

# **Stimulus factors of Local Resident's Participation in Community-Based Tourism (CBT): Study on Sylhet.**

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## **Abstract:**

*Community Based Tourism (CBT) is one of the most effective tools for ensuring sustainable tourism. Tourism had close connection with local communities, local resources and local culture. CBT will ensure the participation of local communities in every phase of tourism development which will help to protect local culture, resources and help to boost up local economy by offering different opportunities to local people. This article basically tries to identify the basic stimulus factors which will encourage local residents to participate in Community Based Tourism activities in their region. Both primary and secondary data sources are used for collecting necessary data for this study. Basically mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative) analysis is done for making the tasks for informative. Five point Likert scale questionnaire survey, interview of the respondents, observation methods are applied and sampling is completed based on convenience and judgmental sampling technique. Then reliability test, regression analysis, correlations analysis and others analysis are conducted to find out the best motivational factors behind community participation. From findings it can be said that if local community find more opportunity for involving them in planning process then they have more control over tourism development and they will develop strategy by protecting local resources. It will create employment opportunities which indirectly improve the local economy as well as the living standard of locals. They will be more aware by attending different encouraging programs and CBT activities will create new dimension for them to invest in more profitable sector. Then community resident's willingness of participation will increase.*

**Keywords:** *Community based tourism (CBT), stimulus factors, community participation.*

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## **I. Introduction:**

Community Based Tourism has been promoted as a means of social, environmental and economic development of local communities by meeting the needs of tourists by offering tourism product (Harold Goodwin & Rosa Santilli, 2009). Many studies have found that tourism industry's development has tremendous impacts on the economic system by creating employment opportunities and ensuring greater income for local people. And community Based Tourism is basically developed based on the active participation of local residents. That's why Community Based Tourism helps to develop the local community's development, also ensures direct relationship among local community and tourists. Local resident's participation will ensure the sharing and equal distribution of tourism benefits among frontline community people. After Cox Bazar and Sundarbans, Sylhet is in the third priority as attractive tourist's destination to majority of tourist's mind. Rich natural, cultural and religious resources are considered as valuable attractions for promoting tourism in Bangladesh. Unique culture and traditions of different indigenous community (Manipuri, Khashia, Garo) as well as their hospitality add new appeals in the mind of visitors to visit Sylhet. Most of tourist places in Bangladesh faces transportation problem, accommodation problem, security problem whereas Sylhet has a good communication facilities, here transportation facilities (Bus, Train, Air) are well decorated and budget friendly for tourist, this region also ensures safety for tourist. So, it's high time to just encouraging and involving local people in tourism activities and offering them opportunities to get additional income source from CBT, being aware for conserving their existing natural and artificial resources, enhancing education and tourism education among local people. Participation of local people in CBT will help to ensure the sustainability of Sylhet-natural queen of Bangladesh.

## **Research Objectives:**

- Major objectives are to find out the stimulus factors affecting community's participation in CBT.
- To identify the interest of the community to participate in tourism.
- To discuss the positive and negative impact of tourism to the community.

- To find out the major influential factors of community participation in tourism.

## **II. Literature Review:**

Community Based Tourism is a form of tourism where local people have substantial control over tourism's development and management and a major portion of the benefits remain within the community (WWF International, 2001). Before establishing community based tourism, the social and political structure of the community, the physical location of the arrangements, community infrastructure, economic opportunities, training, marketing and environment need to be measures (Lash, 1997). Wearing (1996) claimed that community tourism creates value and works as aspiration for a better world. It concerns how destination can be used to enhance the local community. Community Based Tourism owes a strong legacy to the idea of community participation in tourism development (Murphy, 1985). Community participation and stakeholder cooperation helps to reduce the negative perceptions of local community to tourism. Local community should actively participate at all stages of planning and development of tourism (Blackstock, 2005; Johnson 2010; Murphy and Murphy 2004). CBT enhance the livelihoods of rural communities through value adding (Lemos, 2006). If community people can understand that tourism have no negative impact on existing business and activities then they will be more interested in CBT. CBT inspires local people to properly utilize human capital as well as natural resources of that area. Participation of local communities in the tourism activities helps to increase incomes, employment opportunities and education and living standard of local residents.

Community participation in the tourism planning process is advocated as a way of implementing suitable tourism (Okazaki, 2008). CBT is also a part of sustainable tourism development process. It will support to reduce local crime, conflicts and decrease the adverse attitudes and beliefs of local residence. But the participation of local people is not easy because tourism activities heavily rely on the market and resources. Different private public agencies and organization have control over those resources and activities. So cooperation with government and private agencies are need for enhancing the skills, marketing capabilities and networking facilities for locals. Government could play a major role in developing tourism (Ashley, 2006) and Tourism Board could develop some specific guidelines for monitoring CBT in Sylhet.

Generally, CBT is used as an effective tool in many developed countries for poverty alleviation by using tourism as a source of additional income for local residence. It also has positive impact on the diversification of local economy. Based on Community participation, CBT could be considered as an alternative to mass tourism. However, CBT has been linked to the solidarity economy and give opportunity to connect global tourism activities and exchanging culture. Community participation has significant impacts on the well-being of local residence.

## **III. Research Methodology:**

Research methodology shows the entire layout of the research. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used for this study. During the first phase, the qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews and observation were done, different instruments of secondary data sources like Report of WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council), BTB (Bangladesh Tourism Board), WTO (World Travel Organization), Report on Communities of Sylhet and others were studied. And questionnaire survey was conducted for primary data collection. A five point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to collect the necessary data. Both convenience and judgmental sampling technique were used for the sample selection of this study. Several data analysis methods were used to analyze the collected data by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features of the data in a study.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant relationship between the influencing factors and community participation.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the influencing factors and community participation.

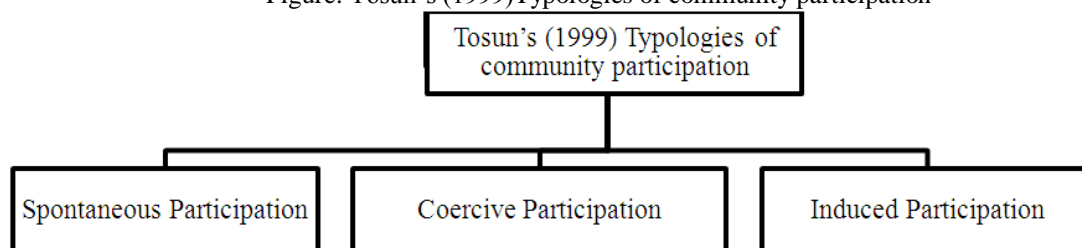
### **Local Community's participation:**

Local people can easily participate in tourism activities either by working as tour guide, providing services and other support to tourism personnel. From the view of Manipuri people, it can be said that, community based tourism will create a new employment opportunity for them which will help them to improve their economic condition as well as the standards of living. They can also participate by involving them indirectly with tourism industry like attending different seminar on tourism and so on. It will create additional earning source for the young generation and the women of this community. They will have the opportunity to show their handicrafts, style of their houses, unique style of their yard and other activities to tourists.

Various scholars have attempted to develop useful models to conceptualize community's participation in tourism development (Tosun, 1999). After reviewing many articles, Tosun (1999) examined community participation in tourism and designed a model which can be applied in tourism industry. His models suggested

three basic forms of community's participation –spontaneous community participation, coercive participation and induce participation.

Figure: Tosun's (1999) Typologies of community participation



Source: Tosun (2006)

Spontaneous community participation emphasizes the provision of full marginal responsibility and authority to the host community for interactive participation in tourism activities. Induced participation focuses on functional participation by giving consultation in tourism development process. Basically it's a top down approach where host communities endorse and participate in decision making process. In coercive community participation, the host community is not fully involved in the decision making process but some decisions are made to meet the basic needs of host communities to avoid potential socio-political risks for tourists.

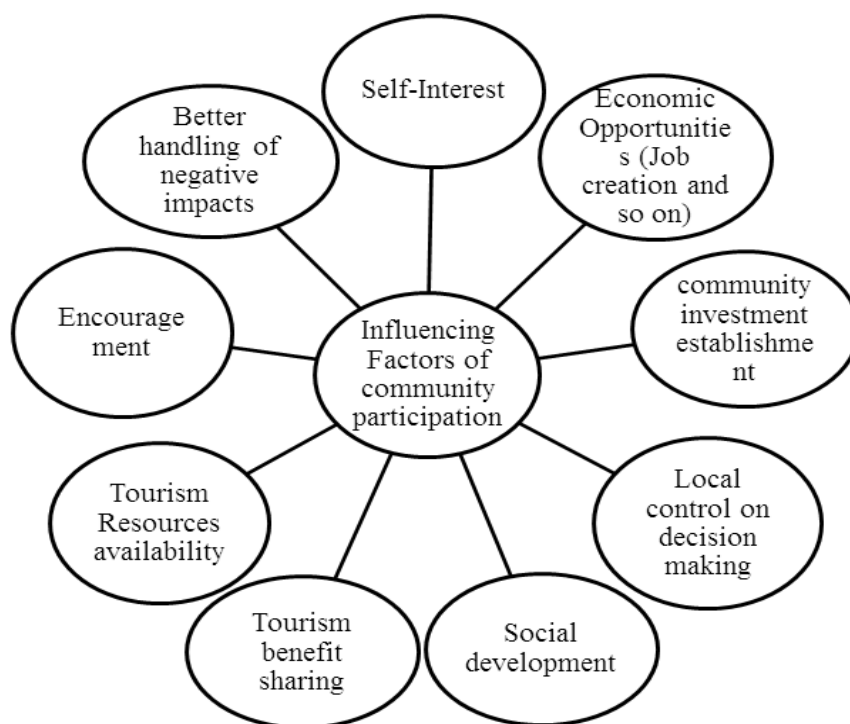
The community should not rely exclusively on tourism, but combine it with other activities (APEC Tourism Working Group and STCRC, 2010). For example, community based tourism and agriculture enhance the livelihoods of rural communities through value adding (McKenzie and Lemos, 2006). Community Based Tourism may receive stronger support if the community is reassured that tourism will not impact negatively on existing businesses and activities, but rather will fit into an existing structure (Murphy and Murphy 2004). One approach to achieve this is “through investments in human capital, such as education and health, investments in social capital such as local-level institutions and participatory processes, and support for community based development efforts planned and implemented from bottom up” (Havel, 1996, p.145). However, given the fact that the central point underlying people's participation may be the degree of power distribution, these efforts are less likely to succeed unless responsive institutions and the legal and policy framework that facilitate and support local participation are in place (Havel, 1996; Tosun, 2004; Wang and Wall, 2005). Involvement and participation of the community in decision-making is advocated so that communities can have some control over tourism resources, initiatives and decisions that affect their livelihood (Wang, and Wall, 2005). The idea of involvement and participation of local communities in the tourism benefits is easily reflected in increasing incomes, employment, and education of local communities about tourism and entrepreneurship (Timothy, 1999). Etsuko Okazaki (2008) showed that community participation in the tourism planning process is advocated as a way of implementing suitable tourism. Community participation and control is a part of the sustainable tourism development process. However, internal conflicts, different groups and diverse attitudes and beliefs can affect lines of communication within a community and also, cooperation between its members (George & Henthorne, 2007; Manyara & Jones, 2007). This will affect community participation and support for tourism. The participation of local people is not easy due to the fact that tourism heavily relies on the market and resources. For example, national parks are mostly under government control and tourists are mostly recommended by tour operators. Cooperation with government and private agencies is therefore necessary for improving management skills, marketing capability and networking and other support on Community Based Tourism development (REST and Buchan, 2002 quoted in Anucha Leksakundilok, 2004a: 35). Typically, Community Based Tourism in international contexts has been used as an effective tool for poverty alleviation by using tourism as a source of additional income for local people. When applied properly, CBT can not only help local villagers control the impacts of tourism, but also generate additional incomes and diversify the local economy (Tuffin, 2005: 178). Collaboration between these groups is particularly important in the case of developing countries. It has also been suggested that government should play a major role in developing tourism (Ashley, 2006). Based on community participation CBT is generally small-scale and is considered an alternative to mass tourism. However, the theme of empowerment and participation has been strongly debated (Butcher, 2011; Simpson, 2008). CBT has been linked to the ‘solidarity economy’, and therefore to the cooperative movement (Johnson, 2010; Mendonça, 2004). At the same time the importance of links to global tourism have been acknowledged (Van Der Duim and Caalders, 2008; Wearing *et al.*, 2010). Community participation programs would imply the involvement of a significant number of persons in

situations or actions that enhance their well-being, for example, their income, security, or self-esteem (Chowdhury, 1996).

**Stimulus factors of Local community's participation in CBT:**

Ensuring local Community's participation in tourism activities is one of the crucial ways to promote healthy and sustainable development of tourism in any destinations (Bahaire T, Martin EW, 1999). There are various ways through which local people can easily involve with tourism activities. Communities can participate in the decision making process (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007; Li, 2005; Tosun, 2000; Chok and Macbeth, 2007). If a proper tourism planning want to develop then local community's livelihood need to be prioritized by ensuring their participation (Chok and Macbeth, 2007). It can be achieved by engaging them in both public and private tourism related decision making bodies. Kibicho (2003) in his study mentioned about community tourism in Kenya that local communities had the feeling that they were not fully involved in their country's coastal tourism, especially in decisions for its development, despite the fact that the industry has impacts on their well-being. Tosun (2006) in his study observed that local community needs to be part and parcel of the decision making body, specially their suggestions and opinions need to be prioritized for developing and managing tourism issues. Involvement and participation of the community in decision-making is advocated so that communities can have some control over tourism resources, initiatives and decisions that affect their livelihood (Wang, and Wall, 2005). On the other hand, local community can easily share tourism benefits by involving them in tourism activities which can reflect in increasing incomes, employments and education of local communities about tourism. However, local community participation in decision making is not only desirable but also necessary for maximizing the socio-economic benefits of tourism for the community. It is perhaps one of the most important elements of tourism management to enable communities who often serve as tourist destinations and for that matter suffer from the negative impacts of tourism, to get involved and eventually participate in planning decisions regarding tourism development. This is important in order to create better handling of the negative impacts of tourism development (Li, 2004;Tosun, 2000). One figure is developed with probable stimulus factors of local community's participation and analysis is done based on the following figure.

Figure: Factors influencing local community's Participation in tourism



Source: Author, 2020

Much of the literature notes that if local communities want to benefit from tourism they must be integrated into the decision-making process. However, Li (2005), while studying community decision-making participation in tourism development in Sichuan Province, China, pointed out that there was weak local

participation in the decision-making process yet local communities received satisfactory benefits from tourism. Community needs to involve them in tourism and tourism related activities for enjoying all benefits from tourism. Negative activities and crime will be decreased while local people involve with CBT more. Natural resources will be also prevented from destroyed if locals found that it could be beneficial for them, and then they will ensure the conservation of all natural or available resources of that area.

**Sylhet as a tourism Destination:**

Bangladesh has an attractive natural environment and many historical-cultural places, which can be potentially utilized for the development of tourism. Sylhet region is located in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh. Sylhet is basically well known for its tea gardens, lush tropical forests, different tribal communities, natural waterfalls, lakes bordered by ever green hills, haors, shrine of Hazrat Shahjala (R.) and Hazarat Shahparan (R.), and the region however is currently known for its business boom-being one of the richest regions in Bangladesh. Sylhet is a place of different indigenous tribes who lives in different hilly areas. They have unique lifestyles, colorful occupations, long history and enriched culture. This region is not only famous for its natural beauty but also famous for highest remittance flow from Europe, America and Middle East (Ahmmed, 2015). Many people from Sylhet stayed at abroad and contribute in the domestic economy. Sylhet also have religious glorious history of Hazrat Shahjalal (R), Shahporan (R), and their companions who have enlightened this region with the light of Islam about 800 years ago.

Table: Few renowned tourism destinations in Sylhet

Tea Gardens	Hum Hum Waterfall	Madhabkundu Waterfall	Volagonj	Ratargol Swamp forest
Lawachara National Park	Madhabpur Lake	Jaflong	BichanaKandi	LalaKhal
Shrine of Hazrat Shahjala (R.)	Shrine of Hazarat Shahparan (R.),	Hills and mountains of Moulvibazar,	Pangthumai waterfall	Area of indigenous people
Khadimnagar National Park	Jadukata River	MAG Osmani Museum	Ali Amjad's clock	The King GourGovindaTila

Table: Indigenous people stayed in different parts of Sylhet

Sylhet has high potentials for tourism development but due to poor awareness of local people and their poor participation in tourism activities, this region unable to rich the pick of tourist attractions. If proper awareness can be developed among local residents and encourage them to participate in community based tourism activities then it will create additional earning source for all of them.

**IV. Data Analysis And Findings:**

Data from various sources is gathered, reviewed, and then analyzed to form some sort of finding or conclusion.

**Respondent's profile analysis:**

Respondent's socio demographic characteristics are described by conducting descriptive analysis. Following Table shows the picture of the socio-demographic profile of respondents.

**Table: Respondents socio-demographic profile**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Educational level	Frequency	Percent
Male	54	54.0	Under SSC	3	3.0
Female	46	46.0	SSC	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0	HSC	11	11.0
Age segment	Frequency	Percent	Graduation	57	57.0
Up to 20 years	19	19.0	Post-Graduation	24	24.0
21-30 years	27	27.0	Total	100	100.0
31-40 years	38	38.0			
41-50 years	11	11.0	Average monthly income (BDT)	Frequency	Percent
Above 50 years	5	5.0	Bellow 10,000	11	11.0
Total	100	100.0	10,000-30,000	19	19.0
Marital status	Frequency	Percent	31,000-40,000	32	32.0
Married	53	53.0	41,000-50,000	21	21.0
Single	47	47.0	Above 50,000	17	17.0
Profession	Frequency	Percent	Total	100	100.0
Agriculture	4	4.0	Work Interest	Frequency	Percent
Business	17	17.0	Interested in tourism activities	53	53.0
Service holder	39	39.0	Interested to develop tourism infrastructure	47	47.0
Student	32	32.0	No interest to participate	0	0.0%
Others	9	9.0	In tourism		
Total	100	100.0	Total	100	100.0

Source: SPSS output of primary data

The above table provides the respondents' information. Out of total 100 respondent 54(54%) were male and 46 (46%) were female. Data were collected from different age group. Large group of respondent were from 31 to 40 (38%) age group people. In addition, 42 (42%) were service holder and 53(53%) respondents were married and 47(47%) were unmarried respondent.

**Reliability Analysis:**

This section will show how much reliable the data is. That means Reliability Statistics shows the reliability of the collected data.

**Table: Reliability statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.811	16

Source: SPSS output of primary data

Here, the value of alpha is .811(81.1%) which shows that the data are more reliable for the study.

**Descriptive analysis of stimulus factors:**

Following table describes the score given by the respondents on the stimulus factors effecting local community to participate in CBT. Here, mean and standard deviation of collected data are analyzed.

**Table: Descriptive statistics**

	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Self-interest of host people	100	4.11	.994
Tourism benefits sharing	100	3.83	.842
Community involvement in decision making			
Community awareness	100	3.98	.783
Economic opportunities	100	4.12	.791
Better handling of negative impacts	100	4.33	.891
Encouragement programs			
Investment opportunities	100	3.79	.876
Resource availability	100	4.15	.820
Political stability	100	4.03	.748
Awareness programs	100	3.89	.701
Co-operation with stakeholders	100	4.05	.860
Facilities availability	100	4.56	.730
Fame of the destination	100	4.13	.779
Resource strength	100	4.76	.740
	100	3.98	.803
Valid N (list wise)	100	4.56	.726
	100		

Source: SPSS output of primary data

This above table basically shows that the opinion of most of the respondents are between the agree to strongly agree and some other shows the neutral view regarding the statements.

**Relationship between dependent and independent variables and model analysis:**

**Table: Model summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	F change	Df1	Df2	Sig. F change
1	.627	.381	.357	.442	.089	13.043	15	83	.000

Source: SPSS output of primary data

Table shows that the value of R is .627 (62.7%) which means there exists a higher moderate level of relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

**Table: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	13.012	15	.867	13.043	.000
Residual	49.978	83	.602		
Total	62.990	98			

Source: SPSS output of primary data

Here, the table analyzes the variance of the variables loaded in the model to examine if there is any relationship exists between the dependent and independent variables. Typically, if the value of "Sig" is less than .005, then it can be said that the model will fit at 99% significant level. Here, the value of "sig" is .000 which is less than .005. So, the model is significant at 99% significant level which is highly satisfactory.

**Coefficient Analysis of all stimulus factors:**

**Table: Coefficients:**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.879	.874		1.006	.317
Self-interest of host people	-.086	.115	-.107	-.751	.455
Tourism benefits sharing	.100	.131	.105	.751	.455
Community involvement in decision making	.003	.140	.002	.019	.985
Community awareness	.118	.110	.073	1.847	.015
Economic opportunities	.067	.133	.004	.604	.547
Better handling of negative impacts	.004	.126	1.058	2.607	.004
Encouragement programs	.056	.130	-.041	-.330	.653
Investment opportunities	.030	.142	1.103	2.962	.003
Resource availability	-.047	1.13	1.35	1.87	.001
Political stability	.096	.123	-.033	-.290	.773
Awareness programs	-.036	.120	.292	.630	.530
Co-operation with stakeholders	.209	1.09	.195	1.916	.059
Facilities availability	.218	.126	.210	1.842	.076
Fame of the destination					
Resource strength					

Source: SPSS output of primary data

**Hypothesis Testing:**

Above Coefficient table shows that independent variables-Economic opportunities (.004), encouragement programs (.003), investment opportunities (.001) have a strong (significant at .005 level) relationship with Community Based Tourism. So, null hypothesis has been rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

There are various factors on which community involvement in tourism is depended. From the analysis it is found that the most considerable factors are- community awareness generation, employment opportunities creation for the community people, investment opportunity creation, and encouragement program arrangement to encourage people participating in tourism activities. Significant level of Community awareness is .004, Economic opportunities are .004, encouragement programs is .003, investment opportunities is .001. If community awareness can be generated and all other factors are offered to community, community participation will be increased.

For the successful running of Community Based Tourism (CBT), Community participation is essential. And participation is influenced by various factors. According to above coefficient table, the economic opportunities, encouragement programs, investment opportunities will help to increase community participation in tourism especially in Community Based Tourism (CBT).

#### **V. Recommendations:**

Community Based Tourism (CBT) will help local people to improve the overall conditions of them and their direct participation in tourism industry will help to flourish tourism more smoothly. From the above descriptions and findings, it can be said that following recommendations will help to enhance local community's participation in CBT:

- Local communities should get engaged in tourism planning in their communities on highest possible level. More opportunities they will get for involving in planning stage, more the planning will be useful.
- Awareness among the community should be increased. It will help to develop a strong bonding among tourist and host.
- Enough financial supports should provide to the local community for participating in tourism and tourism related activities.
- Securities of local people as well as visitors need to be ensured.
- Local market need to be created for selling the products of local people. It will create additional income source for local residence.
- Special training facilities need to be developed for motivating community people to participate in CBT activities.

#### **VI. Conclusion:**

CommunityBased Tourism encouragesbeing more aware about community's culture, cuisine and lifestyle. The residents can earn money as land manager, entrepreneur, service providers and employees. Community participation is defined as a situation whereby a member of the community who lives in a particular area directly or indirectly participates in tourism decision-making, and/or operates a tourism-related business or works in tourism as an individual or in a group. Community Based Tourism will help to involve the community with tourism activity which will help to ensure sustainability of the resources as well as the destinations. It will also contribute in poverty reduction of that area. While involvement and participation of communities in the tourism industry can be viewed in the decision-making process and in the sharing of tourism benefits, community participation through employment brings more economic benefits directly to the household level which, in turn, can be used to alleviate widespread poverty. To achieve sustainability (economic, socio cultural as well as environmental), Community Based Tourism is essential and community participation is the most fruitful way to be successful in tourism activities and ensuring local people's lifestyle improvement. And local people will be more interested in tourism industry when they will get more benefits from it. From the analysis part, it can be said that proper benefit distribution among stakeholders, giving more priority of local community in decision making process, training and encouraging program will ensure the highest participation of local community in tourism and tourism related activities.

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