

Guiding the Future of Community-Based Tourism: Leadership Behaviours that Drive Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

Leadership plays a crucial role in the development and sustainability of community-based tourism (CBT). This study examines typical leadership behaviours in CBT development, focusing on collaborative leadership, community engagement, leadership by example, and open communication. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. An interview guide and a questionnaire were used as data collection instruments to collect information from 40 management committee members. Qualitative data from focus group discussions were analysed thematically using NVivo software, while quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics in Statistical Package for Service Solution (v. 24). Findings indicate that leaders in CBT environments exhibit participatory and consultative leadership styles, fostering strong community involvement and stakeholder collaboration. The study highlights the role of servant, transformational, and authentic leadership in ensuring sustainable tourism practices. The results emphasise that effective leadership in CBT is not only about guiding decision-making but also about creating an inclusive and transparent environment that aligns with community needs and aspirations. The study recommends further research into leadership adaptation to varying community dynamics and stakeholder expectations.

Keywords: Leadership behaviours, community-based tourism, stakeholder engagement, participatory leadership, sustainable tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has gained recognition as a sustainable and inclusive approach to tourism development, where local communities act and play active roles in decision-making in tourism promotion and development, as well as benefit from tourism-related activities in the destination (Gupta et al., 2022). Leadership is a critical factor in the success of CBT, as it influences stakeholder engagement, resource management, and long-term sustainability (Sharma et al., 2019). Effective leadership ensures that community members are empowered to contribute meaningfully and gainfully to tourism initiatives while preserving socio-cultural heritage and natural as well as physical resources in the environment (Sawatsuk et al., 2018). The role of leadership in CBT development extends beyond traditional management functions. It encompasses participatory decision-making, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and aligning tourism strategies with the aspirations of the local population (Sharma et al., 2019). Leadership behaviours, including transformational, servant, and authentic leadership styles, play a pivotal role in shaping the direction of CBT initiatives and its development (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2019). By demonstrating visionary thinking, cultural sensitivity, and ethical forbearance in leadership, CBT leaders can create an environment that promotes innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability (McGehee et al., 2018).

Despite the significance of leadership in Community-Based-Tourism Development (CBTD), there is limited research on the specific leadership behaviours that contribute to its success. Previous studies on CBTD, such as those by Zielinski et al. (2021) and Giampiccoli and Saayman (2018), have primarily concentrated on broad themes such as community participation, sustainable tourism practices, and socio-economic impacts. However, these studies often overlook a focused examination of individual or collective leadership styles. Leadership when discussed is frequently treated or discussed in general terms without delving into specific behaviours or

approaches such as transformational, participative, or transactional leadership that may influence CBTD outcomes. This lack of depth has led to inconsistencies in understanding how different leadership behaviours impact the success and sustainability of CBTD initiatives.

Understanding these behaviours and the associated dynamics is essential for policymakers, tourism practitioners, and community leaders to develop frameworks that enhance community participation and economic benefits while ensuring the long-term viability of tourism projects in the destination and their communities (Naderi et al., 2019). This study examines the typical leadership behaviours exhibited in CBT development, focusing on collaborative leadership, leadership by example, community engagement, and open communication (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Tuan, 2022). Using a mixed-methods approach, the study provides insights into how leadership practices influence tourism outcomes and stakeholder relationships.

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on tourism leadership by exploring leadership behaviours within the unique context of CBT. The findings offer practical implications for improving leadership strategies in community-based tourism settings, ensuring that tourism development aligns with community needs and aspirations (Kim et al., 2019; Chon & Zoltan, 2019). Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of adaptive, inclusive, and ethical leadership in fostering sustainable tourism that benefits the community and visitors alike.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Foundation theories of the study

Path-Goal Theory of Leadership

Path-Goal Theory of Leadership is a contingency leadership approach that addresses a leader's interaction with individual followers. Robert J. House (1971) in his theory suggests that effective leaders make clearer the path to goal attainment, remove seeming obstacles, and provide the needed support and reward systems to enhance employee and follower motivation and performance in every organisation. It focuses on the leader's role in motivating, satisfying, and guiding followers towards achieving their responsibilities and goals as ascribed in the organisation and beyond (Olowoselu et al., 2019). The theory further stresses that an effective leader is expected to assist followers in attaining task goals and making followers' efforts rewarding and satisfying. Embedded in this leadership theory lies varied leadership styles such as directive leadership, participative leadership, supportive leadership, and achievement-oriented leadership (Olowoselu et al., 2019). Under this theory, follower motivation as well as situational factors such as the characteristics of the task and roles, follower's abilities, and environmental factors, in determining the most effective leadership style. Li et al. (2018) reiterate directive, non-authoritarian, and non-punitive guidance by the leader as the main distinct leadership styles proposed by this theory. The leader organises and schedules the work and directs the followers in a non-threatening manner what, when, where and how the work or task is to be performed.

The Multiple Linkage Theory of Leadership (MLT)

The Multiple Linkage Theory of Leadership (MLT), espoused by Yukl (1971), proposes a leadership module that emphasises the dynamic interactions that exist among leaders, followers, and the organisational context (Ball, 2018). This theory of leadership has it that, effective leadership is influenced by multiple factors such as leader attributes; (personality, values, skills, and experience; these attributes shape a leader's behaviours and interactions with the followers, which is critical in understanding leadership outcomes), follower characteristics (motivation, competence, and attitudes, in the leadership process; followers may respond differently to leadership behaviours based on their individual needs and preferences) task requirements (different tasks may require different leadership approaches, and leaders must adapt their behaviours and strategies to match the specific demands of the task at hand), and finally, organisational culture (organisational philosophy, structure, and support systems can impact a leader's ability to motivate and guide followers effectively) (Ball, 2018). This theory posits that in the short term, group effectiveness hinges on the leader's ability to utilise leadership behaviours to address deficiencies in intervening variables. The Multiple Linkage Theory of Leadership stresses the importance of leaders building and managing the interconnectedness of

leaders and followers within an organisation or a community (Ball, 2018); thus, maintaining positive and resolving negative connections among various stakeholders involved in the tourism development process, especially in the destination (Haque & Yamoah, 2021).

In line with the findings of Khalid et al. (2020), leadership styles and organisational performance in the hospitality sector are closely interlinked. The study emphasised that leaders must adopt flexible and adaptive leadership approaches tailored to the specific organisational context, the nature of tasks, and the dynamics of follower relationships. Leaders who adjust their leadership styles to accommodate the needs of their followers and the complexities of their tasks are more likely to achieve favourable outcomes. These insights align with the central tenets of the Multiple-Linkage Theory (MLT), which posits that effective leadership is influenced by a combination of factors, including the leader's attributes, follower characteristics, task demands, and the overarching organisational culture.

Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2022), in their study on leadership and organisational culture within tourism organisations, found that leaders who understand and effectively manage their organisation's cultural values and structural dynamics are better able to align their teams with strategic objectives. This supports MLT's assertion that organisational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping leadership effectiveness, particularly in how cultural context can either enhance or hinder a leader's capacity to inspire, guide, and align followers towards achieving organisational goals.

Normative Decision-Making Theory of Participation (NDMTP)

Normative Decision-Making Theory of Participation (NDMTP) proposed by Vroom and Yetton (1973) is a leadership theory that focuses on a leader's decision-making process and the level of employee or follower participation in that process (Perlaviciute, 2022). Thus, NDMTP sets an outline for leaders to determine the most appropriate level of follower involvement in the decision-making process; these styles include autocratic (A1), consultative (A2, C1, C2), and group-based (G2) decision-making (Banerjee-Batist et al., 2022). In a decision-making context, leaders may adopt various decision-making elements to guide their approach. These elements encompass a spectrum of leadership styles, each with its distinctive characteristics. A leader may decide (Autocratic - A1) on his or her own; thus, a leader makes decisions alone without recourse to subordinates or followers. This is mostly based on expertise and information available at the time of decision-making. The leader may consult individuals (Consultative - A2, C1, C2) by sharing the problem with followers on an individual basis and obtaining suggestions regarding solutions to challenges or problems, that notwithstanding, the leader takes the ultimate decision (Perlaviciute, 2022; Banerjee-Batist et al., 2022). In other words, the leader may also engage in group consultation (Consultative - A2, C1, C2 and G2) by openly sharing problems with followers as a collective and soliciting suggestions from the group of followers. NDMTP advocates that leaders should effectively involve relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process (Namchaisiri et al., 2022; Perlaviciute, 2022). This is because they can influence leadership decisions. Mostly, the course of leadership activities by and large is directed towards these stakeholders. NDMTP provides a framework for leaders to determine the most appropriate level of follower involvement in the decision-making process (Banerjee-Batist et al., 2022; Perlaviciute, 2022).

Michaelsen et al. (2021) considered the relationship between participative decision-making and team performance and decision quality within the framework of management teams. Their finding showed that an increased degree of follower participation, especially through consultative and group attention, improved decision-making outcomes and team cohesion, thus supporting the belief that engaging followers in decision-making promotes more overall effectiveness. This helps the NDMTP to lay the framework whereby, for different levels of task nature and follower in ten, different levels of involvement are required.

In another study, Ali and Yilmaz (2023) examined the effect of the leadership decision-making styles in the process of organisational change management. They discovered that during periods of change, organisations that used a consultative or group-based approach to decision making reached a greater buy-in of the employees, resulting in more successful implementation of changes. This fits in with NDMTP's claim that proper follower participation in decision making is very important for any successful outcome, especially in a dynamic and changing environment of organisations.

Leadership behaviours

Leadership behaviour encompasses the actions, attitudes, and traits demonstrated by a leader in their role. It involves how leaders engage with their followers, make decisions, communicate, motivate, and navigate different situations (Giddens, 2018). When leaders fail to apply the requisite leadership behaviour or unsuitably apply behaviours, followers are not predisposed to achieve the expected group goals. To positively influence followers, a leader must effectively employ specific behavioural strategies and patterns (Marquardt et al., 2021).

Satria et al. (2021) identifies five important leadership functions that drive organisational success. These include articulating a compelling vision and steering focus towards its realisation, cultivating a high-performing team, and sustaining motivation among team members. Additionally, effective leadership involves fostering constructive relationships with stakeholders to facilitate seamless communication of relevant information and addressing the needs of followers to minimise attrition rates (Satria et al., 2021). These leadership functions ultimately contribute to enhanced job performance, high group and organisational outcomes, and overall effectiveness, which is often measured by an organisation's profitability or productivity. Moreover, they influence follower satisfaction, optimise group processes, and contribute to a leader's career success. It is important to recognise that leadership behaviour is shaped by situational factors, individual traits, and personal style, with different leadership styles yielding varying effects (Chang et al., 2020) while some may be more, pragmatic, participative and empowering, others may be more directive and autocratic, among others.

According to the literature, both leadership style and competency are the key elements for a successful organisation (Turner & Müller, 2005). For example, service quality, employee loyalty and customer satisfaction which are borne out of effective leadership, play critical role in prompting positive outcomes (Cummings et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2020). An effective leadership style can be developed through a thorough understanding of the prevailing situation (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). This implies that a leader should possess the flexibility to adapt their leadership approach in response to the circumstances at hand. To enhance effectiveness, leaders must prioritise supporting their followers while fostering trust and respect, which are fundamental to sustaining strong leader-follower relationships (Koohang et al., 2017; Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). Leadership behaviour can vary greatly depending on individual traits, personal lifestyle, and situational factors. Some leaders may be more autocratic and directive, while others may be more participatory and empowering (Marquardt et al., 2021). Effective leaders mostly craft a compelling vision and remain focused on it, establish high-performance working teams, sustain team's motivation, cultivate positive internal and external relationships with stakeholders to ensure smooth information flow while prioritising follower satisfaction to reduce attrition rates within the organisation (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014; Koohang et al. 2017).

Community-based tourism has been developed as a responsible and sustainable approach to tourism development and promotion for the benefit and betterment of local communities by sustaining and preserving their cultural and natural heritage (Dangi & Jamal 2016; Gupta et al. 2022). This cannot be attained without the application of effective leadership behaviours to shape and guide tourism initiatives to foster positive outcomes for both tourists and residents (Sharma et al., 2019). Thus, effective leadership in community-based tourism is not merely about managing tourism operations; rather, it is about stewarding a shared vision of harmony between tourism development, promotion, sustaining as well as fostering community well-being. Effective leadership in CBT development will provide a clear vision and direction for a community's tourism initiatives and drive (Sawatsuk et al., 2018). Such leadership traits, when effectively exhibited, will help set strategic goals that align with a community's values, cultural heritage, and long-term aspirations (Parris & Peachey, 2013). This visionary approach ensures that tourism activities are purposeful, sustainable, and contribute positively to the overall development of the community (Sharma et al., 2019).

Not only is effective leadership pivotal in driving the CBT development agenda toward sustainability but also responsible for mutually beneficial outcomes. Leaders who exemplify visionary, empowering, and culturally sensitive approaches toward the day-to-day management of tourism initiatives in the community can create a

positive environment where tourism thrives, residents flourish, and the natural and cultural heritage is preserved for posterity (Naderi et al., 2019).

Types of leadership styles

The appropriate actions, attitudes, and characteristics expected and exhibited by a leader in his or her role constitute effective leadership behaviour (Sharma et al., 2019). This section explores the significance of three leadership styles: transformational, servant, and authentic leadership in community-based tourism development and how they contribute to its success. The correct application of leadership theories in the daily routine leads to the aforementioned effective leadership styles. It should, however, be noted that these effective leadership styles are not exclusive of each other. They are mutually inclusive and applied based on situations at hand, and follower characteristics, among other factors. The following (transformational, servant, and authentic) are considered effective leadership styles (Sharma et al., 2019).

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership is a style of leading as in community members to transcend their interests in favour of the collective growth of tourism ventures. In CBTD, transformational leaders have created a common vision, that promote innovation, and empower local people to become active decision makers at a community level, which builds stronger, cohesive and sustainable communities (Naderi et al., 2019).

Transformational leadership inspires, encourages, and motivates followers to innovate and create the necessary change to shape the future course of action of a successful organisation or entity. This is mostly accomplished through leadership by example at the executive level through authentic practices. This leadership style is characterised by visionary thinking, inspiring communication, and the ability to motivate and empower individuals toward achieving common goals (Naderi et al., 2019). This propels a strong sense of corporate culture, employee and follower ownership, as well as independence and interdependence in the workplace. Transformational leaders are considered agents of change who are capable of identifying innovative ideas and shifting technological trends and are in the position to shoulder an organisational responsibility to embrace that change (Naderi et al., 2019).

Like in other industries, this leadership style has gained recognition as a valuable approach and the same can be said of the tourism industry and by extension, community-based tourism development. The application of this leadership theory in community-based tourism development is vital in exploring its impact on community engagement, capacity building, sustainable development, and empowerment as well as leadership behaviours on innovation. Such leaders are expected to exhibit charismatic qualities, provide intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, and offer inspirational motivation to their followers and the entire destination as well as the tourism value chain (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020). Transformational leaders in community-based tourism development have the propensity to foster community engagement by inspiring and motivating community members to actively contribute to the tourism development processes, as well as community capacity building for tourism development. This comes into play by identifying and developing the skill sets, knowledge, and resources within the community, empowering individuals to actively contribute to tourism projects (Mishra et al., 2019; Liu, 2017). Research by Naderi et al. (2019) suggests a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and various beneficial outcomes in the context of tourism development, as this leadership fosters the creation of social value and social capital within tourism communities. This leadership style offers valuable insights for community-based tourism development because of its inclination to foster community engagement, capacity building, sustainable practices, and empowerment (Nguyen et al., 2022).

Cultural sensitivity, addressing power imbalances, managing conflicting interests, and ensuring long-term commitment and continuity can all be born out of transformational leadership approaches. Situating this leadership attribute in the context of community-based tourism development and its promotion, transformational leaders can drive positive change by encouraging collaboration, creativity, and a sense of purpose among community members (Liu, 2017). They can set a clear vision for CBT development, empowerment and skill development and ensure collaborative decision-making (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2019).

Servant leadership

Servant leadership calls the leader a servant first with a priority to the needs of the community, not his ambition. Servant leaders concentrate on listening, empathy, and developing the potential of local stakeholders (Eva et al., 2019). They ensure that there is trust and inclusive participation, thus tourism development takes all segments of the community into account, especially the marginalised.

Servant leadership is characterised by a focus on the needs of followers by serving them selflessly; this leadership style has gained prominence in various contexts, including tourism (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Servant leadership centres on the leader's commitment to serving others' needs and promoting the well-being of the community (Kiker et al., 2019). Thus, the leader's resolve to serve others' needs and promote the well-being of their team members or followers is a trait of servant leaders. A servant leadership style is outward-looking and a people-centred approach that emphasises the leader's role as a facilitator and supporter, working in service of their team members' growth and success by fostering a culture of trust, empowerment, and collaboration (Chon & Zoltan, 2019; Kim et al., 2019).

In this leadership approach, leaders prioritise empathy, humility, and the growth of their followers, fostering trust and community within the organisation. Within tourism, this style has the propensity to promote community engagement, sustainable development, and social responsibility, along with collaborative networks and partnerships (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Tuan, 2020). However, while servant leadership encourages community empowerment and decision-making participation, it requires leaders to navigate factors such as power dynamics, cultural sensitivities, and conflicting interests (Mantikei et al., 2020; Tuan, 2022). One advantage of servant leadership in community-based tourism would be its ability to promote responsible tourism practices, such as cultural preservation and equitable benefit distribution within the destination and beyond to the wider area economy (Chon & Zoltan, 2019). By prioritising the long-term well-being of both the community and the environment, servant leaders contribute to sustainable development and positive outcomes within the community (McGehee et al., 2018). Additionally, this leadership style enhances perceptions of social responsibility among community members, this further fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to tourism initiatives (Kim et al., 2019; Chon & Zoltan, 2019).

However, despite its advantages, servant leadership in community-based tourism could also present challenges relating to power dynamics. Leaders must address these dynamics within the destination; conflicting interests among stakeholders, including community members, governmental agencies, NGOs, and tourism organisations are mostly eminent. Leaders are to be mindful of cultural sensitivity to effectively engage and empower community members (Mantikei et al., 2020) and it requires adept negotiation skills and compromise in dealing with such situations (McGehee et al., 2018). Additionally, per the nature of this leadership style, the emphasis on serving others and promoting community well-being may sometimes lead to neglecting organisational goals or individual needs within the leadership structure (Parris and Peachey, 2013).

On the positive side, servant leadership will promote a collaborative environment where community members will feel valued and empowered to contribute to decision-making processes regarding tourism development and promotion (Mantikei et al., 2020). Such a participatory approach does not only strengthen community ties but also leads to innovative solutions and a sense of ownership over tourism initiatives (McGehee et al., 2018). Moreover, by promoting social responsibility and sustainable practices, servant leaders enhance the reputation of the destination, attracting environmentally conscious tourists and fostering long-term economic growth for the destination as well (Kim et al., 2019; Chon & Zoltan, 2019). All in all, servant leadership in community-based tourism can foster collaboration, responsible tourism practices, and sustainable development (Mantikei et al., 2020; Tuan, 2022; Tuan, 2020). This style of leadership can create a nurturing environment where residents' interests are prioritised above personal gains.

Authentic leadership

Authentic leadership is a leadership perspective that focuses on openness, morality, and a real relationship between leaders and the led. This is based on the premise that successful leaders are self-aware, who follow

their values and beliefs and who build trust by consistently doing the right thing despite, perhaps, personally costly consequences (Kılıç & Yavuz, 2021).

An authentic leadership style is centred on leaders who remain true to themselves and their values and will offer several advantages when applied in community-based tourism. Authentic leadership revolves around leaders being true to themselves and their values, leading with integrity and honesty. They promote genuine relationships with their followers, exhibit transparency, and foster an environment of trust and open communication in their role as leaders (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014). Leaders who embody authenticity build genuine relationships, and foster trust and open communication within the community (Moayerian et al., 2022). This trust is essential for successful partnerships, resource sharing, and overall community support for sustainable tourism development. Moreover, authentic leaders demonstrate integrity and ethical behaviours. This further enhances trust among followers and community members (Wang et al., 2014). By valuing everyone's voice and encouraging community participation, authentic leaders facilitate active involvement in shaping tourism initiatives, leading to a sense of ownership and commitment within the community (Moayerian et al., 2022).

More so, authentic leaders recognise the importance of cultural preservation, celebrate local heritage and align it with principles of sustainable tourism development (Gardner et al., 2021). This alignment promotes environmental conservation, equitable distribution of benefits, and community involvement in tourism initiatives. This can foster positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes as a fallout of tourism development and promotion in the CBTD setting (Gardner et al., 2021). However, despite its advantages, authentic leadership in community-based tourism can also face challenges. Cultural dynamics require leaders to adapt their strategies to different contexts, necessitating further exploration of effective approaches (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014). Maintaining authenticity while managing diverse stakeholder interests and balancing community needs with tourism development goals can be complex (Gardner et al., 2021). The cultural nuances identified in various destinations may present barriers to the building of trust and community engagement, which requires leaders to navigate these challenges with sensitivity, adaptability and general tact (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014).

Additionally, while authentic leadership promotes inclusivity and openness, it may also encounter possible resistance from local power structures or cultural norms that favour hierarchical leadership styles (Wang et al., 2014). These traditional leadership structures are mostly rigid and will oppose any new form of leadership that is presented to them.

Despite these challenges, authentic leadership has the potential to enhance community engagement, trust-building, and sustainable development in community-based tourism. Research into specific strategies employed by authentic leaders in building trust and fostering community engagement across diverse cultural contexts can enhance the effectiveness of this leadership style (Moayerian et al., 2022). Summing it up, authentic leadership offers valuable advantages that can be applied in community-based tourism development and promotion; these include trust-building, community participation, and cultural preservation amidst addressing the possible complexities of cultural dynamics and stakeholder interests which is essential for maximising its impact and overcoming potential disadvantages thereof. In a community-based tourism development setting, this style of leadership will arguably foster trust, credibility, and genuine relationships between leaders and the community (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014; Moayerian et al., 2022). They ensure transparency and open communication, cultural respect and sensitivity as well as building sustainable partnerships as part of their management responsibilities (Moayerian et al., 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Study area

The study areas are within community-based tourism destinations in Ghana. Community-based tourism (CBT) in Ghana allows tourists to deeply engage with local communities and cultures while promoting sustainable development and cultural preservation. A total of 10 communities that are actively involved in community-

based tourism initiatives were selected for the study. Table 3.1 gives detailed of the study areas identified for the study.

Table 1 Community-based Tourism Sites Identified for the Study

Destination	Location/Region
Boabeng-Fiema (Monkey Sanctuary)	Boabeng-Fiema, Bono East Region
Duasidan (Monkey Sanctuary)	Duasidan, Bono Region
Kintampo - Kyeremankoma (Waterfalls)	Kintampo, Bono East Region
Abono (Lake Bosomtwe)	Bosomtwe, Ashanti Region
Nchiraa (Waterfalls)	Nchiraa, Bono Region
Nzulezu (Village on Stilts)	Nzulezu, Western Region
Paga (Crocodile Pond)	Paga, Upper East Region
Tafi Atome (Monkey Sanctuary)	Tafi Atome, Volta Region
Larabanga (The Larabanga Mosque)	Larabanga, Savannah Region
Agumatsa (Wli Waterfalls, Butterfly Sanctuary)	Wli, Volta Region

Source: Field data (2023)

Research design and approach

Sample and sampling technique

Regarding the sample, a purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants (management committee members and community leaders) who were directly involved in CBTD decision-making were included. In all, thirty management committee members were involved in the entire qualitative data collection process. These individuals possessed insider knowledge of the leadership practices influencing tourism development in the communities under study. Additionally, forty respondents (management committee members and community leaders either from the traditional council or District Assembly's Tourism Development Office) answered the questionnaires for the quantitative component. This dual approach allowed for the triangulation of findings, providing a broader and more robust understanding of leadership behaviours in community-based tourism development.

Data collection tools

Focus group interviews were conducted with approximately 2 management committee members, with a community leader included from the communities to elicit detailed information about their leadership roles in community-based tourism development in their respective areas. The interviews were conducted by the researcher with an interview guide.

Likewise, a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire was adopted for the quantitative data. A questionnaire was designed to quantitatively measure various dimensions of leadership from forty management committee members. Questionnaires consisted of two primary sections: one focusing on the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the other examined typical leadership behaviours in community-based tourism development that are exhibited by community-based tourism management committees. The instrument included both closed-ended questions, providing predefined response options. Creswell and Hirose (2019)

suggest that closed-ended questions offer the advantage of providing researchers with predetermined responses, which can yield valuable information to support theories and concepts in literature. The other component was open-ended to allow respondents to share their unrestricted views on the information solicited.

Data analysis

The qualitative data was analysed using NVivo software to code responses into themes. This type of analysis (thematic) helped organise and analyse the typical leadership behaviours in CBT development. The quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS v. 24). Descriptive statistics, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to present the results in tables.

RESULTS

The demographic analysis of the management committees, as presented in Table 2, indicates a group that is composed of male members (65.0%), demonstrating male dominance in these roles. The committee is predominantly composed of middle-aged persons, with the highest representation (32.5%) in the age category of 40-49 years. This is closely followed by those in the age bracket of 50-59 years (27.5%). The data indicates that the majority of persons (50.0%) are married, suggesting a solid personal life situation. The committee members possess a high level of education, with the majority possessing a First Degree (65.0%). This indicates that they are a well-educated group capable of providing informed opinions on their responsibilities. Majority of committee members have supervisory roles (82.5%), indicating they provide practical and operational perspectives on management. Notably, a substantial proportion; 42.5%, of members have served for over 10 years, while 25% had been in leadership positions for 6-10 years, indicating that the bulk of the members are seasoned professionals. This points to the fact that a considerable level of knowledge and comprehension of community-based tourism issues under consideration can be found among the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Management Committee Members

Features	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Female	14	35.0
	Male	26	65.0
Age	19-29	4	10.0
	30-39	10	25.0
	40-49	13	32.5
	50-59	11	27.5
	>60	2	5.0
Marital Status	Divorced	5	12.5
	Married	20	50.0
	Single	10	25.0
	Widowed	5	12.5
Level of Education	Diploma/HND	9	22.5
	First Degree	26	65.0

	Master's Degree	4	10.0
	Other (s)	1	2.5
Role	Manager	6	15.0
	Other (s):	1	2.5
	Supervisor	33	82.5
Duration of Service in the current position	1-5 years	13	32.5
	6-10 years	10	25.0
	>10 years	17	42.5

Source; Field data (2023)

Table 2 presents the descriptive data, including the mean and standard deviation, for some expected leadership behaviours in Community-Based Tourism development. These behaviours were evaluated on a Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5.

Leaders demonstrate a notable commitment to encourage team participation in decision-making, as shown by a significant average score ($M= 4.45$, $SD= 0.55$) in promoting team participation. The low standard deviation indicates a consistent observation of this pattern among most of the leaders. This implies a leadership approach that emphasises cooperation, which includes all individuals who matter in the decision-making process. Similarly, there is a significant focus on attaining objectives and completing activities ($M= 4.38$, $SD= 0.58$). This suggests that leaders often prioritise the completion of tasks and consistently employ a systematic manner to achieve them. The emphasis on outcomes is a crucial element of successful leadership in community-based tourism. Leaders exhibit a meticulous approach to project management by closely monitoring schedules to guarantee timely completion, as seen by a mean score of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.52. The consistency of this conduct among the leaders suggests a shared recognition of the significance of adhering to deadlines. With a higher mean score of 4.55 and a standard deviation of 0.59, subordinates receive a high level of coaching from leaders. This is an expression that leaders not only actively guide their teams but also feel delighted doing so. Leaders often promote innovation among their staff ($M= 4.35$, $SD= 0.48$) and continuously respect the bounds of others ($M= 4.07$, $SD= 0.57$). Both actions demonstrate minimal variability, suggesting a consistent strategy for cultivating a creative work atmosphere and honouring individual limits.

Table 3 Typical Leadership Behaviours

Typical leadership behaviours	Mean	Std. Deviation
I encourage team participation in decision-making and I value their input.	4.45	.55
Nothing is a priority than achieving a set goal or task.	4.38	.58
I closely monitor schedule to ensure timely completion of tasks	4.32	.52
I enjoy coaching others on new tasks and procedures	4.55	.59
I focus on challenging tasks with extra attention	3.55	1.03
Fostering creativity among my team is important to me.	4.35	.48
I pay close attention to detail in complex tasks.	4.08	.69

I manage multiple tasks simultaneously effectively.	3.00	1.26
I enjoy learning and applying insights from professional literature.	3.45	1.10
Addressing mistakes without damaging relationships is part of my approach.	3.73	1.01
I excel in time management.	4.30	.64
Explaining complex tasks to my team is enjoyable for me.	4.20	.51
Breaking down projects into manageable tasks is a skill I possess	4.17	.50
Building a strong team is a priority for me.	4.45	.50
I enjoy analysing problems before actions are taken	4.30	.51
Respecting workplace boundaries is crucial to me.	4.07	.57
Providing counselling to subordinates to improve performance comes naturally to me.	4.32	.52
Implementing new procedures from professional literature is something I enjoy.	3.53	1.13
Average mean	4.06	

Source; Field data (2023)

Responses from interview

Four sub-themes emerged from the interviews on typical leadership behaviour. These sub-themes were; collaborative leadership style, leadership by example, community engagement, and open communication.

Collaborative leadership style

The theme "Typical Leadership Behaviours" under the objective "To identify typical leadership behaviours in Community-Based Tourism Development" reveals a consistent pattern of collaborative and consultative leadership styles among the participants (Tourism leaders as well as community leaders). During the **first focus group interview**, a participant noted,

"We consult each other and collaborate; this has mostly been our leadership style."

This sentiment is echoed in another reference from another interview session, stating,

"We work as a team and we are also open to views from team members and outsiders that ensure improvements in our operations."

The collaborative approach extends to liaising with stakeholders, as mentioned,

"We have always collaborated with stakeholders such as the Municipal Assembly, the Ghana Tourism Authority and Friends of the Earth, an NGO."

The long-term nature of these collaborations is emphasised with,

"The stakeholders mentioned above have been with us from the conception stages till now." Similarly, in some of the destinations, the leadership style is described as

"Collaborative,"

Where the management committee liaises with key stakeholders, such as the Forestry Commission and the Assemblies, underscore a commitment to transparency and community involvement. This collaborative approach extends to welcoming input from the Traditional Councils and recognises the invaluable perspective they offer. Together, these actions emphasise the centrality of teamwork, partnership, and engagement in fostering sustainable community-based tourism development. By nurturing relationships both within and outside the community, the leadership exemplifies a holistic approach that values diverse viewpoints and fosters inclusive decision-making processes in the CBT development approach.

Leadership by example

The subtheme "Leadership by example and accountability" emerges from the leadership behaviours. Participant's statements support this theme. A participant noted,

"Leadership by example is what we do. We practice what we preach" (From the 3rd focus group).

This sentiment underscores the core value of leading through action, where leaders actively demonstrate leadership principles they espouse. Moreover, it highlights a culture of accountability, where leaders hold themselves to the same standards, they expect from others especially their followers and the community at large. By embodying integrity, consistency, and responsibility, the leadership sets a powerful precedent for ethical conduct and inspires trust and confidence among stakeholders. Another participant highlights accountability, stating,

"Because they are aware we represent their interest and aware of our accountability to them, they are always free to share information and ideas with us all the time" (From focus group 2).

This insight illuminates how a sense of accountability within leadership engenders confidence among community members, reassuring them that their concerns are heard and their interests are represented. This assurance creates a conducive environment for robust communication and collaboration, essential pillars for effective leadership in community-based tourism development. By fostering a culture of transparency and accountability, leaders do not only strengthen relationships with stakeholders but also promote a sense of ownership and collective responsibility that drives sustainable progress and positive outcomes for any community that has CBT initiative as a whole.

Community engagement

In exploring typical leadership behaviours to identify typical leadership behaviours in community-based-tourism development, the subtheme, "Community Engagement and Collaboration with Residents" emerged as crucial. The participants highlight the significance of residents as major collaborators in tourism development, emphasising the enduring support garnered over the years. A participant expressed,

"Residents are our major collaborators; we have won their support over the years."

This underscores the leadership's ability to cultivate a positive relationship with the local community. By fostering a sense of partnership and mutual respect, leaders have cultivated a supportive network that drives collective progress in community-based tourism development. These collaborative efforts extend to leveraging local resources, such as bananas, which serve as a key attraction for monkeys and consequently, visitors. The strategic utilisation of indigenous resources do not only enhances the tourism experience but also promotes economic opportunities within the community. By harnessing the unique assets of the region sustainably, leaders demonstrate a commitment to both environmental stewardship and socio-economic development by laying the foundation for long-term success and prosperity. The statements,

"Residents are the main source of bananas and other fruits for the monkeys." "The fowls for attracting the crocodiles are obtained from the community which is supplied by the residents at a fee" (Focus Group 3) illustrates the leadership's reliance on the community for essential resources and emphasises the symbiotic

relationship between the community and tourism initiatives. This reveals a leadership behaviour centred on fostering strong, collaborative ties with residents, showcasing their integral role in the development and sustainability of community-based tourism.

Open communication

In examining the subtheme "Active Communication Platforms" under the broader theme of "Typical Leadership Behaviours" to address the objective of identifying leadership behaviours in Community-Based Tourism development, participants emphasised the community's commitment to all-inclusive tourism. One participant from Focus Group 2 highlighted,

"We have all forms of communication taking place every day. As a community, all we seek is an all-inclusive tourism activity."

This emphasises the leadership's dedication to fostering transparent and continuous communication channels within the community regarding tourism development. Furthermore, a participant from Focus Group 3 reinforced this notion, indicating that the instituted community radio has become a platform for residents to express their views on tourism development. The participant stated,

"The community radio that we have instituted has also been a means for them to contribute their views on tourism development during the phone-in segments. Some of these views are novel."

This highlights the leadership's encouragement of community engagement and novel ideas generation for tourism development and promotion. Additionally, the participants expressed openness to both criticisms and recommendations, stating,

"We are open to both criticisms and recommendations."

This openness reflects a leadership behaviour that values feedback, contributing to a collaborative and dynamic approach in community-based tourism development. By embracing a genuine desire for diverse perspectives and ideas, leaders cultivate an environment where innovation thrives, enabling the community to address challenges and seize opportunities more effectively in harnessing CBTD.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings highlight a strong inclination toward collaborative, empowering, and team-oriented leadership behaviours in community-based tourism development. The quantitative data revealed high mean scores and low standard deviations for typical leadership behaviours with the Multiple Linkage Theory of Leadership. This theory underscores the adaptability of leadership styles to meet situational demands, a key characteristic observed among leaders in community-based tourism (Haque & Yamoah, 2021; Khalid et al., 2020). This study supports the strong assumption of MLT about the importance of organisational culture for effective leadership behaviour, thus the importance that cultural context can have in a leader's ability to motivate and direct followers towards organisational success.

Qualitatively, the data further reinforced these findings, revealing themes such as collaborative leadership, community engagement, leadership by example, and open communication. These behaviours align closely with Normative Decision-Making Theory of Participation, which emphasises tailoring leadership styles to follower readiness (Perlavičute, 2022). Leaders in the study demonstrated a critical awareness of their followers' varying levels of engagement and expertise, adapting their strategies to foster inclusivity and community buy-in. For instance, leaders emphasised participatory decision-making, which allowed community members to feel ownership of tourism initiatives, thus promoting long-term sustainability.

The results also underscore the relevance of the Path-Goal Theory, which suggests that leaders clarify paths to achieving goals and provide the necessary support to overcome obstacles (Olowoselu et al., 2019). The behaviours observed, such as prioritising open communication and facilitating access to resources, indicate leaders who actively guide their communities toward shared objectives. This leadership approach strengthens

trust and enhances the community's capacity for innovation, as evidenced by examples of marketing and operational advancements implemented through collaborative efforts.

Additionally, the study provides evidence supporting the Multiple Linkage Theory, which highlights the interplay between leader attributes, follower characteristics, and organisational contexts (Ball, 2018; Haque & Yamoah, 2021). Leadership behaviours such as cultural sensitivity and conflict resolution were particularly significant in addressing diverse community needs and managing complex stakeholder dynamics. The study revealed that leaders who effectively navigated these interactions achieved cohesive and productive community engagement more successfully.

When comparing these findings to prior studies, the results demonstrate both congruence and divergence. Consistent with prior literature, transformational leadership behaviours such as vision-setting and inspirational motivation were integral to fostering innovation (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2019). However, the emphasis on servant leadership behaviours, such as prioritising community well-being and equitable benefit distribution, diverged slightly from traditional models of tourism leadership that often prioritise profit over community impact (Parris & Peachey, 2013). This distinction highlights a shift in leadership priorities within community-based tourism, driven by the unique needs and expectations of local stakeholders. Despite these insights, some gaps remain. For example, while the study identifies key leadership behaviours, it does not delve deeply into the motivations driving these behaviours or their variability across different community contexts. Future research could explore these areas through the lens of the Normative Decision-Making Theory of Participation, which examines how leaders involve followers in decision-making processes and adapt to situational demands (Perlaviciute, 2022). Furthermore, the limitations of Normative Decision-Making Theory of Participation, particularly its oversimplification of leadership dynamics, suggest the need for a more comprehensive framework that incorporates organisational and cultural contexts (Rüzgar, 2018; Hesse, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study provides significant insights into the leadership behaviours that influence community-based tourism development. The findings reveal that leadership in CBT settings is largely collaborative, participatory, and community-driven. Leaders employ consultative decision-making, foster open communication, and engage stakeholders to ensure the success and sustainability of tourism initiatives. The study aligns with established leadership theories, particularly the Path-Goal Theory and Multiple Linkage Theory, which emphasize the importance of adaptive and supportive leadership styles.

Additionally, leadership behaviours such as leading by example, fostering trust, and ensuring community participation were found to be central to effective tourism management. Transformational, servant and authentic leadership styles emerged as critical in promoting sustainability, stakeholder involvement, and cultural preservation within CBT initiatives. The study also highlights the need for leadership approaches that balance community welfare with tourism growth, ensuring equitable benefit distribution. Despite its contributions, the study has some limitations, including the scope of the selected communities and the extent of leadership behaviour variations across different regions. Future research should explore leadership dynamics in diverse cultural and economic contexts to enhance understanding of best practices in CBT leadership. Ultimately, the findings underscore the importance of effective leadership in fostering sustainable community-based tourism, enhancing economic benefits, and preserving cultural heritage.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study extends the application of leadership theories, particularly the Path-Goal Theory and Multiple Linkage Theory, within the context of community-based tourism (CBT). The findings suggest that leadership effectiveness in CBT is influenced by a combination of situational factors, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive leadership styles. This reinforces the notion that leadership behaviours should be flexible and context-dependent, supporting the idea that different leadership styles, such as transformational, servant, and authentic leadership, can be integrated to achieve sustainable tourism outcomes.

The findings emphasise that effective leadership in CBT should be collaborative and participatory, encouraging active community involvement in tourism planning and decision-making. Tourism leaders, policymakers, and community stakeholders should implement structured engagement mechanisms such as town hall meetings, stakeholder forums, and participatory budgeting to ensure that local communities contribute to tourism-related decisions. This will foster a sense of ownership, leading to more sustainable tourism initiatives.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declared that there is no conflict of interest.

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