

Environmental Education through Touristic Offers

Research Project for Obrobibini Peace Complex in Busua, Ghana

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1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In 2007 an article with the catchy title *Mind the Sustainability Gap* was published in the science journal *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*. The gap referred to underlines the importance to establish a new understanding of sustainability as a nested hierarchy with both human societies and economics imbedded in earth's life support system. In many ways this new paradigm challenges some of humans most deeply held values and beliefs. The model of *deep sustainability*, as further literature refers to (i.e. Rigby 2017), is an understanding which needs to be adopted by society, if the sustainability gap, as difference between what 'we know needs to be done and what is actually being done' (Fischer et al. 2007), should shrink.

Tourism as one of the biggest environmental polluters but meanwhile the fastest growing sector in worldwide economics has the potential to play a key role in the mediation of this concern. With 10% of the world's population working in or related to tourism (UNWTO) and 1.4 billion tourist arrivals last year (UNWTO) no other sector can reach and influence as many minds as tourism does. Because sustainable tourism concepts like eco-, responsible or community tourism won't be enough to legitimize the enormous negative effects leisure time migration has on our planet, tourism needs to consider new ways to contribute in a positive way to the change our generation is facing.

The new and deep understanding of what it means to sustain a well-being on earth, goes hand in hand with further aspects of sustainability, such as human health and quality of life (Häberli et al. 2002). OPC, the underlining case of this work, can be seen as ambassador for human's and nature's health in Busua, Ghana and therefore offers an optimal research base to evaluate new methods to impart the knowledge of deep sustainability.

1.1.1 Research Question

This study to be realized seeks to address the following issue:

How can OPC educate a deep sustainable understanding to the local community and tourists of Busua through touristic offers?

The main questions addressed in the study to be carried out will therefore be:

- What's the current perception of the Busua Community on sustainability?
- What's the current perception of tourists of Busua?
- Which behavior and knowledge gabs can be closed through touristic offers from OPC?

1.1.2 Obrobibini Peace Complex

The Obrobibini Peace Complex (OPC) is a young project, located in Ghana, that supports health of people and the environment through education in the poor fishing village Busua on the western coast of the country. This goal is persuaded by providing practical examples in the areas of sustainable agriculture, healthy nutrition, herbal medicine, natural hygiene, waste recycling and renewable energies (Anders 2019).

Obrobibini, a composite of Obron (black man) and Obibini (white man) in the local language Twi, sees itself as a platform between people from high- and low-income countries, who create a healthy environment for body and

mind through the common exchange. The inner peace, the 'P' in the projects name, is promoted through the joint development and implementation of more sustainable practices. By establishing and maintaining the training center, the organization enables especially those people from the low-income country, who otherwise would not have the necessary resources to realize their ideas, to develop their full potential and contribute to the sustainable development of the local community.

OPC's vision includes several guesthouses that accommodate people who live in the center, learn and help develop it further. They will be implemented as soon as the basic components, the agricultural and social infrastructure as well as the training of local employees, have been completed. This will allow tourism to be used in a next step to partially finance the project and implement the vision of Obronni and Obibini working and evolving together, without, however, presenting the core of the concept.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Human behavior is seldom based on rationality but rather on habits, emotions and cultural embedded norms. Unlocking these deep human insights can be paramount when trying to evolve action towards more caring for the earth. It is the essential first step to reach the ambitious goals for more awareness for sustainability and a change of human behavior.

Both OPC and global science demand for an interdisciplinary approach to face the question how tourism can contribute to this education of people. Tourism as the fastest growing sector at this point of time stands in enormous responsibility to evolve itself to more sustainable practices and onlook the potential it holds as a source of information, education and inspiration. The study devotes itself to many further research propositions needed to be addressed in the near future to onlook this enormous potential to reach around the world.

1.3 Scope and Delimitation

1.3.1 Research Structure

Both tourism and human behavior as cross-sectional disciplines hold a large number of complex interrelationships, which have often not been sufficiently considered. Only through connected thinking, which can grasp and interpret the complexity of the circumstances, is it possible to assess the consequences and thus make better decisions in terms of tourism policy, environmental behavior change and individual movement towards deep sustainability. The study to be carried out will therefore follow the call of Müller (2007) to apply system thinking as a method of understanding, scoping and evolving the problems area.

Based on the gained understanding on site, the core values of OPC will be manifested and examined for differences to the initial situation in the population and tourist groups. This will be worked out by surveys conducted in Busua. The differences worked out result in the scope of action in which learning processes are to be implemented. The recommendations of Palmer, Goldstein, and Curnow (1995) and the Applied Behavioral Change (ABC) framework are taken into account here.

1.3.2 Delimitation

The Project of OPC came to life 2017 and is still a vision under construction. At this moment of time the complex maintains no touristic offers and barely any such activities. The only 'guests' OPC welcomes are volunteer or educational tourists as the researcher herself, who are contributing in different ways to the establishment. Therefore, the results and suggestions of the study to be carried out will be tested and implemented at a later point of time. The full benefit of the work needs to be assessed in a later study. Nevertheless, due to the time frame of the thesis, finishing in summer 2020, the findings can be used by OPC for creating their touristic concept based on scientifically evaluated components. Regarding the critics of Backes (2003) and Strasdas (2001) on the poor basic understanding of a location's people, community, values and social structures with its long-lasting negative impacts on tourism planning and development, this limitation needs to be viewed as a chance for the project to implement their touristic components in a better and more sustainable way.

Because no concept will yet be created, it is not necessary to check which touristic approach is most suitable for OPC.

Due to the limited framework for this work, no specific touristic target groups will be elaborated and focused on for the survey. Rather the guests all over Busua will represent the target market and provide information about the current composition of the tourist landscape. The factor that OPC could attract new customer segments is therefore deliberately delimited.

Since the result should give an insight into the case in Busua, historical and cultural factors only play a role as far as they are mentioned by the population. There will no comprehensive research be done on these topics.

2 Related Literature und Studies

2.1 Related Literature und Studies

Tourism as a cross-sectional discipline holds a large number of complex interrelationships, which often haven't been sufficiently considered up to now. Only through networked thinking, which can grasp and interpret the complexity of the circumstances, is it possible to assess the consequences and thus make better decisions in terms of tourism policy (Müller 2007). The lack of addressing complex issues as such in an adequate way, led to many of nowadays problems. Studies like the one from Adjoa (2016) are promoting an unsustainable development of the touristic sector of Ghana, which will lead to further problems and the lack of benefits for the country's population. Such lacks are according to Backes (2003) one of the biggest reasons up to date, why just a few touristic activities can be honestly called sustainable, even though many of them describe themselves as such. The problematics and paradox of an sustainable tourism are another example for the sustainability gap Fischer et al. (2007) referred to. What can close this gap is education according to Palmer, Goldstein, & Curnow (1995). They show that education can help to motivate the public to participate in the needed change and therefore in closing the sustainability gap. Also Häberli et al. (2002), who discuss in their book the interrelations between sustainability and quality of life, put a lot of hope in education and describe through some chapters, how social participation can set social learning processes in motion. The ABC-framework, created by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and themed in further literature such as Palmer, Goldstein, & Curnow (1995) and Day & Smith (1996), provides a meaningful tool to plan and execute behavior change.

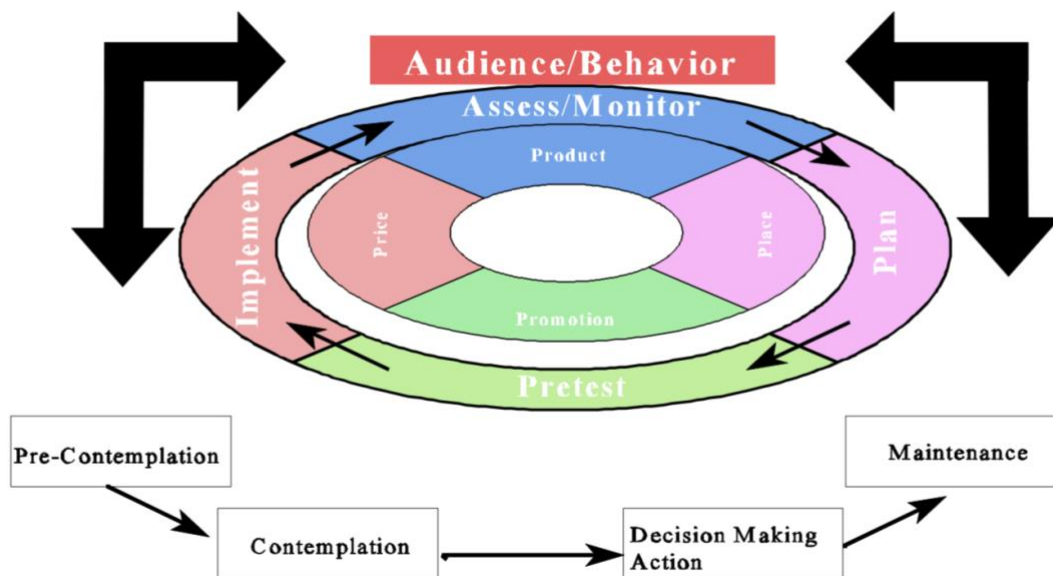


Figure 1: Three Applied Behavioral Change (ABC) framework ; according to Day & Smith (1996)

2.2 Implications for Obrobibini

Following the call from Müller (2007) the complex interrelationships of tourism will be asset with system thinking. As a main source of such, the work of Haberfellner et al. (2018) on the fundamentals and application of systems theory, will be used. Based on the interrelation found and analyzed through the tool, hypothesis at the beginning of the study and solutions according the interpretations can be provided.

The focus on imparting knowledge about sustainability and health is on both tourists and local community. This because the needed switch towards deep sustainability is a global issue and tourism as the international business per se holds therefore enormous chances to inspire a change all around the world. By assessing both parties and comparing them for common chances the study can contribute to create specific touristic offers, which have an inspiring impact for both. The tourist experience as well the local wellbeing can be enriched. By building the procedure on the ABC-framework and complete those first essential steps the research to be done will gain knowledge in three central aspects:

Knowledge about the system	Better understanding about drains, interrelations and changes of surroundings
Knowledge about the goal	Understanding of how a social, environmental and economic attractive future should look like to support a sustainable development
Knowledge about action	Suggestions on how a society can move from its current environmentally harmful behavior to sustainable behavior.

Table 1: Three aspects of scientific knowledge; according to Häberli et al. (2002, s.8)

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Palmer et al (1995) emphasize how important an interdisciplinary approach is, in order to counter the problems of ecologically necessary behavioral changes. Based on this statement psychologically confirmed determinants are to be applied in order to assess the behavior of a group and thus also the possibilities of influencing it:

Perceived benefits	What advantage do people think they will get by adopting a new practice?
Perceived barriers	What do people worry about, think they will have to give up, suffer, put up with or overcome in order to get the benefit they decide they want from a new action
Social norms	Whom does the audience care about and trust on this topic, and what do they think that person/group wants them to do?
Skills	Is the audience able to perform the new action without embarrassment or without failing?

Table 2: psychologically confirmed determinants; according to Palmer, Goldstein, and Curnow (1995)

Based on these basic questions, a preliminary study will be carried out at the research area to gain insights onto possible hypotheses. This explorative part of the study will determine further possibilities to formulate concrete questions to be asked in a quantitative approach. Where appropriate, questionnaires are drawn up and dispensed to both tourists and the local population.

3.2 Research Respondents

In order to achieve OPC's vision of the joint enrichment and development of Obronni and Obibini, both the behavior of tourists and that of the local population needs to be explored. On the basis of both results, opportunities can be constructed to create mutual change.

3.2.1 Local Community

The village Busua has a population of about 2'200 people. To create a representative sample, which can be extrapolated and generalized to make general statements about the community, the necessary size has to be calculated, according to empirical standards, through population size, confidence level and error margin. Estimated this will be around 200 People.

A procedure for another survey of the local population of Busua was developed and applied by a German researcher for her Master's thesis in spring 2019. At that time, she obtained instructions and experience from competent authorities in Agona-Nkwanta, the capital of the Ahanta West District (Keller 2019). Her findings on suitable communication channels and social management prior to her survey, as well as her critical analysis of the results obtained in retrospect, are to be incorporated into the development of the survey to be done.

3.2.2 Tourist

An adapted but similarly structured catalogue of questions (perceived advantages / disadvantages / skills and social norms) is also aimed at Busua tourists. To be able to calculate a reasonable sample size for this part of the study the researcher will search for tourist arrival statistic in Accra and Agina-Nkwanta.

4 Prospect

4.1 Expected findings

The perceived advantages and disadvantages for both the population and tourists by adapting the desired behavior, which are to be found through the research, will ensure new insights to support OPC in fulfilling their vision. By identifying social learning processes and norms of the population, while evaluate gaps in knowledge and skills to sustain the community and its surroundings, a solid base for any future research or implementation of touristic concept is given.

4.2 Evaluation

The two groups interviewed, tourists and locals, are each analyzed for the characteristics of their answers. The answers can then be evaluated in a matrix and thus sorted according to importance. A cross-group comparison reveals whether some factors are important to both groups or whether two components can be combined to form a meaningful offer, which leads to mutual learning processes for both parties. The system considerations initially worked out, will flow into this part of the paper. The results will provide concrete touristic offers while targeting both groups for educational purposes. In the broader context, the work is examined for its significance for science.

4.3 Risks

When carrying out the planned research, it is important to consider some risks which are to be minimized by risk evaluation and the preparation of reactional measures. Appendix 2 contains two tables dealing with these precautionary measures.

4.4 Time Management

In order to complete the preliminary study, which can only be evaluated in detail on site, and to collect the empirical part of the work, the researcher will spend 13 weeks in Busua, Ghana. From January till April 2020 three main outputs are to be completed, as shown in Table 3. For detailed schedule of research activities please check appendix 2.

Milestone	Main Output	Expected completion
1	Finished Outline for stage 1 Interviews	Last week of February
2	Finished questionnaire for door-to-door surveys	Last week of March
3	Finished field research	Mid-April

Table 3: Explanation of the most important milestones of the project with expected completion date

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5.2 List of Figures

Figure 1: Three Applied Behavioral Change (ABC) framework ; according to Day & Smith (1996)

5.3 List of Tables

Table 1: Three aspects of scientific knowledge; according to Häberli et al. (2002, s.8)

Table 2: psychologically confirmed determinants; according to Palmer, Goldstein, and Curnow (1995)

Table 3: Explanation of the most important milestones of the project with expected completion date

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6.1 Risk evaluation

The table underneath shows the 10 largest risks and assess their probability of occurrence and severity. For risks, whose estimated probability is not classified as 'low', there are measures proposed on the right. Many tactics are proved for their effectiveness by results and experience of the previous OPC-Researcher Johanna Keller.

	Risk	Valuation	
1.	Language Barriers for the Researcher in Busua (Twi)	High	The locale support will be a big help concerning this risk. The work will be dependent on the help of the community and local assistants who were willing to share their expertise and skills to compensate for the researcher's lack of local knowledge, language and experience. Zac, a befriended person of the OPC Family offered his help as a translator and will help with challenges concerning this risk.
2.	Strong dependency on the local translator and team from OPC	Medium	Dr. Christian Anders spends half of his time since opening OPC in Ghana. All contacts and connections to conduct this research are provided by him. As a consequence, the dependency is bearable, since all persons are very reliable.
3.	Due to the strong dependence of the results on the site for the completion of the preliminary study, it could become possible that the study cannot be carried out as planned.	Medium	Through strong cooperation with Christian in the run-up to the study, the researcher was able to get a pretty clear picture of the situation. This disposition was created through regular agreements. For unpredictable changes on the initial position, through expertise or new findings, the researcher will turn to literature for assistance.
4.	Difficult communication with the lecture Dr. Jason Hauser in Switzerland due to stay in Busua	Medium	Preliminary agreements minimize this risk. Internet access is available in Busua. Mail and also WhatsApp, after obtaining a local Sim card, can serve as communication channels.
5.	The administrative Workload of the Research is hard to accomplish caused by a lack of Infrastructure in the project area	Low	Most of the infrastructure (i.e. Laptop) are brought along by the researcher. Any important document will be saved as a drobox file.

6. Not the right or insufficient study participants are found.	Medium	From March to May is high season in Busua. Although it is unclear how many tourists it has, it can be guaranteed that as many as ever possible can be reached in this time.
7. Through different social structure, use of communication and felt responsibility to time in Africa, it will be hard to do schedule interviews and stick to the time management	High	<p>This risk was especially present during the research period in Switzerland as overseas communication was difficult. Because of those difficulties the last part of the pre-study must be done in Busua itself.</p> <p>The time management is held quite loose and has enough space to react to incidents.</p>
8. Access to literature during the intensive phase in Busua is very limited and leads to problems with processing the study (i.e. with calculating a sample size for tourist research)	High	The access to literature is very limited since it can only be researched online or at one of the universities in Accra (6 hours car drive away). Nevertheless, in certain cases it is a possibility to go to Accra, i.e. by joining any unrelated task to be done by OPC members. Because of good preparation and a big amount of desk research already done in Switzerland this risk is under manageable control. Further, one week in January is spent in Accra before leaving to Busua, enabling to scan existing literature in advance.
9. The intermediate steps lead to results, which cannot be continued as intended.	Low	If no further way is found, the results have to be analyzed for their scientific added value only, i.e. how far the evaluations can be adapted to other locations for planning changed behavior.
10. First steps in Busua are difficult, because Christian returns to OPC not before end of February.	Medium	Before leaving to Ghana the researcher put up a contact to Israel, the executive director of OPC, who will guide and inform her within the first weeks.

6.2 Schedule of Research Activities

Within the 13 weeks spend in Ghana, the researcher will invest some time at the beginning of the period with getting to know the country over the borders of the research area, to get familiar with the clima, the transportation possibilities and the main touristic organization in the capitol Accra and the main district city Agona-Nkwanta. Isreal Tay Nii Ashitey, the executive director of OPC, will introduce the researcher to the project on site, the area, the locals and the main figures to conduct the study like i.e. Zac, the owner of Zebra Tours, who will contribute his help as a translator wherever needed.

Dr. Christian Anders the president of OPC and on-site mentor for the field research period will arrive on the project ground towards end of February. With his help the researcher will validate the system structure done so far and decide which focus is the most valuable for OPC for future research.

Number	Activities	December	January				February				March				April				Mai - September			
			I	II	III	IIII	I	II	III	IIII	I	II	III	IIII	I	II	III	IIII	M	J	J	A
	Presence at OPC / Ghana																					
	Joëlle Martz																					
	Dr. Christian Anders																					
	Israel Tay Nii Ashitey																					
	Activities / tasks / work output																					
1.	Continue secondary research to create questionnaire																					
2.	Teilnehmende Beobachtung																					
3.	Get to know OPC, Busua and its structures																					
4.	Line out the system of OPC and its components																					
5.	Line out the system of the busua community																					
6.	Equalize viewpoints/ goals with Israel																					
7.	Evaluate potential Interview partners for stage 1																					
8.	Outline the open Interviews for stage 1																					
9.	Equalize viewpoints/ goals with Christian																					
10.	Exploring Interviews with community leaders																					
11.	Work interviews and research into questionnaire																					
12.	Training of Research Team																					
13.	Collect Research																					
14.	Evaluate results																					
15.	Create new tools and offer to address to new behave.																					
16.	Write down work																					
17.	Proofread the work																					

Submission: 1-September 2020

6.3 Independence Declaration

I declare that I have written the present work independently and without outside help. I have completely listed the literature and sources I used and cited them according to scientific citation rules. I have not already used the present work or parts thereof as evidence of performance, unless this has been expressly agreed with the responsible speaker. I am aware that the present work can be checked for plagiarism - even using appropriate software. I hereby expressly authorize the Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences to undertake such a review. The University of Applied Sciences reserves the right to inspect all information collected and compiled for the work within 10 years after completion of the work.

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Place, Date

Bern, 06.12.2019



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