

Community-based ecotourism: Its socio-economic impacts at Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary, Ghana

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How to cite:

Eshun, G. and Tonto, J.N.P., 2014: Community-based ecotourism: Its socio-economic impacts at Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary, Ghana. In: Rogerson, C.M. and Szymańska, D. editors, *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-economic Series*, No. 26, Toruń: Nicolaus Copernicus University, pp. 67–81. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2478/bog-2014-0045>

Abstract. There is a lacuna in literature from Western Africa on how issue of participation influence socio-economic impacts at ecotourism destinations. This paper investigates the socio-economic impacts of ecotourism based on Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary in Ghana. The paper is based on primary data generated from Boabeng and Fiema communities. Seventy mainly opened-ended questionnaires were administered face-to-face to purposively selected residents from the two communities, alongside, in-depth interviews with the management of the Sanctuary and focus group with purposively selected individuals from Boabeng and Fiema. The study reveals that the residents of the communities face burgeoning challenges such as shrinking livelihood options, inadequate involvement of community in the ecotourism, poor state of the visitor centre, inadequate government support and poor roads.

Article details:

Received: 1 August 2014
Revised: 30 August 2014
Accepted: 2 September 2014

Key words:

Community-based ecotourism,
socio-economic impact,
community participation,
Boabeng-Fiema,
Ghana.

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1. Introduction

The International Ecotourism Society (2005) defines ecotourism as, “*a responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and sustains the wellbeing of the local people*”. Ecotourism’s potential to contribute to conservation and development is increasingly gaining the attention of international and national financial donor agencies (Eshun, 2011). Within the ecotourism market has emerged community-based ecotourism (CBE) as a mutually-reinforcing relationship between conservation, livelihoods and cultural preservation (Lash, 2003; Kiss, 2004; Weaver, Lawton, 2007; Fennell, 2008; Honey, 2008; Hoole, 2010; Stone, Rogerson, 2011; Eshetu, 2014; Tran, Walter, 2014). Kiss (2004) suggests that there are three types of CBEs. First, is the CBE that is owned wholly by a community. Second, is the CBE that is owned by families or groups in a community, where they all pull their assets together to ensure the operation of the ecotourism enterprise for the benefit of all the participating members. Third, is the CBE that is partly owned by a community and the government, NGO or private investors. Overall, Kiss (2004) states that 32 out of the 55 World Bank-financed projects that supported conservation efforts in Africa between 1988 and 2003 included CBEs.

Ghana remains a pioneer in the field of CBE in Western Africa in terms of both alleviating poverty and curbing resource depletion (Eshun, Page, 2013). Tourism remains Ghana’s fourth largest foreign exchange earner after merchandise exports—gold, cocoa and foreign remittances (MoT, 2012). Ghana’s tourism economy is growing at 15% per annum and provides about 47,000 direct jobs and 115,000 indirect jobs in 2004 (MoT, 2012). The 2013 Tourism and Travel Competitive Index Report ranks Ghana

in 13th place in Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of its competitiveness in travel and tourism. Tourism earnings in Ghana, stood at US\$2.19bn, contributing 2.3% to the country’s GDP in 2011 (MoT, 2012). Ghana passed the one million mark in international arrivals in 2011. Foreign tourism is concentrated in eight markets – Nigeria (19%), the USA (13%), UK (9%), Cote d’Ivoire (5%), India (3%), Germany (3%), South Africa (3%), and the Netherlands (3%)— which comprised 58% of all foreign arrivals in 2011 (MoT, 2012). Also, Ghana ranks among the top 25% of African countries with the greatest diversity of wildlife. In 1992, the country endorsed the Convention on Biodiversity, and through Legislative Instrument 282, established 15 wildlife protected areas, which extend to more than 38,000 km², i.e. 16% of the country’s land area; outside the protected areas, an estimated 4,000 km² of forests still exist (Eshun, 2011). Protected areas continue to be the bedrock of ecotourism development in most developing countries (Akama, Kieti, 2007; Sweeting, 2012). According to Eshun (2011), three types of ecotourism market exist in Ghana namely, state-led ecotourism, CBE and private-owned ecotourism. The state-led ecotourism ventures are solely under the control of the Wildlife Division, while the CBE seeks 100% community-control.

Gilbert (2007) argues that ecotourism has both positive and negative ramifications, thus local communities who bear the brunt of such projects should be at the core of ecotourism analysis. However, existing research in Ghana largely overlooks how the issue of participation influences socio-economic development impacts at eco-destinations. Boabeng Fiema Monkey Sanctuary (BFMS) is the only place in Africa where the two different species of monkeys exist in large numbers and co-exist harmoniously with humans in the Boabeng and Fie-

ma villages since the 1830s. The Sanctuary is home to 200 Colobus and 500 Mona monkeys and also 249 plant species including trees, lianas and ground vegetation. The creation of the Sanctuary has led to an increase in numbers of the monkeys (Saj, Sicotte, 2001). Against this backcloth, the paper selected BFMS as the study area, and specifically teases out issues of participation and socio-economic development. The remaining part of the paper is divided into four interlinked sections. The next section reviews literature related to issues of participation and the impacts of ecotourism development. This is followed by a discussion of methodological issues. The third section analyses the results and discussion, drawing on issues of participation, economic benefits and challenges facing ecotourism at BFMS. The final section highlights areas for further research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Participation Issues in Ecotourism

In 1969 Arnstein proposed an eight-level ladder of participation namely; manipulation, therapy—depicting non-participation; informing, consultation, placation, partnership—depicting tokenism and delegated power and citizen control—depicting citizen power. This contribution highlighted the layers of power at the core of participation. These eight categories have been simplified into three categories of manipulative participation, citizen tokenism and true participation (Marturano, Gosling, 2007). Manipulative participation creates a false sense of participation by just informing locals of decisions and actions taken. For example, Hoole (2010) showed that 43% of the villagers of Ehi-rovipuka Conservancy in Namibia did not know how the conservancy boundaries had been formed. Citizen tokenism indicates the level of participation where locals are made to participate in decisions and activities that do not change the decisions and actions already put forward by central authority. Ultimately, issues of local participation are geared towards true participation—where locals assume full managerial authority over the projects in their community (Scheyvens, 1999; Mowforth, Munt, 2003; Zapata et al., 2014).

The meaning of ‘community participation’ in conservation and development discourses, however, is increasingly contested (Scheyvens, 1999; Tosun, 2000; Lash, 2003; Mowforth, Munt, 2003; Kiss, 2004; Cater, 2006; Eshun, 2011; Yeboah, 2013). On community participation, Cline-Cole (1995) depicts it as an organized effort to increase control over resources and regulative institutions on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control. Kiss (2004) adds that local communities have both the right and obligation to be involved in the planning and implementation processes of tourism projects in their localities since they have to live permanently with its social and environmental impacts.

Tosun (2000) classifies community participation into three types namely; spontaneous, coercive and induced participation. Spontaneous participation provides full managerial responsibility and authority to the host community. Induced community participation allow locals to have a say in tourism development process, but final decision rests with more powerful actors such as government agencies and multinational companies—induced participation is top-down. Coercive participation is a manipulative attempt to avert potential and actual opposition to tourism development by educating the locals on the introduction of tourism. The crux of coercive participation is that local participation in conservation and development initiatives is not desirable because it makes the project formulation and implementation less efficient and laborious. Thus Cater (2006: 31) opines that popular participation in tourism “*is used as a ‘hegemonic’ device to secure compliance to, and control by, existing power structures*”. Lash (2005:27) cautions that in ecotourism, “*the most influential voice is best given to local residents, in order for success to occur*”.

Scheyvens (1999) forwards two viewpoints which impede local involvement in tourism. The first argument surrounds the heterogeneity in communities because of different kinds of people, often with unequal positions and different aspirations to participate in tourism. The second argument holds that communities often lack information, resources and power, which makes it especially difficult to reach the market. Tosun (2000) also presents three limitations to local participation namely; operational, structural and cultural limitations. The operation-

al limitations include the centralization of tourism administration which makes it difficult for locals to become involved as well as a lack of coordination due to fragmentation in the tourism industry. Structural limitations highlight the attitudes of professionals who are frequently unwilling to negotiate with locals, or locals are not in the position to negotiate with them properly due to lack of human and financial resources. The issue of cultural limitations relates to the low level of awareness of the local community concerning the social-cultural, economic and political consequences of tourism development.

As a counter to mass tourism, ecotourism is touted as providing better sectoral linkages, reducing revenue leakage and engendering sustainable development (Page, Connell, 2006; Holden, 2008). A shift in the ecotourism niche-market towards addressing issues of revenue leakage from eco-destinations and local participation is the emergence of CBE. It must be understood that CBE has both direct and indirect participants and direct and indirect beneficiaries. Direct participants in CBEs include the tourism management committee and the actual workers involved in the CBEs. Indirect participants include the broader community who selects the management committee and those who were once dependent on the natural resources (Sproule, 2006). Direct beneficiaries include employees including guides, craft producers, and committee members, while indirect beneficiaries include the wider community as recipients of projects funded through tourism (Wearing, Neil, 2009).

2.2. Ecological Impacts of Ecotourism

Eco-destinations, be they a whole country such as Belize and Costa Rica, or portions of countries such as particular eco-destinations in Ecuador, Kenya and South Africa, seek adherence to international discourses on biodiversity loss prevention and correspondingly anticipate growth in terms of a eco-/tourists and revenue. Ecotourism 'success' stories range from Rwanda's mountain gorillas, to Ecuador's Galapagos Islands and to Fiji's Koroyanitu Development Project, Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE, Nepal's Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Nepal, and the Community Baboon Sanctuary in Belize

(Lash, 2003; Fennell, 2008; Honey, 2008). Indeed, it is argued that properly managed eco-destinations can acquire legal and financial power, and can help either to ameliorate the hardship at the local community-level, or heighten their existing livelihood strategies or provide alternatives (Sweeting, 2012).

One important issue for local communities is the impact of wildlife. Lamarque et al. (2009) acknowledge that larger herbivores (e.g. elephant and hippopotamus) and mammalian carnivores (e.g. lion, leopard and cheetah), and crocodiles are responsible for most of the human-wildlife conflicts in Africa. Indeed, rampant raiding by elephants in the past 5 years within the Kakum Conservation Area in Ghana has resulted in 10 people being killed. Consequently, raiding of crops and killing of people by fauna in eco-destinations can erupt into or heighten the existing conflicts between a park's management and local communities.

2.3. Socio-Cultural Impacts of Ecotourism

As the tourism industry is a social phenomenon, companies, communities and tourists need to act synergistically towards sustainability (Honey, 2008; Eshun, 2011). Sofield (1996) describes how in the Solomon Islands the traditions of the Melanesian villagers are so interlinked with their forests, coastal reefs and associated habitats that these features are regarded as their most important social and economic resources. Sweeting (2012) also touts trenchantly that, even the most well-designed, attractive and desired ecotourism products will have a difficult time succeeding without the support of the local/host community. The socio-cultural benefits of ecotourism to local communities may include interaction with tourists, provision of social amenities such as hospitals, schools, roads, electricity, libraries, exchange programmes and provision of potable water (Honey, 1999). Nevertheless, several writers caution that CBE is not always a panacea for local development and identify factors such as internal collaboration, external partnerships and effective leadership that associate with success. Furthermore, other issues include the potential to generate internal conflict, exacerbate discrepancies in class, gender and patronage (Belsky, 1999), create problems as to who should be included as part of

the ‘community’ and create long-term dependency on external support (Akama, 2004). Gradually, conservation-related actors are awakening to the realisation that the differentials in the understanding of local communities and so-called ‘experts’ on resources for community-based initiatives can frustrate the success of even well-intentioned projects. For example, inequities in ecotourism benefits, can lead to social disempowerment through feelings of ill-will (Mowforth, Munt, 2003).

2.4. Economic Impacts of Ecotourism

Ecotourism generates economic opportunities for both the formal and informal sectors. In Kenya a lion is worth US\$ 7,000 per year in tourist revenues and income from an elephant herd is valued at US\$ 610,000 annually (Honey, 1999). Honey (1999) reports that foreign exchange from ecotourism has overridden the mainstay banana crop in Costa Rica and that it accounts for 80% of the income of the people living on the Galapagos Islands. Tourism revenues for the seven villages around the Belize Baboon Sanctuary rose from US\$8,500 in 1992 to US\$ 99,000 in 2000 (Lash, 2003). TIES (2005:4) states that “*in Komodo National Park in Indonesia, independent travellers spend nearly US\$ 100 locally per visit; package holidaymakers spend only half this. In contrast, cruise-ship arrivals spend an average three cents in the local economy*”. In South Africa nature-based tourism generates 11 times more revenue per year than cattle ranching on the same size of land, and job generation is 15 times greater (Honey, 1999). In the Monteverde area of Costa Rica one eco-destination directly employs 43 staff, with 70% being local residents whilst in Cuba ecotourism has been reported to generate over 54,000 direct employments. Further empirical evidence of tourism’s economic potential is reported by Zapata et al (2014), that since 2001 the tourism sector in Nicaragua has overtaken coffee, meat, and other traditional product exports in economic performance.

Often revenue from ecotourism comes from, *inter alia*, entry fees, camping fees, sales of services and products at the site, donations by visitors and sales of concessions for accommodation, food and tours (Honey, 2008). However, ecotourism can increase inequity in local communities because its

economic benefits go to outside operators, elites and government (Mowforth, Munt, 2003). Mitchell and Ashley (2007:2) add that only ‘between a fifth and one-third of the total tourist turnover in a destination is captured by the ‘poor’ from direct earnings and supply chain’. Currently, up to a half of all tourism income in the South leaks out of the destination, with much of it going to industrial nations through foreign ownership of hotels and tour companies (Akama, Kieti, 2007). For instance, 60% of the ownership of the tourism industry in Kenya is owned by multinational companies and only 2% to 5% of the tourism revenue trickles down to local communities (Akama, 2004). However, Lacher and Nepal (2010), show how the Mae Aw village in Thailand seeks to decrease leakages from ecotourism, by linking its agricultural base to tourism. Indeed, besides direct benefit from ecotourism such as employment, ecotourism establishments can also provide markets for agricultural products and other locally made goods (Rogerson, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Reimer, Walter, 2013).

3. The study

3.1. Study Area – BFMS

The case study area of Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary (BFMS) is 71,430 N and 11,420 W; 350 m above sea level, is located 22 km north of Nkoranza, and 230 km from Accra. In 1975, a byelaw was passed which prohibited the hunting of the monkeys within 4.5 km² Boabeng and Fiema communities (the habitat for the monkeys is actually 1.9 km²). Also because the monkeys are seen as children of the gods and revered they have their own cemetery. BFMS is in Nkoranza North District of the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana, with Busunya as its capital (Fig. 1).

The District used to be part of the Nkoranza District but was carved out by Legislative Instrument 1844 in 2008. It has a total land area of about 2,322 km², and lies within longitudes 1° 10` and 1° 55` West, and latitudes 7°20` and 7°55` North. The District lies within the wet semi-equatorial region, having a mean annual rainfall level ranging between 800-1200 mm. The District has a bio-modal rainfall

pattern with its major rainy season from March to June and minor rains in September to November. Temperatures in the District are generally high, the average annual temperature is about 26°C. The District lies within the transitional zone between the

savannah woodland of northern Ghana and the forest belt of the south. The vegetation on a whole comprises a mosaic of original forest, degraded forest, woodland and savannah. The crops cultivated in the District include maize, yam and cassava.



Fig. 1. Location of Study Area

Source: BFMS Office, 2014

Around the early 1970s the Saviour Church established itself near the twin-village. Some members of the Saviour Church began killing the monkeys to show that they were no longer constrained by indigenous beliefs. Consequently, Daniel Akowuah of Boabeng wrote to the then Department of Game and Wildlife for support. On the 1st May 1975, a by-law was passed that prohibited the slaughter of the monkeys. Although the BFMSMC had been formed in the 1990s the Wildlife Division managed the sanctuary until 2008 when BFMSMC took charge of revenue collection and distribution. In 1996, the United Nations Global Environmental Fund provided funds to build a six-bed room guesthouse for night-sleepers, which led to the creation of a small ecotourism project based on BFMS (Table 1).

During 2007 funds from the revenue generated from BFMS were used to build three more rooms at the back of the Visitor Centre. Also, in 2004 the Government sought to construct an ICT Centre near the Visitor Centre to aid research and provide training in ICT to the youths of communities. In 2014 however, the ICT Centre is still under construction. The selection of the BFMSMC members was based on the consensus that resulted from the 31st October 2000 meeting. Between 2002 and 2004, BFMS was selected as part of the CBE project funded by USAID and under the initiative of the Nature Conservation Research Centre. The CBE project was linked to the construction of an interpretative room, rest room, provision of benches, furniture, directional signs, first aid kits and safety equipment, and refuse bins.

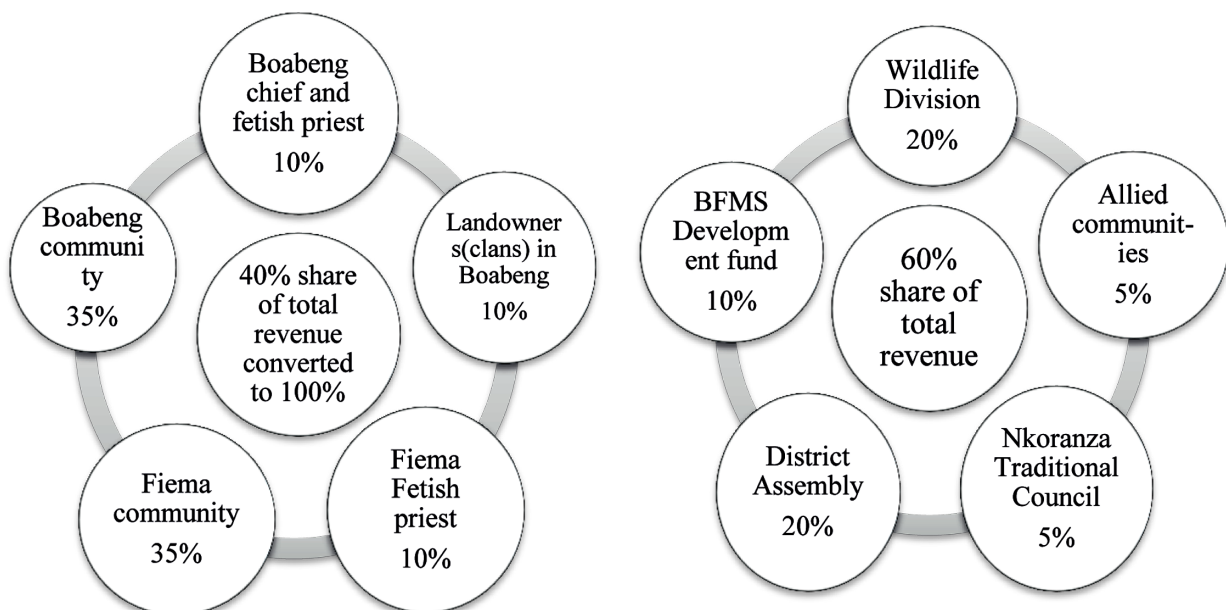
Table 1. Major Events in the Evolution of BFMS

Years	Events
1831	The village, Boabeng is established, Fiema is established later. They are given the responsibility to care for the monkeys by the gods 'Daworo' and 'Abujo'.
1970s	The Sanctuary faces attack from members of the Saviour Church, which resulted in killing and eating some of the monkeys.
1975	Wildlife Division called in to protect the monkeys. BFMS formed in May of the year. Hunting in the Sanctuary becomes illegal through the byelaw.
1990	BFMSMC is formed. Two members each from Boabeng and Fiema with a fifth member being an Assembly member of Boabeng-Fiema.
1996	The guesthouse is built for night-sleepers. Before then, the house of Mr Akowuah provided accommodation for night-sleepers.
2002	Selected as one of the sites of the CBE project Phase I.
2008	BFMSMC takes over the keeping of tourism receipts in May. Wildlife Division now concerns only with the protection of the Sanctuary.
2010	BFMSMC include the Chief Warden, the Assembly member, and 3 individuals each from Boabeng and Fiema communities.

Source: BFMS Visitor Centre, 2014

BFMS won the 6th National Tourism Tourist Attraction in 2003 and registered the highest visitorship and generator of revenue. In general, the peak period of visitorship is between July and August and the lowest period is between September and October. In 2005, the revenue sharing at BFMS was made to include seven other communities namely, Busunya, Bonte, Bomini, Akruwa Panyin, Akruwa Kuma, Konkrompe and Senya,

known as the 'Allied Communities' because some of the monkeys are found in their forests. Currently, Busunya, Bonte, Akruwa Panyin and Kuma, altogether have 100 black and white Colobus monkeys in their forests and Bomini has two Monas. In terms of revenue sharing, the actual percentage that is retained by the community is 40%, then the remaining 60% is spread among other stakeholders" (Fig. 2).

**Fig. 2.** Revenue distribution at BFMS

Source: Authors

Institutionally, the BFMSMC is made of two representatives each from Boabeng and Fiema and the Assembly person. A member of the BFMSMC stated, “besides emergency meetings, the Committee meet every month to discuss any arising matter on the Sanctuary and the communities, and the sitting allowance for each meeting is 20 Ghana Cedis”.

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

The study is based on primary data which was generated through questionnaire administration, in-depth interviews, focus group and field observation. The data collection took place from January to March, 2014. The legal age for adulthood in Ghana is 18 years and individuals who are at this age are entitled to partake in issues of community development; only residents who were 18 years and above were selected. The study employed purposive sampling to select 35 households, and two individuals from each household to give information. According to Creswell (2008) purposive sampling involves selecting participants with the needed experiences and perspectives relating to an investigation.

A total of 70 questionnaires were administered face-to-face with the respondents. For respondents who were illiterate, the researchers read out the questions in Twi (a local dialect) and then recorded the responses in English. The literacy level for the study area is 48% which is lower than the national average of 54.5% (Ghana Statistical Service[GSS], 2012). The questionnaires were mainly opened-ended, which enabled respondents to freely express their views. Further, a total of 10 in-depth interviews were carried out variously with a member of BFMSMC, officials from the Wildlife Division, the Assembly member, community elders, and provision store owners, the fetish priests at both Boabeng and Fiema. The CBEs in Ghana involve national and international actors, who dialogue with community elders, chiefs, landowners and District Assembly on the prospects of developing ecotourism in their communities. Finally, a focus group was carried out with 8 people involving the Assembly man, the two fetish priests in the twin-village, a member of BFMSMC, a member of Wildlife Division and community elders. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics employing the Statistical Product for Serv-

ice Solutions (SPSS Version 16). After Dey (1993), the qualitative data were analysed through a three-step process. The description involved transcribing data from the in-depth interviews into a mass of text. The classification step involved relating the transcribed data into their major themes. Thirdly, the interconnecting step involved making sense of the themes in relation to the study objectives.

4. Results and Discussion

This section addresses the social-demographic characteristics of the respondents, ecotourism acceptance and revenue retention, employment opportunities and community involvement, the nexus of CBE and culture preservation and challenges facing BFMS.

4.1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 70 respondents, 62.9% were males and 37.1% females. In terms of age of respondents 28 (40%) were in the 15-26 year category, 20 (28.6%) were in 27-38 year category, 14 (20%) were in 39-50 year category and (8) 11.4% were in 51 years and above category. On religious affiliation, 57 (81.4%) were Christians, 2 (2.9%) were Muslims, 8 (11.9%) were traditionalists, 3 (4.3%) were atheist. Attuquayefio and Gyampoh (2010) showed that despite the high acceptance of Christianity, the communities still hold a strong belief about the deity of the monkeys. With respect to education, 24 (34.3%) participants have senior school education, 11 (15.7%) have no formal education, 11 (15.7%) tertiary education, 22 (31.4%) junior high school and 2 (2.9 %) have primary education. On years of residence, 34 (48.6%) have lived in the villages for less than 10 years, 11 (15.7%) for 10-20 years, 7 (10%) between 20-30 years and 18 (25.7%) for over 30 years (were born and bred in the twin-village). In terms of occupation, 26 (37.1 %) were farmers, 14 (20%) were traders, 12 (17.1%) were students, 6 (8.6 %) were teachers, 4 (5.7%) were in charcoal trade, 3 (4.3%) were tour guides, 2 (2.9 %) barbers, 2 (2.9%) were tailors and 1 (1.4%) was a taxi driver. The minimum

educational requirement for tour guide at BFMS was a secondary school qualification.

4.2. Ecotourism Acceptance and Revenue Retention at BFMS

A significant share 42 (60%) of the total respondents endorsed the establishment of the BFMS. The reasons given were threefold. First, 12 (28.6%) were pleased about the attention given to the community from the ecotourism project that draws people from Ghana and abroad. Second, 13 (30.9%) respondents enjoyed the presence of the monkeys and loved the sight of them as much as visitors. Third, 17 (40.5%) respondents indicated the economic benefits they derive from ecotourism which they said was due to their petty trading in the community which was boosted sometimes by the presence of visitors to the Sanctuary. Congeniality of local communities to tourists is viewed as “an integral part of the tourism product and the hospitality they extend or do not extend to visitors directly affects visitors’ satisfaction, expenditure levels, and propensities to visit again” (Spencer, Nsiah, 2013: 221).

Besides the stated acceptance, 28 (40%) respondents complained that the monkeys (especially the Mona monkeys) posed a threat to the community’s personal properties and farm produce but should be tolerated. A 51 year male respondent stressed “the monkeys bother us so much, they even bully the kids for their food, thus it will be unfair for us to be kept in the dark by the management on the revenue use”. Although 15 (21.4%) of the total respondents did not care about how the revenues were used as many as 55 (78.6%) expressed strongly that it was their right to know how revenues were used. The respondents explained that their genuine concern for sustaining ecotourism at BFMS drives their interest in the revenue appropriation. These findings re-emphasise work by Eshun (2011). In a South African investigation Shehab (2011) cautions that tourism revenue and its use must be transparent for local communities in order to help foster transparency and lessen suspicion.

Overall, there are 3 major sources of revenues to BFMS which include the entrance fees, revenue from the guesthouse and the fees paid by researchers (see Table 2).

Table 2. Fees Charged at the Sanctuary

Visitor Category	Fee GH¢
Primary	0.30
Junior High School	0.50
Senior High School	1.00
Tertiary	2.00
Adult	3.00
Foreign Volunteers and students	7.00
Foreign Tourists	10.00
Local Researchers (for 1-30days)	250.00
Foreign Researchers (for1-30days)	US\$75

Source: BFMS Office, 2014 (Exchange rate is GH¢3.50=US\$1)

A major source of regular occupancy of the guesthouse is visits from postgraduate students from Calgary University (Canada), who visit every year in May and stay for three weeks for research purposes. On the performance of management, 51.4% indicated that the BFMSMC’s performance is ‘very poor’. Of the remaining respondents, 25.7% maintained that their performance is good, 22.9% stressed the committee’s performance is excellent. In terms of the poor performance a respondent added that “BFMSMC fails to embark on development projects in line with the urgent needs of the community, but from their own volition and choice”. In total 34.3% complained that there was absolutely no benefit from ecotourism to their community. On specific development projects initiated by BFMSMC, as many as 50% of the respondents indicated in the affirmative, 33% stressed on some benefits to individuals in the community and 17% stressed that development in the community is spearheaded by the government. In addition, 6 (12%) of the 50 respondents said there had been improvement in some transport systems, 18 (36%) mentioned Kumasi Ventilated Improved Pit (still under construction), 21 (42%) stated the building of schools, whilst 5 (10%) mentioned the creation of a borehole. One 37 year old male respondent stated, “*in times of genuine difficulty in the payment of fees for some parents, the BFMSMC can sometimes be of help, the District rarely supports development of the communities*”. The specific benefits from BFMS include employment, infrastructural development, purchase of a community bus, income and the forest serving as windbreak for the community. Another respondent added that “*when the community’s*

borehole breaks down, the committee do come to our aid by giving some form of loans to help fix the problem". The survey respondents pointed out some of the developmental projects in the twin-village such as the KVIP was donated by a benevolent foreign tourist and the school and borehole were provided by the Unit Committee and the District Assembly respectively. It was observed by another respondent that "though some of the visitors enjoy their stay in these places, there are others whose overall experience will be enhanced in the face of better accommodation facilities". Currently, only two households provide homestay opportunities at BFMS. The residents of the twin-village further expressed that the community members who offer homestays must give portions of their revenue to the BFMSMC, if not it will increase inequality in the communities. All respondents stressed that there is an urgent need for clinic and better road to the communities. This finding parallels the research reported by Eshun (2011) and Yeboah (2013) who both called for the need to address the bad roads in Brong Ahafo Region and to BFMS.

4.3. Employment Opportunities and Community Participation

Employment in ecotourism has been observed as mostly unskilled and semiskilled and often with low quality and low remuneration (Cater, 2006). Lash (2003) states that one important way to involve communities and gain their support in tourism is through local job creation. Akama and Kieti (2011:287) add, "direct participation in...wildlife tourism in protected areas is essential not only for economic benefit, livelihood security and measurable gains in quality of life indicators such as health and education, but also for cultural survival".

In the project of 70 respondents, only 9 (12.9%) were employed in tourism whilst the remaining 61 (87.1%) respondents were not. For the total of 9 respondents who are employed, 5 were tour guides (4 males and a female), a bus driver, revenue collector, security and the guesthouse caretaker (also doubles as a cook). Also there were 3 Wildlife Division officials, who patrol and protect the Sanctuary. Indirect benefits to community members include employment linked to store owners. Tourism

at BFMS is mainly confined to touring the Sanctuary. The arts and crafts shop at BFMS mainly opens only on the request of visitors. The local craftsmen could have improved income opportunities, however, if greater attention is paid to upgrading the arts and crafts shop near the Visitor Centre. It was revealed that 44 (62.5%) of the total respondents seek to work in BFMS. Furthermore, the clearing of the boundaries of the forest is done by the locals who get paid for the service.

In total only 24 (34.3%) of the total respondents said there were opportunities of training for community residents. Of these 24 respondents, only 3 (12.5%) of them indicated an opportunity to work together as a community. This notwithstanding, the respondents maintained that even under the BFMSMC the twin-village still have poor roads and lack health clinics. The laterite road to the twin-village often gets muddy especially during the raining season and prevents tourists from visiting the Sanctuary sometimes for days.

Of the total respondents, 36 (51.4%) alleged that BFMSMC does not involve them in decision making on BFMS. Of this group of 36 respondents, a total of 16 (43.2%) stated that BFMSMC does not involve them in decision making because they want to cover up their activities, 11 (29.7%) stressed management sometimes think that the larger community does not have the requisite knowledge to contribute in decision making and 10 (27%) stated that BFMSMC has become the mouthpiece for the communities and thus side-lines other emerging voices. Of the 34 (48.6%) respondents who indicated that they were involved in decision making, 20 (57.6%) respondents said their involvement was in the form of informing, 10 (30.3%) indicated forms of consulting, while 4 (12.1%) mentioned they take part in rituals for the monkeys. However, the dominant form of involvement at BFMS is informing the BFMSMC on issues from the community followed by consulting. Current participation of local residents in BFMS can therefore be categorised a form of 'citizen tokenism'.

On how BFMSMC stifles community participation, one respondent stressed that "sometimes the committee members embark on projects without a community-wide consensus, what they fail to acknowledge is that this can create apathy towards them, and may translate towards the visitors to the

community". This finding parallels that of Nance and Ortolano (2007) who maintain that communities are often sidelined in decision making as well as provision of support services in CBEs. A member of BFMSMC summed up as follows: "we meet every month to make decisions and audit the accounts, and it is the responsibility of us to disseminate the information to the larger community".

4.4. The Nexus of CBE and Culture Preservation

Of the total respondents, 55 (78.6%) mentioned that the culture of their communities has contributed towards the conservation of the forest. The respondents maintained the belief that the monkeys are children of gods which engendered reverence and fear for their protection. In a similar manner Place (1995) argues that ecotourism may help in survival of culture, people and their territory as shown in the case of the Kuna Indians in Panama, who were the first indigenous group to obtain authority over their land in Central America, which afforded them the opportunity to conserve their cultural beliefs, while opening up their reserve to tourism on their own terms. In the Ghana study one respondent stresses that "visitors have nothing to worry about our beliefs, in fact, visitors are even protected by the gods on their journeys back home". A 30 year female respondent stated that "the community does not adhere to bylaws because of fear of government, but for the reverence for the gods; despite the formidable presence of the Wildlife Division, the animals would still have been hunted". Nonetheless, 15 (21.4%) maintained that presence of the Wildlife Division has actually ensured the survival of the forest. At BFMS, visitors are intrigued by the way of life of the people at Boabeng and Fiema. There are calls for blend of indigenous ecological knowledge and scientific knowledge for conservation in Africa (Arhin, 2010; Attuquayefio, Gyampoh, 2010; Eshun, 2011; Eshun, Madge, 2012; Wearing, Neil, 2009; Breugel, 2013; Yeboah, 2013).

On the nexus of tourism and culture, 32 (48.5%) of the respondents stated that CBE has helped them to recognize and revere their unique culture and history, 18 (27.3%) indicated the projection of their culture onto global stage, 11 (16.7%) mentioned

patronage of indigenous products, 5 (7.6%) believe that people have now come to respect their culture and research on their community and the Sanctuary and 4 (5.7%) people stated nothing. Discussing the effects of CBE on the local culture, the fetish priest of Boabeng explains that, "even young children are made aware of the taboos on the monkeys which engender reverence for wildlife and ecotourism". A 55 year old respondent adds that, "many individuals come to pay homage to the shrine, however what remains is packaging our cultural resources to be part of the ecotourism offerings".

4.5. Challenges Facing the Sanctuary

The main challenges facing eco-destinations in most developing countries include lack of infrastructure, difficulties in access, political instability, ineffective marketing and absence of readily visible natural features (Honey, 2008). The challenges of local involvement and participation in tourism continue to receive critical scholarly attention (Tosun, 2000; Kiss, 2004; Rogerson, Visser, 2004; Stone, Rogerson, 2011; Eshun, Page, 2013).

Respondents of Boabeng and Fiema who do not participate in ecotourism do so basically because of lack of transparency, lack of the requisite knowledge and a feeling of non-responsibility. From the study, 30 (42.9%) of the respondents attributed their non-participation in decision making to the lack of transparency on the activities of BFMSMC, and the BFMSMC which is suspected of impropriety. In a similar case of impropriety is that of the Makuleke Contract Park in South Africa, where the community management have built a huge house for the chief and provided a scholarship for his son's education, while the poorest in the community are left to fend for themselves (Shehab, 2011). On issues of local participation, 21 (30%) indicated that they do not have the requisite scientific knowledge and business acumen to contribute to decision making within the CBE. Similar research on CBEs has shown that inadequate knowledge of the locals, lack of funds and central institutions can impede local participation (Stone, Rogerson, 2011; Sweeting, 2012; Yeboah, 2013; Eshetu, 2014). The remaining 19 (27.1%) feel that once there is a representative body, there is no need to waste resources in order

to involve the entire community in decision making, and that the representative body have the responsibility to manage the sanctuary.

Earlier work by Tosun (2000) indicated that a central administration and lack of requisite knowledge by locals can hinder local participation. In the Ghana investigation, towards increasing participation, 20 (29%) indicate the need to improve transport systems, 10 (14.5%), stressed that the Visitor Centre needs renovation. Also, 27 (39.1%) state that the onus lies on the BFMSMC to restructure their management strategies to involve the larger community. From the study, 10 (8.7%) indicate access restrictions farming on the forest should be loosened to allow free access to the resources therein. For 3 (4.3%) respondents, BFMS should be taken over again by the Wildlife Division, since no significant improvement in revenue has been seen since BFMSMC took over the collection. Correspondingly, 3% believe that training on ecotourism products can help boost community participation. Indeed, educational and training programmes around tourism destinations can help local communities grab some of the opportunities associated with tourism development (Eshun, Tettey, 2014).

Because of the rather romantic view of ecotourism, the difficulties borne by local communities are sometimes concealed to fit this discourse. For example, at Boabeng the Mona monkeys frequent homes in search of food especially during harmattan when the sources of their diet in the Sanctuary are limited. Attuquayefio and Gyampoh (2010) reached similar conclusion that the plight of the local residents are further worsened by the pestilence of the Mona monkeys, precipitated by visitors feeding and changing their natural eating habits. One respondent stated “*the Monas enter our homes and steal foodstuff, they run on roofs creating noise, they eat almost everything in our backyards, and thus prevent us from having gardens*”. The local residents also maintain that the Sanctuary limits the land available for farming and further settlement due to their increasing population. It was stated by one respondent that “we are forbidden to clear any portion for settlement or farming and the benefits from tourism remains a mirage”.

5. Conclusion

The case of BFMS highlights how CBE can contribute to the socio-economic development of local communities. Although the African Charter for Popular Participation, maintain participation should serve the interests of all the stakeholders to effectively contribute to the development process and equitable share of the benefits, community participation in BFMS is limited. Key constraining factors are disclosed to be the lack of the requisite knowledge on ecotourism market, lack of government support, inadequate funds and limited alternative livelihood options. Furthermore, the local communities lack educational and healthcare facilities, good roads and public toilet to help people stop defecating in some areas of the sanctuary. In maximising local impacts from this ecotourism project there is the need to develop new products to complement the attraction due to the monkeys. A festival based on the monkeys and introduction of livelihood strategies such as snail rearing, apiculture and micro-finance services towards expanding the agricultural activities and craft making in the communities, could help to increase the benefits that the residents of the communities can derive from the Sanctuary.

In final analysis in order to position ecotourism as a formidable sustainable development tool in Ghana, further research must focus on its demand-side and supply-side perspectives. The demand-side perspective, should aim at critically unravelling and categorising the characteristics of ecotourists to Ghana, their home countries, spending power, preferences, length of stay, identifiable behaviours and motivations. The supply-side perspective, should include a critical assessment of the business capacities of especially local communities to engage in ecotourism and the viability of ecotourism compared to other land uses.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Tony Dassah (past Chief Warden at BFMS) for useful information for the study, to Chris Rogerson for helpful comments on earli-

er drafts and to critical comments from journal referees.

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