be seen as a priority at all times. This will also create a healthy relationship between the nature reserve and the community members of Nyongane Village. Allowing the residents to participate in the reserves, particularly in matters affecting them, will enable the reserve to know the important resources the community needs in order to improve their standards of living.

#### 5.3.3. Reducing the Socio-Economic Issues

The study recommends that PGNR, private companies, local government and the Department of Tourism should work together to help the community of Nyongane Village to fight poverty through programmes such as Corporate Social Responsibility, food parcels, Skills Development Programs, among others. This could assist in reducing

malnourishment brought by food insecurity. It is recommended that these entities come up with other ways of instilling community independence in food security and other aspects. This can be achieved through the creation of more jobs and provision of skills development programmes with stipends provided.

The study recommends that the traditional leader, local municipality, Department of Tourism and Phabeni Gate Nature Reserve should work hand-in-hand to try and share a portion of land with the community members. The residents of Nyongane Village need operative and well-organised extension structure to participate in subsistence farming. This could also develop production schemes and inspire the community's enthusiasm towards income generation. The purpose of agriculture extension should be to rise the food production and spread the reimbursements of improved farming structures widely. Training programmes, with regard to management, should be provided to assist in addressing diverse rural development difficulties innovatively. Improving land policy in matters revolving around poverty alleviation and issues of land tenure in communities should be seriously considered instead of being taken for granted. South Africa should revisit and review its land reform policy and make adjustments that take into the consideration the development of local communities.

#### 5.3.4. Addressing Ecotourism's Effects on Poverty Alleviation

The study recommends that the reserve and the Department of Tourism should make sure that ecotourism is only undertaken inside the fence or borders of PGNR. This will help in keeping the environments of the local people safe. No visitors will be picking faunas and stealing domestic animals from the community of Nyongane Village. The local communities' sacred places will be left alone without any disturbances. In other words, during eco-tours, the protection of sacred places as well as the preservation of spiritual customs and cultural traditions will be ensured. In this way, tourists will also get to respect local communities across the world. Cultural awareness should be built whilst ensuring that physical, behavioural, psychological, and social impacts are reduced.

The study recommends that the PGNR should hire more people from the Nyongane Village. Some of the residents do not have the necessary skills required for certain

positions, but through skills development and training programmes, the reserve will be able to provide employment opportunities to the residents. Ecotourism should offer work opportunities by spreading and accumulating earnings that could be of assistance in reducing the exposure of the deprived. Internships and learnerships should be provided to the residents of Nyongane Village with the aim of developing their skills and providing the required experiences for certain job positions. The representatives of PGNR should reduce the number of employees hired at the reserve who are not from the village. If the representatives of the reserve adhere to the reserve's mission, the negative effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village will be reduced.

Ecotourism should generate income that can improve the living standards at Nyongane Village. Priority should be placed on the poor local community when acquiring benefits from ecotourism. Moreover, ecotourism should strive to improve the lives of the poor community members of Nyongane Village. The financial benefits or resources obtained by the nature reserve should be shared with the community members of Nyongane Village. They could be shared by improving infrastructure such as roads in the village, providing skills development programmes regularly to the community members and improving health and education facilities as well as providing proper sanitation, among others. The government of South Africa should also make sure that the tax revenue generated from nature reserves is indeed used to improve the standards of living of the local community of Nyongane Village.

## **5.5. Conclusion**

Generally, most nature reserves often promise their nearby communities that they will create employment whenever they have access to land that belongs to the communities around. The study found numerous negative effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village. For instance, during eco-travels, tourists tend to visit the village and cause problems such as pollution, destroying the residents' areas conserved for spiritual purposes, pick flowers planted for adornment at yards as well as stealing other material; ecotourism provides more education and skills to the tourists; the PGNR is still biased towards a certain group of people. However, the study made recommendations

that can help to address the negative effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village and also improve the positive effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in the village. It was recommended that the PGNR representatives and local government should stress the need to prioritise unity among community members of the village, the need for the reserve to consider community participation at least once in 6 months in the reserve, and the need for the reserve and the Department of Tourism to make sure that ecotourism is only undertaken inside the fence or borders of PGNR. Overall, the residents of Nyongane Village do not benefit from ecotourism and their standards of living have been negatively affected. Lastly, the study concluded by stating that the negative effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village can be dealt with if the recommendations detailed in this study are implemented.

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## APPENDIX A: CONSENT LETTER TO MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



University of Limpopo

School of Economics and Management

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 4164, Fax: 0866219636, Email: [millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za](mailto:millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za)

**To:** Whom it May Concern

Mbombela Local Municipality

**From :** Dr TM Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer

**Date:** November 02, 2020

**Subject:** Request to Conduct Field Work for Masters Research Project

Ms P.T. Mnisi is a registered for the Degree Master of Development Studies (Planning and Management) offered at the University of Limpopo in the Department of Development Planning and Management. To successfully complete the Degree, Ms Mnisi has to complete a research project which is in the form of a Dissertation as a prerequisite for the qualification. I, therefore, humbly request that you assist her by granting permission to conduct field work and collect data in your Municipality/institution/village as her area of study. Please note that the information collected by the student during the field work will solely be used for academic purposes as prescribed by ethical considerations that are approved by the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

The student's details and the title of the study are as follows:

**Student Name:** PEARL THOBEKA MNISI

**Research Title:** THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Thank you very much

Signed: Dr TM Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer Department of Development Planning & Management

## APPENDIX B: CONSENT LETTER TO DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM



University of Limpopo

School of Economics and Management

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 4164, Fax: 0866219636, Email: [millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za](mailto:millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za)

**To:** Whom it May Concern Department of Tourism

**From :** Dr T.M. Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer

**Date:** November 02, 2020

**Subject:** Request to Conduct Field Work for Masters Research Project

Ms P.T. Mnisi is registered for the Degree Master of Development Studies (Planning and Management) offered at the University of Limpopo in the Department of Development Planning and Management. To successfully complete the Degree, Ms Mnisi has to complete a research project which is in the form of a Dissertation as a prerequisite for the qualification. I, therefore, humbly request that you assist her by granting permission to conduct field work and collect data in your Department as her area of study. Please note that the information collected by the student during the field work will solely be used for academic purposes as prescribed by ethical considerations that are approved by the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

The student's details and the title of the study are as follows:

**Student Name:** PEARL THOBEKA MNISI

**Research Title:** THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Thank you very much

Signed: Dr TM Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer Department of Development Planning & Management



## APPENDIX C: CONSENT LETTER TO KRUGER NATIONAL PARK IN PHABENI GATE



University of Limpopo

School of Economics and Management

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 4164, Fax: 0866219636, Email: [millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za](mailto:millicent.ramoroka@ul.ac.za)

**To:** Whom it May Concern Kruger National Park in Phabeni Gate

**From :** Dr TM Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer

**Date:** November 02, 2020

**Subject:** Request to Conduct Field Work for Masters Research Project

Ms P.T. Mnisi is a registered for the Degree Master of Development Studies (Planning and Management) offered at the University of Limpopo in the Department of Development Planning and Management. To successfully complete the Degree, Ms Mnisi has to complete a research project which is in the form of a Dissertation as a prerequisite for the qualification. I, therefore, humbly request that you assist her by granting permission to conduct field work and collect data in your reserve as her area of study. Please note that the information collected by the student during the field work will solely be used for academic purposes as prescribed by ethical considerations that are approved by the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

The student's details and the title of the study are as follows:

**Student Name:** PEARL THOBEKA MNISI

**Research Title:** THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Thank you very much

Signed: Dr TM Ramoroka

Supervisor and Senior Lecturer Department of Development Planning & Management

**APPENDIX D: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NYONGANE VILLAGE, 2020/2021**  
**on**  
**THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION**



This questionnaire is designed to survey heads of households representing families of Nyongane Village and those who engage in ecotourism at KNP coming from Nyongane Village on the research project titled: “The effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village” The research project is registered with the Department of Development Planning and Management, University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus. Please assist by providing information required in this questionnaire. We guarantee you anonymity and confidentiality of sensitive information. The information will be used solely for academic purposes.

**Instruction!!!**

Please mark with an **X** where applicable and where there are brackets ( ) state the number of household based on the question

**Section A: Demographic Profile of heads of household representing their households and Socio-economic status of communities practicing ecotourism**

1. Gender component of the household

1	2
Male (s)	Female (s)
( )	( )

2. Age categories of the households

1	2	3
18-35	36-53	54-above
( )	( )	( )

3. Education category of the households

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No formal education	Crèche	Abet	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Other
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

If Other, Specify.....

4. Employment status of the household

1	2	3	4
Employed	Unemployed	Student	Other
( )	( )	( )	( )

If other specify.....

5. Overall Income category of the household

1	2	3	4	5	6
0-1200	1201-2400	2401-3600	3601-4800	4801-6000	6001 and above

6. Type of occupation

1	2	3	4	5
Education and training	Hospitality and tourism	Domestic Work	Manufacturing	None
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

If other specify.....

7. Source of additional income

1	2	3	4
Art crafting	Social grant	Remittances	Other
( )	( )	( )	( )

If Other, Specify.....

8. Which social services do you have access to?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Healthcare and education facilities	Healthcare and proper sanitation	Education and Proper sanitation	Healthcare, education facilities and proper sanitation	Other
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	-------

If Other, Specify.....

**Section B: The nature of ecotourism**

9. Which approach is used to undertake ecotourism in Kruger National Park, Phabeni gate?

1	2	3	4
Industry-Oriented Approach (promotes privately-ownership of nature reserves and ignores development)	Physical or Spatial Oriented Approach (put emphasis on the need to pay special attention to the social, physical and environmental capacity when undertaking ecotourism)	Community-Based Approach (stressed the need for the development of the poor local communities)	Other

If Other, Specify.....

10. What resources do you have access to in the reserve?

1	2	3	4
Flora	fauna	Both flora	None

		and fauna	
--	--	--------------	--

If Other, Specify.....

11. How often does the management of the nature reserve communicate information with you?

1	2	3
Often	Never	Not often

12. How do you and the nature reserve communicate?

1	2	3	4
Email	Telephonically	Community Meetings	Other

If Other, Specify.....

**Section C: The role of ecotourism in poverty alleviation**

13. Which of the following does ecotourism provide?

1	2	3	4	5
Education	Employment	Help generate income	Entrepreneurial skills	None

If other, please specify.....

14. To what extent does ecotourism provide education to the community members of Nyongane Village?

1	2	3	4
No extent	Small extent	Large extent	Have no idea

15. To what extent does ecotourism provide employment to the community members of Nyongane Village?

1	2	3	4
No extent	Small extent	Large extent	Have no idea

16. To what extent does ecotourism help the community members of Nyongane Village to generate income?

1	2	3	4
No extent	Small extent	Large extent	Have no idea

17. What is the participation level of the community in decision making process at the reserve?

1	2	3	4
Passive	Interactive	Consultation	Other

**Section D: The effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation**



18. How effective is ecotourism on employment opportunities?

1	2	3	4	5
Very effective	Effective	Have no idea	Ineffective	Very ineffective

19. How effective is the ecotourism on entrepreneur opportunities?

1	2	3	4	5
Very effective	Effective	Have no idea	Ineffective	Very ineffective

20. How is the effectiveness of ecotourism on improving the local economy of the village?

1	2	3	4	5
Very effective	Effective	Have no idea	Ineffective	Very ineffective

21. How is the effectiveness of ecotourism on income generation for the village?

1	2	3	4	5
Very effective	Effective	Have no idea	Ineffective	Very ineffective

22. How agreeable/disagreeable are you that the nature reserve has positive effects on poverty alleviation in the village?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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23. How agreeable/disagreeable are you that the nature reserve has negative effects on poverty alleviation in the village?

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree

**Section E: Recommendations**

24. What could be improved on your Social Services?

1	2	3	4
Healthcare facilities	Education facilities	Proper sanitation	Other

If other, specify.....

25. In your opinion, what could be done to enhance the positive effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation?

.....  
 .....

26. In your opinion, what could be done and by whom to address the negative effects of ecotourism in the village?

**Thank you for your time.**

**APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
FACILITATOR OF KRUGER NATIONAL PARK IN PHABENI GATE.**

**On**

## THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



This interview schedule is designed to survey the community development facilitator of Kruger National Park in Phabeni Gate, “The effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village”. The research project is registered with the Department of Development Planning and Management, University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus. We guarantee anonymity and that the results of the survey will be used for academic purposes only.

1. What is the rationale behind Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate?

2. Which approach (s) do you employ to undertake ecotourism?
3. Do you consider community participation during ecotours?
4. What role do community members play in the management and operations of the reserve?
5. How would you describe your relationship with the Nyongane Village community members?
6. How do the community members of Nyongane Village benefit from the ecotourism?
7. How does Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, affect the employment status of Nyongane Village?
8. How does Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, affect the income status of Nyongane Village?
9. How does Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, affect the entrepreneurial opportunities of Nyongane Village?
10. How would you describe the effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism on poverty alleviation in the village?
11. In your opinion, what could be done to enhance the positive effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism on poverty alleviation?
12. In your opinion, what could be done and by whom to address the negative effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism in the village?

**Thank you for your time!**

**APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE MANAGER FROM MBOMBELA MUNICIPALITY UNDER THE EHLANZENI DISTRICT, UNIT 8 OF LED, TOURISM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.**

**on**

## THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



This interview schedule is designed to survey the manager from Mbombela Municipality under The Ehlanzeni District, Unit 8 of LED, Tourism and Rural Development, “The effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village”. The research project is registered with the Department of Development Planning and Management, University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus. We guarantee anonymity and that the results of the survey will be used for academic purposes only.

1. Which approach (s) do you employ to undertake ecotourism?
2. How would you describe your relationship with the Nyongane Village community members and KNP?

3. What role do you play in the management and operations of the reserve?
4. Would you say that the nature reserve is making a difference based on the current standards of living of the community members in Nyongane Village?
5. How does Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate, affect the education status of Nyongane Village?
6. How does Kruger National Park, Phabeni Gate affect the employment status of Nyongane Village?
7. How would you describe the effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism on poverty alleviation in the village?
8. In your opinion, what could be done to enhance the positive effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism on poverty alleviation?
9. In your opinion, what could be done and by whom to address the negative effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism in the village?

**Thank you for your time!!!**

**APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
PRACTITIONER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM.  
ON**

## THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



This interview schedule is designed to survey the community development facilitator of Kruger National Park in Phabeni Gate, “The effects of ecotourism on poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village”. The research project is registered with the Department of Development Planning and Management, University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus. We guarantee anonymity and that the results of the survey will be used for academic purposes only.

1. Which approach (s) is employed to undertake ecotourism at KNP?
2. Is community participation considered during ecotours?



3. What role do you as the Department of Tourism play to make sure that the reserve ecotourism responds positively to poverty alleviation in Nyongane Village?
4. How is the effectiveness of ecotourism on improving the local economy of the village?
5. How is the effectiveness of ecotourism on income generation and employment creation for the village?
6. How would you describe the effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism on poverty alleviation in the village?
7. In your opinion, what could be done to enhance the positive effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate and ecotourism on poverty alleviation?
8. In your opinion, what could be done and by whom to address the negative effects of KNP, Phabeni Gate, and ecotourism in the village?

**Thank you for your time!!!**

**APPENDIX H: FACULTY APPROVAL LETTER**



University of Limpopo  
Faculty of Management and Law  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DEAN

Private Bag Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 2558, Fax: (015) 268 2873, Email: [frikkie.ponelis@ul.ac.za](mailto:frikkie.ponelis@ul.ac.za)

10 February 2020

Mnisi P.T MDEV  
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT  
MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT (Planning and Management)

Dear Mnisi P.T,

FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I have pleasure in informing you that your Masters proposal served at the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee meeting on 04 February 2010 and your title was approved as follows:

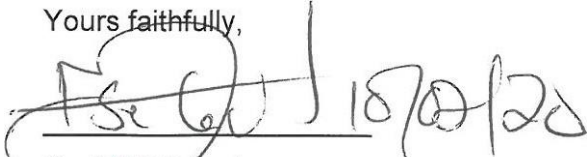
"The Effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation in Nyongane Village, Mpumalanga Province".

Note the following: The study

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
Requires no ethical clearance Proceed with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	X

Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	
--	--

Yours faithfully,

  
Prof MP Sebola

Chairperson: Faculty Higher Degrees Committee

CC: Supervisor, Dr T.M Ramoroka, HOD, Mrs M.D Mathebula and Acting Director of School of economics and Management, Prof M.P Sebola.

## APPENDIX I: ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL LETTER



**University of Limpopo**  
Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 3766, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 10 December 2020

**PROJECT NUMBER:** TREC/439/2020: PG

**PROJECT:**

**Title:** The effects of Ecotourism on Poverty Alleviation in Nyongane Village, Mpumalanga Province  
**Researcher:** PT Mnisi  
**Supervisor:** Dr TM Ramoroka  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** N/A  
**School:** Economics and Management  
**Degree:** Master of Development in Planning and Management

**PROF P MASOKO**

**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

*Finding solutions for Africa*

## APPENDIX J: EDITORIAL LETTER

### UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO TURFLOOP CAMPUS

Faculty: Humanities  
School: Languages and Communication Studies  
Department: Languages



Private Bag X1106  
Sovenga  
0727  
Tel: +27 15 268 3564  
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E-Mail: [moffat.sebola@ul.ac.za](mailto:moffat.sebola@ul.ac.za)

19 July 2021

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to certify that I have edited a Research Proposal entitled: **THE EFFECTS OF ECOTOURISM ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NYONGANE VILLAGE, MBOMBELA MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE** by **PEARL THOBEKA MNISI**.

I trust you will find the editing quality in order.

Best regards

*Sebola, M*

MOFFAT SEBOLA (LANGUAGE EDITOR)

