

Dimensions of Community Capacity Building: A review of its Implications in Tourism Development

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Abstract: Assessing dimensions of community capacity building is an important step in developing community strategies to achieve tourism development. The purpose of this study is to explore the concept and dimensions of community capacity building with respect to tourism development. The literature derived from my study in tourism development and community capacity building. This study provided unique theoretical for tourism developers and community leaders for develop tourism in local communities with respect to building community capacity. [Journal of American Science 2010;6(1):172-180]. (ISSN: 1545-1003).

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1. Introduction

Community capacity building (CCB) is a necessary condition for improving the process of tourism development and enhancing its benefits for local communities. Community capacity can be defined as the characteristics of a community that enable it to mobilize, identify and solve problems. Chaskin et al. (2001) provided a very useful definition, whereby they state community capacity is the interaction of community capitals, and organizational resources existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve that community (Chaskin et al., 2001). There is an argument that CCB is necessary for community development and participatory processes at the community level (Reid & Gibb, 2004). This research is important because up to the present moment, there has been very little research or discussion focusing upon the CCB in tourism development. The concept of CCB has been given only limited attention in tourism literature, even though it has been extensively used in other areas of development, especially health, education and agriculture (Laverack, 2006; Moscardo, 2008). The literature about implication CCB in tourism development supported by the literature and research evidence from health (George et al., 2007; Labonte & Laverack, 2001a; 2001b; Labonte et al., 2002; Maclellan-Wright et al., 2007; Raeburn et al., 2007; Seremba & Moore, 2005; Wickramage, 2006), education (Harris, 2001; Smyth, 2009) and agriculture (Dollahite et al.,

2005). CCB is vital in order to empower local people to take advantage of the opportunities provided by tourism development (Laverack & Thangphet, 2007). Hence tourism development needs to be supported by CCB activities.

2. Dimensions of Community Capacity Building

Dimensions of community capacity are understood as the "qualities of a capable community" (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a). Labonte & Laverack (2001b) argued that there is a broad agreement concerning the dimensions of community capacity. Previous attempts to conceptualize CCB have involved identifying characteristics or qualities of a capable community (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a). Several groups have identified such dimensions (Bopp et al., 2000; Chaskin et al., 2001; Goodman et al., 1998; Jackson et al., 1999a; 1999b; Kwan, Frankish, Quantz, & Flores, 2003; Labonte & Laverack, 2001a; 2001b), all of which have attempted to classify the characteristics of CCB. As Chaskin (2001, p. 318) believed CCB must focus on these components at the individual level, it is important to develop human resource and community leadership. At the organizational level, efforts could be made to develop the ability of community organizations to serve in community development. At the community level, it seeks to focus on association and relations between community residents, local groups and local community organization to build up community development. The

dimensions of community capacity which are most important for achieving systematic change in local communities are; participation, and leadership, community resources, social network and community power. Collectively, these four dimensions of community capacity represent a community's social capital (Thompson et al., 2003). Labonte & Laverack (2001a, p. 117) identify nine dimensions of community capacity: participation, leadership, organizational structure, problem assessment, resource mobilization, asking why, link with others, role of external agents and program management. Bopp et al. (2000) identifies seven dimensions: shared vision, sense of community, community participation, community leadership, resources, skill and knowledge, communication and ongoing learning. Laverack (2005) outlines nine dimensions of community capacity including; participation, problem assessment capacities, equitable relationship with external agents, organizational stature, resource mobilization, links to other resources and people, leadership, asking why, and control over program management. Maclellan et al. (2007) outlines nine dimensions of community capacity including; community participation, community leadership, community structures, asking why, resource mobilization, link with others, external support, skill and knowledge, and sense of community. Attempts to make the definition of community capacity more specific usually involve articulating dimensions. This research has identified eight essential dimensions of community capacity that can be fostered within local communities. Although these dimension have been used to study of assessing the level of CCB for tourism development in local communities of Shiraz, Iran (Aref, 2009).

2.1 Community Leadership

Goodman et al. (1998) labeled leadership as a dimension for community capacity. He stated that community leaders enhance capacity when they ensure active involvement of a diverse network of community members, thus enabling those with disparate interests to take collective action by forming a unit of solution. Edwards et al., (2000) also considered community leadership to be important an dimension in measuring CCB. Community leadership was identified as a key factor in developing tourism in local communities (Moscardo, 2008). The importance and need for community leadership in building strong capacity communities cannot be ignored. In order to develop in current economic and social environment, communities need leaders who can help local group, businesses, and non-profit organizations to

work together to address challenges and promote local strengths (Wituk et al., 2003). Community capacity is achieved through developing community leadership and decision making skills in community members (Ife, 2002). In a community capacity approach, community leaders play a vital role in handling the programs and plans towards achieving the goals of the community. In addition, a community without leadership may not be equipped to mobilize resources or influence tourism planning. Local communities, like other organization leaders cannot proceed successfully without having and dynamic leaders willing and able to take initiatives. Therefore the success of local community depends on the quality, creativity and commitment of its leadership in maintaining its daily affairs (Uphoff et al., 1998). Community leadership requires a strong base of participants, and participation without good leadership often leads to disorganization (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a). Kirk & Kraft (2004), Mills (2005), and Williams & Wade (2002) have made substantial contribution to studies of community leadership in development. Collectively, they suggest community leadership emphasized a collaborative, ongoing, influential process based on relationship between people for development processes. Raik et al. (2003; 2005b) also believed community leadership is important for collaborative community based tourism development.

2.2 Community Participation

Community participation is a concept that attempts to bring different stakeholders together for community problem solving and decision making (Talbot & Verrinder, 2005). Community participation is considered necessary to get community support for tourism development projects (Cole, 2007). Goodman et al. (1998) labeled community participation as a dimension of community capacity. Community participation refers to peoples' engagement in activities within the community. It plays an essential and long-standing role in promoting quality of life (Putnam, 2000). Community participation in tourism development processes can support and uphold local culture, tradition, knowledge and skill, and create pride in community heritage (Lacy et al., 2002). Community participation is one of the mechanisms to empower people to take part in community development. It was launched as a key concept of tourism development. Increased community participation is a means to achieve community capacity to resolve the community problems (Lasker et al., 2001). Community participation also is the mechanism for active

community involvement in partnership working, decision making and representation in community structures (Chapman & Kirk, 2001). The World Bank recognized the lack of community participation as a reason for failure of many community development attempts in developing countries (World Bank, 1993). Without community participation, there is obviously no partnership, no development and no program. Hence lack of community participation in decision making to implement tourism development can lead to failure in the community development (Miranda, 2007). Meanwhile, some scholars provided a typology of participation, but they do not directly deal with tourism development (Leksakundilok, 2006). Therefore this study attempts to establish a typology of community participation in tourism development based on those models.

Table 1 showed six broad categories or levels of participation, which had been formulated. The six rungs are categorized into three categories. The top of the ladder represents full or genuine participation. The next grouping encompasses three degrees of tokenism, which allow the participants to be heard, to have a voice. At the level of symbolic participation, citizens gain some degree of influence though it is still a form of tokenism as traditional power-holders continue to have the right to decide (Arnstein, 1969). It is the illusion of a voice without the voice itself. The two bottom rungs of the ladder (informing and Manipulation) represent non-participation. In this level, people are allowed to participate, but is does not give them any opportunity to change programs to their own needs and a result maintain the status quo in power relations (Arnstein, 1969).

Table 1: Types of Community Participation in Tourism Development

Levels	Types	Characteristics
Genuine Participation	Empowerment	Local people may directly contact explorer tourists and develop tourism by themselves (Choguill, 1996; Dewar, 1999; Pretty, 1995). Local people have control over all development without any external force or influence(Choguill, 1996; Dewar, 1999).
Symbolic Participation	Partnership	There are some degrees of local influence in tourism development process (Arnstein, 1969).
	Interaction	People have greater involvement in this level. The rights of local people are recognized and accepted in practice at local level (Pretty, 1995).
	Consultation	People are consulted in several ways, e.g. being involved in community's meeting or even public hearings. Developers may accept some contribution from the locals that benefits their project (Arnstein, 1969).
Non-Participation	Informing	People are told about tourism development program, which have been decided already, in the community. The developers run the projects without listening to local people's opinions (Arnstein, 1969).
	Manipulation	Tourism development is generally developed by some powerful individuals, or government, without any discussion with the people (Arnstein, 1969).

Source: Adapted from Leksakundilok (2006)

2.3 Community Structures

Community structures can provide the source of both problems and potential solutions in the sphere of community development (Richards & Hall, 2000). According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) community resource helps tourism destinations to identify linkages in supply and opportunities which could be pursued to increase their potential for tourism development. Hence community resource is the baseline of tourism development activities. Success in tourism development comes from knowing what resource are available for

tourism development (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000, p. 8). Local community structures can bridge the gap between individual and organizations in a community. They also can have a significant effect on processes of tourism development. Community structures are labeled as a dimension of community capacity (MacLellan-Wright et al., 2007; Public Health Agency of Canada, 2007). Community structures in a community include small groups such as committees, and youth groups. Laverack (2001) labeled community structures as a domain of community capacity. According to Anderson et

al. (2007) community structures refer to smaller or less formal community groups and committees that foster belonging and give the community a chance to express views and exchange information for tourism development.

2.4 External Supports

Maclellan (2007) and also Public Health Agency of Canada (2007) labeled external supports as a dimension of community capacity. External supports can as a means of determining the community's access to external supports for development of tourism in local communities, community's access to external supports that are both internal and external to a community, social capital or the ability to generate trust, confidence and cooperation, existence of communication channels within and outside of a community. External support such as government departments and local authorities can link communities and external resources in tourism development. External support may also contribute to empowering community organization to take full advantage of opportunities for community development (Reid & Gibb, 2004).

2.5 Skill and Knowledge

To build community capacity, community participants need to procure skills and knowledge. Knowledge helps people to think and act in new ways. Many authors identify the important role knowledge play in individual capacity (Bopp et al., 2000; Frank & Smith, 1999). The concept of community skill and knowledge is regarded as a tool to assist in tourism development and community development as well in local communities. Skill and knowledge has become an important source for tourism development. Bopp et al. (2000) labeled skill and knowledge as one dimension of community capacity. Increased skill and knowledge can be attained by any stakeholder in community based tourism development, local government officials, leaders and community residents. The findings from analysis of 392 case studies of tourism development indicated that the greatest barriers to effective tourism development were due to a lack of skill and knowledge about tourism in general. This lack of tourism skill and knowledge are critical barriers that not only directly limit the ability of local people to participate in tourism development but also contribute to the next set of barriers: a lack of tourism leadership and domination of external agents (Moscardo, 2008). Moscardo (2008) also argues that a lack of knowledge of tourism has been used in many developing countries to justify the exclusion of local residents and other community

stockholders from involvement in marketing decisions and there exists little information on how to resolve this problem. According to Hall et al. (2005, p. 5) limited awareness of tourism can contribute to false expectations about the benefits of tourism and a lack of preparedness for change associated with tourism, and limits opportunities for locals to benefit from tourism opportunities. Thus, enhancing community knowledge and skill is one aspect of building community capacity for tourism development in local communities (Moscardo, 2008). Lack of skill and knowledge also constrains the ability of local communities to fully control their participation in tourism development (Cole, 2007). Community development also requires a broad base of skill and knowledge on many subjects. Thus development skill and knowledge are important to long-term success of any community tourism development process (Frank & Smith, 1999).

2.6 Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization was measured in this study as a means of determining the community's ability to identify resources development of tourism in local communities as well as being a dimension within community capacity (Goodman et al., 1998). A successful building capacity process for tourism development requires strategic use of community resources. Goodman et al., (1998) discussed the dimension of resource mobilization as pertaining to resource acquisition, diversity, equitable distribution, sharing, use, appreciation and planning. Eng & Parker (1994) discussed resource mobilization as the measurement of relations with wider society. Fawcett et al. (1995) identified access to resources to be one of the multiple dimensions of environmental factors influencing initiatives and ability to engage in an empowerment building process. A local community with capacity also has access to resources. These resources include those of economic, human, physical and political nature (Chaskin et al., 2001). These resources represent the community's ability to make instrumental links with larger social systems, and the ability to access and leverage resources located inside and outside of the community. According to Schaeffer & Loveridge (2000) building capacity in communities requires multiple source and also time to develop. Hence community resources mobilizations are an essential component for community capacity. They can affect the community's ability to achieve their goals. Community resources mobilization comes in many forms. The community resource for community capacity in

tourism development can be accessed from a variety of sources including, private and voluntary sector. But the financial resources are arguably the most central aspect of community resources (De Vita et al., 2001). Tourism development as an important part of any community development must be accompanied with resource allocation. The future of any community development depends largely on local ability to raise or restore their community-based tourism.

2.7 Community Power

Community power is often unequally distributed across groups within local communities. The notion of community power is considered as a tool to assist in tourism development in local communities (Sebola & Fourie, 2006). Chaskin et al. (2001) states community power is necessary to maintain some ongoing community capacity. Efforts to strength community capacity in local communities have multiple motivations. The most common one is to improve quality of life in the community by increasing its ability and power as well as increasing ability to access external resources (Chaskin et al., 2001). According to Smyth (2009) community power is helping residents act together so as to strategically acquire resource necessary to improve community development. Community

power has become an umbrella for supposedly a new genre of development intervention (Tosun, 2000). It can be seen as a process whereby the community residents are given a voice and a choice to participate in issues affecting their lives (Theron, 2005a). Bianchi (2003) and Cheong & Miller (2000) have made substantial contributions to studies of community power in tourism development. Successful tourism development needs overcoming barriers to community empowerment at structural, operational and cultural level. Community power is manifestly critical in tourism development (Cheong & Miller, 2000). Simmons (1994) has argued that involvement of a community in tourism decision making processes is vital for the residents of destination. However community power as a component of community capacity often faces barriers in tourism development (Moscardo, 2008). Ashley & Roe (1998) describe community power as a spectrum from passive to active involvement to full participation. The above theoretical arguments for community power in tourism development seem to indicate that if their views are applied and put into action, most of the problems of tourism development may be avoided. Figure 1 illustrates the ladder of community power on tourism development policies.

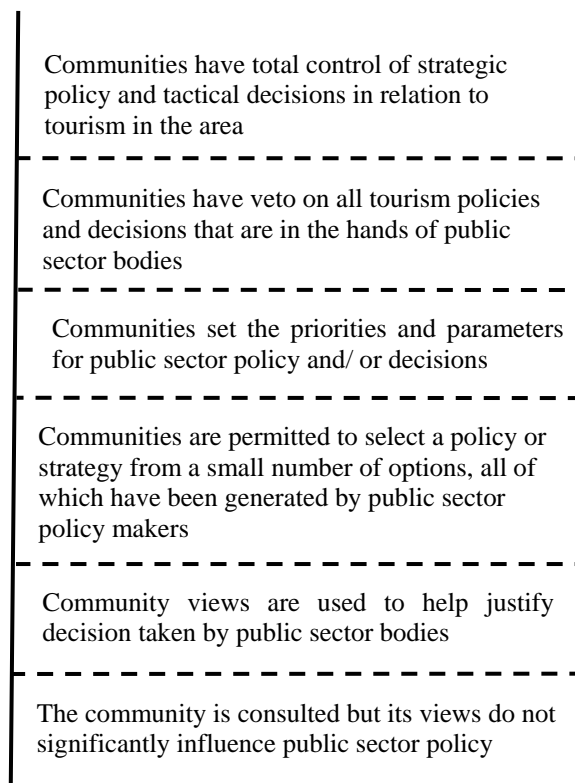


Figure 1: The Ladder of Community Power Adapted from Swarbrooke (1999, p. 126)

2.8 Sense of Community

The sense of community plays an important role in fostering support for tourism development and may enhance its long-term sustainability as a broad basis for tourism development planning (Hall et al., 2005). Sarason (1974) defined sense of community as the interdependence between an individual and community. Bopp et al. (2000, p. 113) defines sense of community in the following way: "sense of community refers to the quality of human relationship that makes it possible for people to live together in a healthy and sustainable way". Sense of community also helps people feel they are a part of something larger than themselves. Developing a sense of community contributes to CCB by enabling people to feel connected and motivated to live in harmony and work together towards common community goals. A key term used in community development and community capacity is sense of community. Sense of community is a sense of belonging to a community in which it entails interaction with other members of the community (Buckner, 1988). Sense of community can be seen as the capacity of the local people to participate in development activities (Cupples, 2005). Tourism developers often like to encourage a sense of community among community residents as a way of contributing to building community capacity. Thus local communities

play a vital role in addressing tourism development base capacity building (Beeton, 2006). In relation to this, community leaders, stockholders, and tourism development practitioners should regard the concept of sense of community as a refinement of community members. While there is a substantial body of literature on the definition and conceptualization of sense of community (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Davidson & Cotter, 1989; McMillan & Chavis, 1986), only a few literatures discuss the practical application of approaches that have been successfully used to measure sense of community in different cultural contexts. Local communities for building community capacity in tourism development requires strengthening of sense of community (Conway & Hachen, 2005). The lack of sense of community has been reported as one of the reasons as to why people do not participate in development activities (DeNeui, 2003).

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3. Conclusion

The literature review revealed the importance relevance of CCB for tourism development planning in local communities. This study showed eight dimensions of CCB in three levels are involved in processes of tourism development. This study is the first of its kind to use the CCB for tourism development in local communities. The findings of this study contribute to tourism literature and community development. In addition, the findings of this study can be useful in assisting tourism planners, and academic researchers to assess, monitor and evaluate current or potential tourism development. The outcome of this investigation also assists researchers in the field of community development and the tourism industry.

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