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**Contribution of Cultural Tourism to the Socio-economic Development of Thaba-Bosiu
Community's Livelihoods**

**A dissertation submitted to the Department of Development Studies in partial Fulfilment of
the requirement for Master of Arts in Development Studies**

By

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation that I submit for the Master of Arts in Development Studies at the National University of Lesotho is my work.

Supervisor.....

Supervisee.....

Date.....

Date.....

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBT	Community-Based Tourism
ICTs	Information Communication Technology
QoL	Quality of Life
DMOs	Destination Management Organisations
PRASAD	Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive
SAT	South African Tourism
Dj	Disc Jockey

Abstract

Cultural tourism has been recognised for its significant contribution to the economies of various countries. However, there remains a lack of investigation into its role in the socio-economic development and livelihoods of communities. This study investigated why cultural tourism was struggling to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Thaba-Bosiu communities at Ha-Khoabane and Majakaneng, using the lens of Community-Based Tourism theory. The study employed a qualitative research approach. Since the qualitative technique allowed people to express themselves, the researcher was able to investigate and gain experiences and feelings revealed by participants. The data collected from primary sources were analysed using a qualitative thematic approach. The study addresses three research questions: (1) How does skills and knowledge affect cultural tourism in its efforts to improve livelihoods in Thaba-Bosiu? (2) What is the effect of cultural activities at Thaba-Bosiu on the livelihoods of the community? and (3) How do tourism policies impact cultural tourism's ability to improve the livelihoods of local people? The findings revealed that cultural tourism was not fully successful in improving the livelihoods of the Thaba-Bosiu community. It attracted cultural activities and tourists to the area creating employment opportunities but these activities were reported to be too few and far apart to sustainably improve community's livelihoods.

Key words: Cultural Tourism, socio-economic, Thaba-Bosiu, Community-Based Tourism Theory, Livelihoods

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Chapter one: Introduction and Background to the Study

1.0 Introduction and Background

This chapter present introduction and background to the study outline what is already known about cultural tourism in Lesotho starting from the days of Moshoeshoe the great. This is complement with what other scholars discuss about the role of cultural tourism in other context showing how it contributes to local community's livelihoods and challenges to provide a context to this study. This is followed by the statement of the problem, research questions, and the significance of the study.

Thaba-Bosiu is a significant national monument in Lesotho, known as the birthplace of the Basotho people. It's accessible only on foot and features steep cliffs along the ridge, numerous historical water springs, and intact homes associated with historical figures like Moshoeshoe's brother and first wife (King, 2019). A Cultural Village Site Museum at the mountain's base provides an interactive display of the monument's rich history. Thaba-Bosiu is a cultural attraction for tourists, but it is unclear how many visitors come and whether it benefits the local community. Many developing countries, including Lesotho, are pinning their hopes on the tourism industry to boost their economies. Lesotho's government is actively taking steps to improve its tourism sector, believing it can greatly benefit the nation. Their goals include attracting tourist investments, improving Lesotho's image as a desirable travel destination, and strengthening the tourism-related institutional frameworks (Yiu et al., 2015).

Several researchers have indicated that cultural tourism has significantly impacted the livelihoods of the communities it serves in various countries (Adedoyi, 2020 & Mugizi et al., 2018). By encouraging economic growth, protecting regional heritage, and creating job opportunities, cultural tourism has significantly improved livelihoods in Ghana (Deladem et al., 2020). A growing number of domestic and foreign tourists are visiting Ghana because of its rich cultural diversity and historical attractions, which has increased local community investment and revenue (Frempong & Deichmann, 2017). For instance, the Kakum National Park has become a popular tourist destination because of its distinctive canopy walkway and diverse wildlife, providing

employment for local guides, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs who offer lodging, transportation, and other services to tourists (Mensah, 2017). In a similar way, Oppong et al. (2018) noted that the UNESCO World Historical Sites Elmina Castle and Cape Coast Castle have sparked the development of historical tourism and led to the opening of locally owned hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops. These changes have raised community living conditions while promoting the preservation of Ghana's cultural legacy for future generations. Pasaribu et al. (2020) noted that the cultural tourism sector in Bali, Indonesia, has made a substantial economic contribution by creating jobs for artists, singers, dancers, and traditional craftspeople while also promoting the preservation of Balinese rites and art forms.

Studies indicate that cultural tourism is also prevalent in Southern Africa because of its rich and diverse indigenous culture (Doughlas et al., 2023; Chivandi et al., 2020; Apraku et al., 2021; Gumedu, 2019). For example, according to (OECD, 2020) 38% of tourists visit South Africa, to experience the country's divergent cultures and as a result, cultural tourism has been identified as the country's key growth area by the South African Tourism (SAT). Similarly, Botswana's tourism sector is rapidly growing because of its diverse and abundant wildlife as well as its natural heritage resources, which attracts high-end overseas visitors (Rogerson et al., 2022). Furthermore, Okharedia (2020) indicated the Maasai community in Kenya has developed cultural tourism projects such as homestays, cultural performances, and craft sales by utilising their unique cultural history. By developing income-producing possibilities and funding community development programmes like healthcare and education, these initiatives have given the Maasai people more influence.

Several scholars have studied different aspects of tourism in Lesotho (Thetsane, 2019; Rasethunts'a, 2021; & Lekaota, 2015). Thetsane investigated how people might get involved in the growth of the tourism industry, using the Katse villages as a case study. Rasethunts'a has written about the scope of partnerships between tourism enterprises and associations to support the growth of tourism in Lesotho. Lekaota also examined the significance of rural communities' involvement in tourism management. A few scholars have, however, written about cultural tourism, (Shano, 2014; Monaheng, 2016). Shano wrote on the development of historical and cultural tourism: the example of the village of Ha Kome Cave. The development of cultural tourism in Lesotho is being studied by Monaheng on the other side. None of these studies investigates cultural tourism as it

contributes to the socio-economic livelihoods of proximate communities. This sets my study apart as I focus on how cultural tourism contributes to the socio-economic livelihoods of the Thaba-Bosiu Community.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Currently, tourism including cultural tourism is marketed as a useful strategy for eradicating poverty and providing local communities with a stable source of income. Studies show that in the other parts of the world cultural tourism is contributing significantly to the socio-economic lives of proximate communities. However, in the case of Lesotho cultural tourism is under-researched and its contribution to the socio-economic lives of proximate communities has not been investigated. Anecdotal evidence shows that cultural tourism has contributed very little to Thaba-Bosiu's community notwithstanding that Thaba-Bosiu is the hub house of cultural tourism in Lesotho.

1.2 The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate why cultural tourism is struggling to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Thaba-Bosiu communities.

1.3 Objectives of the study

- To identify cultural activities that local communities engage in to create jobs for them.
- To determine the skills and knowledge the workers and communities from the institutions possess to promote cultural tourism.
- To investigate whether the tourism policies are benefiting the community.

1.4 Research Questions

- How do skill and knowledge affect cultural tourism in improving livelihoods in Thaba-Bosiu communities?
- What is the effect of cultural activities at Thaba-Bosiu on community livelihoods?
- How do tourism policies affect cultural tourism in improving the livelihoods of local people?

1.5 Justification of the study

Several studies have been provided about Cultural Tourism. These studies include the works of Makwindi (2016) which examined the role of Authenticity in Lesotho Cultural Tourism. Shano (2014) carried out a study on developing Heritage and Cultural Tourism in Lesotho. Lastly, Monaheng (2016) wrote about integrating indigenous knowledge in the development of . The objective of the Makwindi article was to assess the benefits and drawbacks of community-based tourism as a way for Lesotho residents living close to Sehlabathebe National Park to diversify their sources of income. Shano's study looked at how heritage and cultural resources are used for tourism, the Ha Kome Caves' tourism integrity, and the area's impact on tourism. It also analysed the resources and facilities available for tourists. However, this study will take a different approach and assess why Cultural Tourism does not improve the socio-economic condition of Thaba-Bosiu communities.

1.6 Delimitations

Delimitations are essentially the boundaries that the authors have purposefully chosen (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). They are concerned about the criteria that the researchers choose to establish as the boundaries or limits of their work in order to prevent the study's goal and objectives from being unachievable. Since there were many different types of tourism, the researcher focused on cultural tourism to see how it affected communities' socioeconomic conditions. The research included Basotho men and women, youths, cultural village workers, and information centers because they were directly impacted by tourism. The study also included event organizers since there were additional annual events like LETOFE and APICA. As the knowledge was still new and they could still remember most of it, the researchers' attention was from 2019 before COVID-19 until the research was conducted.

1.7 Chapter outline

This chapter consists of seven subheadings that systematically introduce and frame the study. Beginning with a brief historical background of Thaba-Bosiu, it establishes context by detailing its significance, historical events, cultural relevance, and geographical importance. The chapter then sequentially presents the research's purpose, explaining its broad objectives, including the

pursuit of new knowledge, practical solutions, theory validation, or phenomenon analysis. The research questions and study objectives direct the investigation, offering focus and direction. Furthermore, the chapter justifies the study's importance, emphasising its contributions to knowledge, practical applications, and relevance to specific fields. Delimitations and acknowledged limitations outline the study's boundaries and potential drawbacks, enhancing transparency. Lastly, the chapter outlines the study's organisation, providing a preview of its structure.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will review relevant literature on the contribution cultural tourism has on the socio-economic development of local communities' livelihoods. The chapter is divided into five sections: the first outlines the theoretical framework that forms the foundation of this study. Here, the researcher will explain the underlying concepts, models, and ideas that provide a framework for understanding the connection between cultural tourism and the development of local communities. This theoretical basis will guide examination and interpretation of the collected information. The subsequent section focuses on the skills and knowledge that are crucial within the context of tourism. The researcher will explore the competencies and abilities required to effectively engage in cultural tourism activities. Moving forward, the third section takes a closer look at cultural activities. By analysing these activities, we aim to uncover the various ways in which local communities showcase their unique cultural heritage to tourists. The fourth section of the chapter critically examines tourism development policies. Lastly, the chapter will conclude with a summary that enclose the key findings and insights from each of the sections.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Community-Based Tourism Theory

This study draws its basis on the community-based tourism theory which according to Naranjo Lluport (2022) is a tourism theory that advocates for the incorporation of management procedures that are based on endogenous and the sustainable enhancement of natural resources to provide a service that is rewarding to tourists through new, experiential experiences. Aazami et al. (2020) adds that this theory is considered within the welfare policies developed for the Millennium Assessment (2003–2005) which entails compliance with the requirements of freedom of choice and action, good social relations, and the necessary material to live. Concurrently, this theory is beneficial from the perspective of social and psychological sciences, as it is based on achieving the subjective well-being of the individual and emphasising the importance of participation in social life and strives to give tourism value to the natural resources of the environment through their sustainable use (Armbrecht et al., 2020).

Several scholars have similar views on community-based tourism (CBT) (Giampiccoli & Saayman 2018; Lo Y-C & Janda 2020; Prakoso et al., 2020). Community-based tourism is typically seen as a way for a local community to make money by selling tourists goods that are related to the local communities, lifestyles, natural resources, and cultures. Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018) further mention that community-based tourism is meant for underprivileged community members and can address concerns like empowerment, sustainability, social justice, and self-reliance.

In developing nations, community-based tourism has been proposed as an alternative to traditional mass tourism (He et al., 2021). It is designed as a tool for community development that helps communities take charge of tourism management and development and deliver benefits generated by tourism activities to communities (Lo & Janda, 2020). Similarly, Prokoso et al. (2022) assert that community-based tourism can be seen as a strategy for community development to improve rural communities' capacity to manage tourism resources and include participation from the local community.

Ngo & Creutz (2022) used a Community-Based tourism framework, their study proposes an integrated methodological approach that provides solutions for assessing tourism sustainability and advancing community-based tourism development approaches and operations towards sustainability in rural communities in Hoi An. The final sustainability index reveals that community-based tourism in Hoi An has overall potential sustainability (Vo et al., 2020). The community based theory will be used to guide this study in order to investigate why cultural tourism does not improve the socio-economic conditions of Thaba-Bosiu communities. This theory will be adopted in this study because community-based tourism theory encompasses relevant concepts that the study aims to achieve which include the creation of jobs, improvement of quality of life and sustainability at its entirety

2.2 Contribution of Skills and Knowledge in cultural tourism

Different studies support the idea that for tourism in general and cultural tourism in particular to thrive and enhance the livelihoods of proximate communities both the owners, employees, and the community need various skills and knowledge (International Labour Organisation, 2022). It is indicated that trading skills are crucial for the growth of tourism and attaining the highest level of success in the global tourism industry (Zimpoulidou, 2020). Zunaidi (2022) suggests that local

community members and individuals involved in the tourism sector need to enhance their trading skills, along with their marketing, advertising, and competency skills, in order to convince customers to buy tourism-related services and products.

Karaman (2010) suggests that sales skills help attract potential tourists, inform them about tourism businesses, stimulate their interest in buying, and ultimately achieve sales of tourism products. Karaca & Polat (2022) suggests that another skill set that the locals can capitalise on for the better promotion of cultural tourism is the contemporary marketing strategies, where social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and guidebooks are used to promote the products. This can be done by creating blogs on Facebook and setting up an account on YouTube, to upload videos, posts, and other content to advertise nearby tourist attractions.

Cultural tourism relies heavily on good communication skills, as it involves more than simply providing information (Tankovic et al., 2023). Effective communication is particularly important in the interactions between tourists and locals. According to Tankovic et al. (2023), communication holds a deeper significance and is an integral part of creative and cultural processes. Tankovic et al. (2021) further highlight the importance of good communication skills in the tourism industry, as it helps prevent misunderstandings and errors. Additionally, UNWTO (2011) showcases how heritage communication adds value by promoting knowledge and emotional connections that enhance the travel experience. For instance, individuals with strong communication skills such as tour guides, play a vital role in the development of local communities.

Entrepreneurship skills and cultural tourism play a significant role in fostering socio-economic development in communities (Chuayounan et al., 2022). Entrepreneurship skills are essential for establishing and managing new businesses (Sousa & Ameida, 2016). In their views Chuayouna et al. (2020), these skills contribute to enhancing the standard of living by promoting community growth, expanding markets, and creating employment opportunities. The relationship between entrepreneurship and cultural tourism is closely linked to the growth of enterprises in the heritage tourism sector (Surugiu & Surugiu, 2015). Overall, Isik et al. (2019) provide evidence that entrepreneurship is closely linked to the development of the tourism industry. This information can be useful for policymakers and business owners who are interested in promoting entrepreneurship and the growth of the tourism industry.

Technical innovation and cultural tourism generate value for businesses (Ammirato et al., 2022). Technology skills are the capacity to carry out various tasks using computer-based technologies. In their views, Rodrigues et al. (2021), generic skills and technology skills are both necessary for people to be crucial in their future lives in today's knowledge society. Technology skills enable tourism professionals to effectively promote cultural attractions and products via websites, emails, and social networks. Rodrigues et al. (2021) conducted a study on the influence of the information communication technology (ICTs) on the quality of life (QoL). The research demonstrates that global access to ICTs and digital inclusion has a substantial effect on quality of life.

The significant importance of developed skills within a community in the context of cultural tourism cannot be stressed because they act as the drivers of prosperous livelihoods and exciting cultural encounters (Thananusak & Suriyankietkaew, 2023). Creative skills serve as the vibrant tapestry weaving together the threads of cultural tourism, breathing life into communities and empowering individuals to enhance their livelihoods (Wisansing & Vongvisitsin, 2019). Cultural tourists are typically more affluent and educated (Richards, 2020), and they consume tangible cultural heritage and places at a faster rate, which causes them to lose interest, grow bored, and look for something new and different (Pintea & Badulescu, 2020; Richards, 2020; Della Lucia & Trunfio, 2018).

Studies indicate that it is imperative for the tourism stakeholders to enhance their creative skills set and invest in diversifying their products and services in order to attract more tourists (Weidenfeld, 2018; Richards, 2020; Tantipanichkul et al., 2023). According to Liu et al. (2019) this could be accomplished, for example, by introducing unique products and services that are in line with popular culture or topics that tourists can easily relate to and that are more interactive and fun. This will result in more sustainable cultural tourism thus enhancing the socio-economic livelihoods of the local communities. The community needs organisational skills in order to further develop and boost its sales and to be able to outsell potential rivals, particularly during events involving cultural tourism (Guidici & Filimonau, 2019; Sonnenschein, 2021). Community members can accomplish this by working together, first by researching and discovering what visitors' and/or attendees' typical purchasing preferences are (Jamil et al., 2022).

Secondly, by working together as a community where each member contributes resources or skills they have, and then combining all that, resulting in a better comparative advantage as compared

to their counterparts enabling them to outperform any external competition (Sinha & Pratt, 2021). This will result in the employment of the locals on the tourist's facilities resulting in more empowerment and enhanced livelihoods of the local community members. Investment skills are regarded as one of the crucial skills that will come in handy as the community grows its sales and income (Cedafop, 2017). The host community also needs skills that will enable them to live normal lives outside of the tourism industry (Andrades & Dimanche, 2019; Dube & Nhamo, 2021) this will help them to save and invest the money they get from selling various cultural goods and services rather than living hand to mouth. The money saved or invested will support them and be available for any future needs, such as financing the education of their children or engaging in other economic activities like starting enterprises outside of the tourism industry.

Cultural tourism can bring numerous benefits to local communities, including economic growth and the preservation of cultural heritage (Tien et al., 2021). However, there are also potential negative impacts associated with cultural tourism that can stand in the way of its development and negatively affect local communities. Some of these negative impacts include, environmental degradation and cultural modification. Increased tourism can put pressure on local ecosystems and natural resources (Karani & Failler, 2020). Overcrowding, pollution, and habitat destruction can harm the environment and disrupt local ecosystems. In their views Du Cros & Kong (2020) mentioned that overcrowding of popular tourist destinations can lead to congestion and overuse of natural areas. This can result in damage to fragile ecosystems, trails, and landmarks. It can also diminish the overall quality of the visitor experience and affect the well-being of local residents who may feel crowded out of their own spaces.

Cultural tourism can sometimes lead to the commodification of local cultures, where traditional practices, artifacts, and traditions are commercialised for the benefit of tourists (Suardana et al., 2022). This can result in the distortion or even loss of authentic cultural experiences. According to Hebert (2022) when traditional practices, artifacts, and traditions are commercialised for tourists, there is often a pressure to present them in a way that caters to tourist expectations. This can lead to the distortion or simplification of cultural practices, making them less authentic. Locals may modify or perform their culture in ways that are not genuine but are geared towards maximising tourist appeal.

2.3 The role of cultural activities in promoting cultural tourism and livelihoods

Cultural tourism promotes social growth and employment (Misrahi et al., 2021). Oyekunle (2018) has revealed the potential of handicraft industries for sustainable development and livelihoods. Handicrafts are a tangible cultural heritage and tourists spending on shopping, according to Orden-Mejia et al. (2022), support locals in tourist destinations who sell their crafts. The handicraft industry is the state's oldest traditional cottage industry and holds socio-economic significance due to its potential for generating employment and income (Sheikh, 2020). Abreham (2022) notes that the International Trade Centre predicts that Ethiopian handicraft sales in the travel and tourism industry reached USD 12.7 million, and 55 percent of the sales value benefitted underprivileged artisans, traders and raw material suppliers. Sheikh (2022) also provides an example of India where the handicraft sector plays a significant role in generating income for rural areas. It employs over six million crafts people, with a focus on women and individuals from lower socio-economic groups.

The traditional dance carries and transmits aspects of cultural custom and heritage from generation to generation (Lyke, 2018). As a result, it makes a significant contribution to the preservation of the cultural identity and is essential to the cultural development of societies. Zunaidei et al. (2022) suggests that the traditional dances have a positive economic and social impact on the local population, leading to more job opportunities, higher living standards, and local economic growth, this is mainly because during their visits to the host communities, tourists will come and observe traditional dances; they will have to pay, and the dancers will get gate takings. Robinson & Jonker (2016) also agree that tourism can be a powerful driver of economic growth and development, particularly in resource-constrained economies. On the macro level, tourism can promote economic growth through foreign exchange earnings and increased state venue, while on the micro level, it can improve people's quality of life through the creation of jobs, more equitable income distribution, and well-balanced regional development. Regarding currency exchange, tourists often bring various currencies that are worth more than the local currency, which by itself raises locals' incomes (Habimana et al., 2023).

Traditional ceremonies have the potential to benefit the local communities (Diminyi et al., 2022). These celebrations attract people from diverse backgrounds, and in villages or towns with a strong presence of traditional performing arts and crafts, they promote the development of traditional

marketplace and brands. This in turn allows participants in the community to earn income. Moreover, Pasya et al. (2016) also highlight the role of traditional ceremonies in attracting tourists to the host community, providing both income and cultural heritage promotion. Harrison et al. (2021) used interviews and observations to gather data on the role of Zambian traditional ceremonies. The research revealed that these traditional ceremonies contribute to socio-economic development. Tourism centred on culture and arts contributes greatly to state economic growth (Sparks & Waits, 2012).

The visual arts use a diverse range of media, equipment, and techniques; they are generally understood to encompass the following disciplines: drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpting, and photography. Through consumers' spending and tourism, the arts and culture improve local economies and open up job possibilities while theatre and performance provide a culturally and historically rich view of history and culture (Ebewo, 2019). Theatres are viewed as businesses and many of which have many sources of funding (Levinson, 2021).

Festivals contribute significantly to the cultural and economic development of local communities (Sahoo & Mukunda, 2020). In the tourism context, festivals can boost the local community in different ways, people of the local culture are being flattered by the international interest in their culture. The study conducted by Adon (2016) serves as proof that festivals play an important role in socio-economic development. The findings show that cultural festivals, particularly in festival-prone countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, can be significant tools for development. This enhances the residents' pride as well as promotes the preservation of and cultivation of the local culture.

It has also been discovered that museums now play a significant role not only in the broader sphere of the arts but also in tourism and leisure (Perara, 2013); their roles have changed to attract more audiences. Kelly (2006) indicates that the economic value of the arts and culture industry is generally acknowledged as constituting only a portion of its overall net worth to the community. Additionally, through the preservation and display of artifacts and other cultural works, museums contribute significantly to society (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 2014). By preserving artifacts and works of art, history will be preserved and important information will not be lost or forgotten. As a result, more tourists from around the world will continue to visit museums and spend money there, which will benefit the nearby communities. Supporting these reasons, Angelini et al. (2020) used the influence of cultural tourism on Indonesian as an example. This study found that the

Sukuh Temple had an effect on the local population in terms of economy, society, and culture. People also felt a social effect in addition to the economic impact. As a result, a cultural effect was seen, with a rise in cooperation in the preservation of regional culture and historical heritage.

Furthermore, there are socio-cultural benefits of tourism, such as infrastructure development and the improvement of community services from which individuals can benefit (Muresan et al., 2021). The development of tourism infrastructure, including hotels, restaurants, transportation services, and tourist attractions, creates employment opportunities for local residents. This encompasses direct employment in the tourism sector, such as hotel staff and tour guides. Moreover, Nguyen (2021) indicated that the presence of tourism infrastructure can attract investment from both the public and private sectors, leading to additional community development in areas like healthcare facilities, education, and public services.

2.4 The Role of Policy on Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism also plays a major role in development policies. In countries such as France for example, the growth of tourist policy has significantly shaped the nation's communities and strengthened its economy (OECD, 2022). The French government has put in place a number of measures to encourage ecotourism and protect the regional cultural heritage (Tourism Strategy, 2022). To enhance accessibility and inclusivity for all visitors, campaigns like the "Tourism for All" initiative have been launched. In their article, Kolupaeva & Galimzyanova (2019) noted that the government has also made investments in infrastructure growth, enhanced transit systems, and encouraged the expansion of tourist attractions and lodging. These initiatives have improved local economies and expanded the tourism sector, which has benefited the entire community.

Similarly, the German government's tourism policy focuses not only on economic goals but also on social and structural aspects (OECD, 2018 Germany). Germany has put in place a clear tourism policy designed to encourage sustainable growth and ensure favourable effects on local communities. The nation understands how important it is to strike a balance between economic progress and social and environmental responsibility. Schafranki (2022) noted that the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, as well as community involvement and fair benefit distribution, are prioritised by the tourist policy. In addition, Germany has been successful in encouraging partnerships among local stakeholders, including citizens, businesses, and government organisations, to influence tourism development in a way that benefits the community

(Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs, 2017). This has been accomplished through programmes like the Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) (Borzyskowski, 2013). These initiatives have improved the infrastructure, opened up job opportunities, increased income generation, and improved quality of life for locals.

The local community has been significantly shaped and socio-economic development has been promoted by Moroccan policies for the promotion of cultural tourism (OECD, 2018 Morocco). The Moroccan government, according to Boujrouf (2014), has realised the potential of its varied customs and rich cultural history as a significant tourism asset. As a result, it has put in place regulations designed to protect and advance these cultural features while assuring their sustainable growth. In Boukherouk & Ed-Dali's (2019) view, investments in infrastructure, improved visitor experiences, and assistance for local communities have been the main goals of initiatives like the "Vision 2020" tourism policy and the founding of the Moroccan National Tourism Office. Positive results from this strategy have included the creation of jobs, income generation, and revival of traditional crafts and the arts (Lamnadi, 2019). Additionally, local communities' participation in tourism-related activities has given them the power to uphold their cultural identity, promote their traditions, and improve their level of living. Locals can directly profit from the sector by participating in cultural tourism, which includes the accommodation, transportation, and the selling of local products and services.

Ethiopia's development tourism programme has significantly influenced how local communities live now (Master Plan, 2015). In order to expand the industry sustainably, the Ethiopian government developed policies after realising the potential of tourism as an engine for economic growth and the eradication of poverty. Ali (2016) noted that community engagement, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation have been highlighted in these policies as essential elements of tourism development. The policy has given local communities the power to actively participate in and profit from the tourism value chain by supporting community-based tourism enterprises including homestays, handicraft production, and local guide services. In addition to providing communities with income and employment possibilities, this strategy has conserved and promoted Ethiopia's rich cultural history and variety of natural features (Kassahun, 2018). The policy's emphasis on environmentally friendly methods has also helped to save ecosystems, assuring the long-term viability of tourism as an engine of the economy (Mebrahtu, 2021).

The National Tourism Policy, according to the Ministry of Tourism Government of India (2021), seeks to support a favourable climate for tourism development while safeguarding the nation's cultural legacy and natural resources, serves as a guide for the growth of tourism in India. In their view, Mehrad et al. (2023) state that the policy's main objectives are to advance environmentally friendly tourism practices, improve connectivity, upgrade infrastructure, and intensify efforts to market destinations. Mishra et al. (2016) further indicate to develop and promote tourism in certain regions, pilgrimage sites, and heritage sites, respectively, programs like the Adopt a Heritage scheme, the Swadesh Darshan scheme, and PRASAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) scheme have been introduced. Community-based tourism projects have been shown to have the ability to strengthen local communities, protect cultural assets, and improve the quality of life for locals.

Tanzania recognises the potential of cultural tourism for sustainable development and preservation of its rich cultural heritage (Njau & Losaru, 2017). To fully benefit from the economic, social, and environmental advantages of this sector, the country has implemented a comprehensive strategy for cultural tourism development (Bell & Gallimore, 2015). The strategy aims to diversify the travel and tourism industry by showcasing Tanzania's vibrant traditional practices, arts, crafts, music, dance, and folklore. It ensures that local communities are involved in the tourism value chain, thereby generating revenue, employment, and capacity-building opportunities (Mgonja et al., 2015). This approach has significantly improved livelihoods and contributed to the preservation of cultural traditions, fostering social cohesiveness and cultural identity. Matinyi et al. (2015) further mention that the growth of cultural tourism in Tanzania has positively impacted the country's standard of living, infrastructure, and investment in grassroots projects.

The Department of Tourism in South Africa has put into place a community-based tourism policy that aims to encourage the growth of tourism in rural and marginalised communities (Spenceley et al., 2016). Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018) noted that this policy encourages local communities to participate in tourism activities, providing them with opportunities to showcase their culture, traditions, and natural resources. By focusing on preserving and showcasing indigenous cultures, historical sites, and traditional practices, Strydom et al. (2019) further mention that South Africa has created opportunities for communities to actively participate in the tourism industry. The policy's positive impact on the livelihoods is evident through various case studies, such as

developing a tourism route in the city of Mbombela Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa (Sekole et al., 2023). This example demonstrates how cultural tourism development has contributed to sustainable economic growth, improved infrastructure, and enhanced quality of life for communities in South Africa.

Lesotho, a landlocked nation within the boundaries of South Africa, has realised the enormous potential of cultural tourism as a driver of economic growth and sustainable development (Yiu et al., 2015). The Lesotho government has put in place a thorough programme for the promotion of cultural tourism that aims to provide socio-economic advantages for nearby communities while showcasing the rich cultural heritage and customs of the Basotho people (National Strategic Development Plan, 2018-2023). The strategy places a strong emphasis on the protection of historical sites and cultural landmarks, as well as the preservation and promotion of traditional arts, crafts, music, dance, and food (Lesotho Tourism Act, 2002). Lesotho, according to Rasethunts'a (2021) has been able to grow and diversify its cultural tourism offerings, which include tour guides, cultural festivals, and community-based tourism projects, through smart collaborations with regional communities, for-profit businesses, and international organisations. The country has established itself as a desirable destination for cultural tourism by investing in infrastructure, capacity building, and marketing initiatives (Camillo, 2015). This has improved the Basotho people's standard of living and provided job opportunities.

2.5 Chapter Summary

The chapter unpacked the theoretical framework that was used for this study. It also provides a comprehensive review of relevant literature for the study, exploring various arguments and justifications pertaining to skills and knowledge, cultural activities, and tourism development policies

Chapter Three Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology adopted for this study. The chapter will discuss the research approach, research design, study area, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods and tools employed, data analysis, as well as ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative research approach. Aspers & Corte (2019) define qualitative research as an interactive process that enables the scientific community to better comprehend the topic being examined by creating new, meaningful differences. Cropley (2022) adds that qualitative research looks at how people interpret their own concrete, real-world experiences in their own minds and words, then uses behavioural science concepts to analyse these interpretations, such as psychology, sociology, politics, education, health sciences or more; recently, business and management, decision-making, or innovation. The researcher was able to explain and analyse the data received from the respondents using a qualitative technique. Through this approach, the researcher investigated and gained a deeper understanding of the experiences and feelings revealed by participants in Ha-khoabane and Majakaneng in the Thaba-Bosiu area. The qualitative technique enables individuals to express themselves in-depth. The how, what, and why questions were used to achieve this. It was not the first time this approach was used in studying tourism in Lesotho as several authors carried out studies using a qualitative research approach (Rasethunts'a, 2021; Thetsane, 2019, & Lekaota 2015).

Contrary to the quantitative method, the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to conduct additional study and learn more about the experiences and emotions that respondents in Thaba-Bosiu cultural tourist establishments conveyed. Additionally, using a qualitative technique gave the researcher the chance to speak with individuals face-to-face and explain the situation and phenomenon under investigation. This was beneficial since the researcher had the chance to interact in person with respondents and address the concerns they brought up and talked about, which would not possible with the quantitative data and analytical statistics employed in the qualitative technique.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study to better understand how cultural tourism affects the socio-economic well-being of the Thaba-Bosiu community. Many authors have the same opinions regarding case study research (Heale & Twycross, 2017; Baskarada, 2013; Karlsson, 2016), attesting that a case study is a thorough, systematic assessment of a single person, group, community, or other unit in which the researcher looks at in-depth data relating to a number of variables. Baskarada (2013) notes that case study research offers the chance for the researcher to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research subject and may make it easier to describe, understand, and explain a problem or circumstance. Karlsson (2016) added that case study is a useful tool for understanding phenomena in practical contexts.

This approach is used frequently in a variety of disciplines, including business, psychology, sociology, political science, and social work. Miles (2015) argues that case studies in educational research produce narratives of practice that offer knowledge of experience and make a conceptual contribution to research understandings of practice. Thaba-Bosiu was therefore used as a case study to examine how cultural tourism affects the socio-economic well-being of the Thaba-Bosiu community. Although there are many cultural tourism attractions in Lesotho, such as Ha-kome, Morija, and Ha-Baroana, the researcher chose to use Thaba-Bosiu as a case study because that is where most of Basotho' cultural history stored.

3.3 Study area

The study was conducted at Thaba-Bosiu Maseru. As the birthplace of the Basotho people, Thaba-Bosiu is a national monument and the top tourist attraction in Lesotho. It offers many outdoor activities and attractions such as hiking and biking trails, pony trekking, and Basotho cemetery and graves. It is a sandstone plateau with an area of approximately 2 km² and a height of 1,804 metres above sea level. Thaba-Bosiu is located 24 km outside of the city of Maseru (Von der Heyde, 2017).

3.4 Population of the study

A population is a clearly defined group of analytical units that make up the study's main focus (Haute, 2021). It comprises every unit that can be used to apply research findings. In other words, a population is a collection of all units that share the variable characteristic being studied and for which research findings can be applied broadly (Shukla, 2020). The study included Basotho men and women from Ha khoabane and Majakaneng who were above eighteen years of age, cultural village workers, Thaba-Bosiu information centre, and local authorities because they had in-depth knowledge of the area and are directly impacted by local tourism activities.

3.5 Sample

Sample is a subset of people used to present the whole group (Polit & Beck 2010). The participants in this study were chosen based on their potential to provide relevant data for this study. Since the study used a qualitative research approach, the researcher interviewed local community members, local business people, community members who produce tourism products, *Mokhibo* group, *Mohobelo* group, *Ntlamo* group, Herdboys, Horse riders, Area chief, councillor, and employees of tourism establishments.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The study employed non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling method, according to Showkat & Parveen (2017), mostly relies on judgement. Participants are chosen because they are accessible rather than at random. Similarly, Kyu-seong (2022) indicates that non-probability is defined as sampling rather than probability sampling. It arises whether the sample is not selected randomly or the inclusion probability of the unit is uncertain even under random sampling.

This study used purposive sampling which is made up of numerous non-sampling techniques (Thomas, 2022). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which the researcher only chooses participants who, in the researcher's opinion, meet the study's objectives (Esezi, 2023). The researcher deliberately chose people from the population who, in their opinion, best reflect the population, based on their experience and expertise. The participants were believed to have knowledge regarding the study.

3.7 Data collection methods

The researcher used interviews to collect primary data for this study. The information from one-on-one interviews was captured using a cellphone to record the interviews, which were later transcribed into a computer for analysis purposes.

Interviews are a popular method for collecting data for qualitative research. Although true understanding can occasionally be elusive, interviews are a crucial tool for researchers to understand the world of others (Qu et al., 2011). The researcher created a semi-structured interview schedule and used it to ask open-ended questions to the respondents to learn what they think about the topic being studied. The interview schedule will enable the collection of objective data from the respondents and prevent off-topic conversation.

3.8 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used in this study. Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into, patterns of meanings or themes across a dataset (Braun & Clark, 2012). The data was analysed using thematic analysis to organise and develop codes and categories based on the study's research questions. The researcher transcribed and then studied the data carefully in order to uncover recurring themes, subjects, ideas, and patterns of meaning. This was accomplished by the researcher familiarising herself with the data, coding, producing themes, defining and labelling themes. In the review of each participant, the researcher identified and labelled the words and sentences that convey similar meanings into codes. The report was provided in Appendix A. This approach to data analysis has been used in tourism studies in Lesotho (Tlali & Musi, 2021) but to my knowledge it has not been used to investigate cultural tourism.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Vigour was made possible by observing reliability and validity standards as they relate to qualitative studies. Reliability is the extent to which outcomes are constant over time and exact representation of the whole population under investigation, and a research tool is seen to be reliable if results can be obtained using a similar methodology (Leung, 2015). A research tool attains reliability when outcomes can be reproduced using comparable approach. Validity is the extent of accuracy of an instrument to measure the construct it is supposed to measure in the context of the

variables being studied. Pilot testing was conducted to evaluate the study's viability and to evaluate its methodology, tools, and processes.

Transferability is attained when study results may be readily used in various contexts and situations, which is known as the external validity of the results. (Stahl & King, 2020). In order to ensure transferability, descriptive data such as the research context, setting, sample, sample size, sample strategy, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of participants, and inclusion and exclusion criteria were all given in detail. For example, the setting and Thaba-Bosiu was provided as the case for this study. In qualitative research, dependability is typically used to ensure the reliability of findings (Tlali & Musi, 2021). The researcher improved dependability as a result by giving a detailed explanation of the methods used during the full study inquiry for acquiring data, developing categories, and drawing findings.

3.10 Ethical considerations

To ensure the ethical conduct of the study, the researcher observed the following principles.

3.10.1 Permission to conduct the study

The researcher sought and obtained permission to conduct the study from the local authority of Thaba-Bosiu communities, and the cultural village. After obtaining permission, the researcher informed the respondents of the purpose of the study, promised them confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy and informed them that participation was voluntary and that they are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time should they so wish without penalty.

3.10.2 The right to informed consent

The respondents were informed and provided with complete information about the nature and goals of the study, and they will be given the freedom to participate or decline without any coercion or deception. Additionally, they were informed that the data reported in a dissertation would be available in the library of the National University of Lesotho.

3.10.3 Privacy and confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality were based on the principle of respect. In this study, the respondents' privacy was maintained by conducting individual interviews and omission of personal details in the interview schedule and not being forced to answer questions. In addition, the respondents' names were not written on the interview schedule to maintain anonymity. The interview schedule and completed interview schedules are kept in a safe place to which only the researcher has access.

3.10.4 Limitation of the study

Theofanidis & Fountouki (2019) indicate that limitation is an imposition that is therefore basically outside the researcher's control. Therefore, some participants initially agreed to participate but later found themselves being too busy or facing unexpected time constraints that were preventing them from participating in the interviews. Similarly, participants were indicating that they had work and personal commitments that were clashing with the interview schedule. These commitments may not have been foreseeable when they initially agreed to participate. Conflicts in scheduling arised due to differences in availability amongst participants or institution requirements. Some participants agreed to be part of the study but later changed their minds for various reasons, including discomfort with the interview topic or personal reasons, especially those who were employed in particular institutions. They were indicating that there were certain things they were not allowed to talk about. Certain institutions, as mentioned, had strict policies or procedures for scheduling and conducting interviews, which delayed the process.

3.10.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the methodology adopted for this study. The research approach and research design were discussed. The chapter also presented the study area and targeted population, sample and sampling techniques. The data collection and analysis methods were discussed. The rigour of the study, ethical consideration, limitations and chapter summary was presented.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the data collected from various stakeholders in tourism including the Thaba-Bosiu community. The first section presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. This is followed by presentation of themes and categories that emerged from the data analysis. Each theme is presented, analysed, and interpreted in detail in the sections following the section on demographic characteristics of the participants utilising the categories and codes created during the investigation. Short and long quotes were used in the analysis of data to illustrate that variegated participants contributed during data collection.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

For confidentiality, participants were labeled as indicated in Table 1 below to represent the variety of individuals who responded during data analysis. In addition to the key participants, the study gathered data from the local community members including local business people, community members who produced tourism products like, *Mokhibo* group, *Mohobelo* group, *Ntlamo* group, herd boys, horse riders and employees of tourism establishments. The participants' ages ranged from twenty-seven to seventy-eight. Most participants only completed their Cambridge Overseas Syndicate Cambridge (COSC); only few were in possession of post-secondary education and received diplomas. Table 1 presents a summary of the socio-characteristics of the participants.

Table 1 participants' Socio-demographic information

Participants	Age	Sex	Occupation	Education
P1	48	Male	Administrator	Degree
P2	34	Male	Guest Relations	Associate Degree
P3	69	Female	Self Employed	Standard 7
P4	35	Female	Tour Guide	Degree
P5	38	Male	Self Employed	Cambridge Overseas Syndicate Cambridge (COSC)
P6	62	Female	Unemployed	Standard 6
P7	50	Male	Self Employed	Degree
P8	27	Female	Self Employed	COSC
P9	78	Male	Area Chief	Standard 5

Source: Interview data 2023

4.2 Themes and categories

During data processing, a number of code and categories appeared under each pre-determined theme. Table 2 gives a summary of the themes and categories followed by sections that provide their in-depth examination and interpretation

Table 2 Themes and categories of the study

Lack of skills and knowledge	Cultural Activities	Tourism Policies	Challenges
Communication Skills	Viewed as Entertainment	Land Conservation	COVID-19
Entrepreneurial Skills	Homestays	Involvement and Empowerment	Exploitation
Technological Skills	Events/Festivals	Host-Community Preferences	Unequal opportunities
Handicraft skills	Instil Love	Giving back to the community	Policies e.g. clear know of policies
	Good Relationships	Working on shifts	
	Create Jobs		
	Income Generation		
	Parking Spaces		

4.3 Contribution of Skills and Knowledge in enhancing livelihoods in Cultural Tourism

The data analysis revealed that participants did not fully benefit from cultural tourism at Thaba-Bosiu due to lack of skills and knowledge hence skills and knowledge became a theme that

emerged out of several categories. The data demonstrated, as literature reviewed noted (Tankovic et al., 2021), that effective communication skills were crucial for promoting cultural tourism. Communication has a more profound relevance and is an essential component of the creative and cultural processes. However, data showed that views differed between the well-off, educated participants and ordinary participants on the contribution of communication to enhancing local community livelihoods at Thaba-Bosiu. The respondents, especially the key participants, who were mostly elites with active professional lives, stated that effective communication skills were necessary to market cultural tourism both locally and internationally leading some participants like P2 to note that he was good at talking since his other duty was to work as a promoter and that was what the job demands him to do, saying that selling was vital in the tourism sector and that it required good communication skills. He also indicated that effective communication skill had been invaluable in his life. It empowered him to navigate professional challenges with confidence and positively impacted both his career and personal growth. Additionally, he claimed that effective communication skills were crucial in his ability to market Thaba-Bosiu outside of the country, which brought more tourists to the town and greatly benefited the Majakaneng and Ha-Khoabane communities, the two village adjacent to the cultural tourism in Thaba-Bosiu.

Participant 4 shared the same sentiments saying:

Knowing how to talk has truly been an important tool for me as it has greatly enriched my professional life. In my line of work, effective communication is an indispensable skill, and I can confidently say that my ability to articulate thoughts and ideas has opened countless doors for me.

On the other hand, most ordinary respondents participating in tourism for survival said that lack of communication skills was a barrier between them and the tourists preventing their livelihoods from developing. Since most guests did not speak Sesotho, they said that many of them struggled with English. They used the herd boys and horse riders as examples stating that while entertaining the visitors with the animals, these people found it difficult to communicate well. One herd boy emphasised that the language barrier had a negative impact and had stopped their lives from progressing. Additionally, the participants indicated their desire to have been provided with workshops and programmes aimed at enhancing their skills. These initiatives would have enabled

them to better interact with the visitors, thereby allowing them to derive benefits from cultural tourism and simultaneously improve their livelihoods. A horse rider gave an example saying the difficulty was that they ultimately settled for any amount that was given to them by tourists despite having a standard price for their activities because of poor communication skills especially in English language stating this in this way:

We use animals to entertain visitors while they are on tour, but when translators are not available, communication becomes difficult. As a result, visitors decide to not to watch, which costs us money or sometimes they charged themselves.

The data revealed that Thaba-Bosiu communities had different opinions about technological skills and their impact on their livelihoods. The findings indicated that few participants had acquired technological skills, while most of the participants did not. Key participants 1, 2, and 4, who were holding higher positions within Thaba-Bosiu communities, indicated that they had acquired the necessary skills to promote Thaba-Bosiu as a tourist destination through the use of latest technologies, such as Safari, Trip Adviser and Facebook. They stated that their familiarity with technology made them more competitive and adaptable in the job market because this skill enhanced work performance and kept them up to date with industry trends.

Nonetheless, many members from Thaba-Bosiu communities who lacked technological skills responded that they were not using social media platforms to promote their cultural businesses; instead, most of them relied on Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation to do so on their behalf. The participants stated that the knowledge held by officials in the tourism sector was ineffective because it was not passed on to the community. They highlighted that the knowledge that was not shared with them created a gap that prevented the broader community from accessing the same opportunities and benefits. The participants indicated that the lack of knowledge hindered the exposure of their businesses, which prevented improvement in their livelihoods. Participants stated that they wished to be trained to use modern technologies to enable them market their goods and services on social media like WhatsApp, Facebook and the whole internet.

The study uncovered that within the Thaba-Bosiu communities, there were people who had taken advantage of cultural tourism and managed to establish small businesses, while others lacked the necessary entrepreneurial skills, leading to the emergence of a category concerned with

entrepreneurial skills as a category. A few participants demonstrated that entrepreneurial skills were essential for them, enabling them to benefit from cultural tourism. They emphasised that these skills helped them identify and capitalise on income-generating opportunities within the cultural tourism sector, ultimately leading to job creation and an improved standard of living. A community member mentioned that he had a carwash where he used to call a Disc jockey (Dj). He also pointed out that he organised various events, particularly on Fridays, as that was when most tourists would visit Thaba-Bosiu. He stated that these tourists would often come to his carwash upon returning from their mountain visits, and even on weekends, they would gather for braai and beverages. He mentioned that despite the community's support, hosting tourists on weekends significantly improved his life, as it provided him with a consistent weekly income.

Unfortunately, many participants explained that they could not benefit from cultural tourism because they lacked entrepreneurial skills. They mentioned that many of them were in business without the necessary skills to derive any benefits. The participants revealed that their lack of skill hindered their ability to handle business planning, financial management, and marketing strategies which in turn adversely affected the growth and profitability of their businesses impacting their livelihoods negatively.

Participant 8 summarised this saying:

“I am not a business-minded person; I simply take advantage because I see an opportunity. My business stagnates because I lack the necessary skills, and my life is not getting better”.

Participant 3 also contributed by mentioning that despite their lack of entrepreneurial skills, a significant problem that impeded their ability to derive benefits from cultural tourism was the situation where they had visitors, particularly school children. In these instances, their teachers would discourage the students from buying items from the local participants, opting instead to bring similar items themselves and encouraging the children to buy from them.

Lastly, the data has revealed that the Thaba-Bosiu communities had different views about the contribution of handicraft skills to their livelihoods. A significant number of participants indicated that through the knowledge and work of their handicrafts, they were able to create jobs for themselves and earn money. Some participants claimed that they were able to support themselves

through the sales of mats, hats, cowhide wristbands, side bags, and jewellery. Furthermore, Key Participant 5 shared the same sentiments and reported that the skill provided him a viable means of income generation and sustenance to make a sustainable living. One community member added that since they had been in the sector, they were able to cover fundamental needs like paying for their children's education, and they were also able to meet their basic needs such as food and clothing.

Some participants, however, claimed that even though they still had the necessary skills, they were still not generating enough money to sustain their lives. Another community member who was in the handicrafts business gave an example that he hired out his products to the tourists, allowing them to wear them and take photos in exchange for a certain fee. However, he indicated that the business did not perform as well as it used to do in the past. In similar manner, key participant 3 stated that the decline in number of tourists had negatively impacted their business as well as their livelihoods. She expressed that decrease in tourist arrivals resulted in significant financial setback, making it challenging for them to provide for their families adequately.

In essence, skills serve as the bridge between cultural heritage and economic well-being in the realm of cultural tourism, paving the way for both personal growth and collective prosperity. As referred to in the literature by Mehrad et al. (2023) and the Master Plan (2015), skills play a significant role in shaping the impact of cultural tourism on livelihoods in countries like Ethiopia and India. Also, as referred to in the theories by Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018), Lo Y-C & Janda (2020), and Prakoso et al. (2020), community-based tourism is typically seen as a way for a local community to generate income by selling goods related to their communities, lifestyles, natural resources, and cultures to tourists. This serves as evidence that people can make money and create job opportunities by sharing their ideas with tourists. For instance, one community member highlighted that he had a car wash where he hosted tourists for leisure every Fridays and Saturdays, and this had generated a weekly income and job opportunities for him.

However, in the context of the current study, Thaba-Bosiu communities were not fully benefiting due to lack of skills. This shortfall arised because individuals, particularly those who did not acquire the necessary skills, lacked access to essential tools such as development programmes aimed at skill enhancement. For example, the analysis revealed that inadequate communication

skills created a barrier between tourists and herd boys, as they were unfamiliar with the English language. Another factor could be that local policies were tailored to educated participants rather than encompassing ordinary community members, given that a majority of skilled participants were elites.

4.4 Cultural Activities and Livelihoods

The data showed that there were different opinions concerning the contribution of cultural activities at Thaba-Bosiu to community livelihoods. The findings revealed that Traditional dances like *Mohobelo*, *Mokhibo*, and *Ntlamo* and festivals were the key activities that had the potential to lure tourists from all over the world. Few members of *Mokhibo* indicated that they were gaining from the activity. The leader of *Mokhibo* provided an example stating that they saved the money earned from their performances throughout the year. At the end of the year, they shared these savings amongst themselves. She mentioned that the previous year they had collectively bought blankets with the saved fund, and this had significant impact on their lives.

Even though a few participants indicated that they had benefited, most members highlighted that *Mohobelo* did not have a significant long-term impact on their lives to the extent that they viewed *Mohobelo* as simply an entertainment not anything contributing to their livelihoods. Most respondents went on to say that they performed these dances not as a means of living but rather to showcase Basotho culture to tourists and to express their national pride. They indicated that the absence of broader economic opportunities related to *Mohobelo* prevented the potential to create sustainable livelihoods for them as Participant 5 put it this way:

In my opinion, Mohobelo is a form of entertainment, and it does not make much of an impact on our livelihoods. We are many in the group and the little payments we receive in return we share amongst us. It would be dishonest to say that you can live by M50 for the whole year.

Other group members made the point that although they received pay, it was not enough to cover their basic needs. Additionally, they said that they collected and saved the money from the performances until it accumulated, to the point they would share it. Furthermore, they emphasised that despite waiting a long time for the money to accumulate, they were unable to use it whenever

a need arised. They came to the conclusion that their number in the group posed a problem, even after they split the money at that precise time the money would still bring no change on the livelihoods.

Another view that manifested itself was that there were some groups that had more opportunities than others. Many respondents indicated that among the factors preventing traditional dances from improving their lives was the existence of another *Mokhibo* group located in the cultural village. The group was made up of cultural village staff who were receiving regular pay. Additionally, the group was provided with more opportunities compared to the other community groups since the cultural village was an important attraction for tourists. The participants said that because management already had an active group, it did not see the need to call them for performances. The prominence of cultural village group created an atmosphere of competition within the community, making it challenging for other groups from the proximate communities to establish themselves and thrive.

On top of that, the data revealed additional groups that had greater advantages than *Mokhibo* and *Mohobelo*. Those groups were older people and disadvantaged school children. During an interview, Key participants 1 and 2, emphasised that they occasionally invited disadvantaged school children to perform for the guests, offering them a fee of up to M1000 and gifts while elderly people, who were unemployed received M2000. They indicated that the extra income could be instrumental in supporting education and other needs, potentially improving their livelihood prospects in the long run.

Community groups, on the other hand were offered a standard fee, the group members mentioned that they performed as a way of making a living while receiving less money had a negative impact on their lives. The participants continued saying insufficient income from performances led to financial struggles making it challenging for them to meet their daily needs and achieved financial stability.

Competitions were presented as another issue for the groups. The competition issue did not sit well with the traditional dances groups, they claimed it was yet another obstacle to their personal advancement. They mentioned that the cultural village had an annual Arts and Cultural Festival, the problem with the competition was that it involved competitors from South Africa and outside of Thaba-Bosiu. They emphasised that they had groups that were active, and competition should

take place amongst them. The participants added that this could result in a decline in their interest and participation in future events, impacting their livelihoods. *Mohobelo* member confirmed this saying:

Thaba-Bosiu needs to serve the interests of its local community before acting as a tourist destination. The competitions are only open to Thaba-Bosiu residents, ensuring fairness and promoting progress in our lives. Last year's winner was from South Africa and took the money, which prevented our advancement.

A sub-category emerged highlighting the selection of six specific homes, namely Homestays, within the community of Thaba-Bosiu to serve as accommodations for the tourists during the visits and events. These houses belonged to certain individuals in the community. The houses were rented and paid for, much like hotels, by the tourists. Nonetheless, the participants had different views about the impact of this initiative on livelihoods. A few participants responsible for the initiative highlighted that the issue of homestays had improved the quality of life for the people who hosted the tourists because they had a consistent income from the tourists who stayed in their homes. They further mentioned that they had never gone more than a month without having guests stay at their homes.

Participant 4 confirmed this and said:

“My life is significantly improving since I started having guests at my home. I now have a second source of income, and this effort is providing me job opportunities to sustain myself and take care of my basic needs”.

However, most respondents in the community were unaware of the existence of those homestays. A few participants who knew about them but were not part of such complained that they had a minimal impact on their livelihoods because it appeared as though the initiative was designed for a selected few rather than the Thaba-Bosiu communities. Furthermore, they stated that unequal opportunities encouraged economic inequalities within the community, which hindered improvement in livelihoods. Additionally, the respondents indicated that it was unclear how those houses were selected, and they believed it would be better if they were distributed among all community members. One respondent summed up this sentiment by stating that she learned about the houses from other person during casual conversations. They also emphasised that the houses

belonged to individuals who had connections with the people responsible for initiating this programme.

The findings revealed that there were many cultural festivals hosted in Thaba-Bosiu including the APICA, the All White Party, and the Lesotho Tourism Festival (LETOFE) sponsored by big companies in Lesotho. When participants were asked how festivals helped them to improve their livelihoods, two connected sub-categories emerged: the first one was love and the second one was good relationships. As a result of the extensive promotion of Thaba-Bosiu's attractions both local people and visitors grew fond of Thaba-Bosiu and started visiting the place. Participant 2 provided an example of taking steps to ensure that Thaba-Bosiu became well known both inside and outside of Lesotho, with a goal of winning over the hearts of the people. He made the implication that during these events, tourists came in numbers and the local economies improved, because it provided employment opportunities for the local workforce.

In a similar way, good relationships were established between the cultural village management, the event's organisers and Thaba-Bosiu community. The planning and execution of the events become more effective and efficient because of good relationships. P1 and P2 said that strong bonds facilitated community involvement and participation, which expanded chances for businesses to market their goods and services and fostering economic development and job creation.

The same sentiments were expressed by key participant 7 who said that his friends from town frequently stopped by his bar to buy beverages before heading to the festivals. He indicated that he drove them to the events with his car and picked them up the next morning. He added that providing these services resulted in payment and improved financial situation and livelihoods.

However, there were differing opinions between key participants and community members regarding these categories. Participant 2 mentioned that every time they conducted the events, they notified the area chiefs and requested casuals and marshals from the local community to take charge of security and maintain control. These individuals were compensated for their roles in ensuring security during the events. He further mentioned that with the additional income, community members could afford better access to essential services, leading to an improved

overall quality of life. Additionally, he noted that they had started educating community members about the importance of welcoming visitors.

Nonetheless, the members of the community highlighted that they had not benefited from the events, even though they had been given part-time jobs during the events. They expressed dissatisfaction with various issues, with some stating that despite having worked all night, they had been paid small amounts of money. The participants continued to say that they had struggled to meet their basic needs and had experienced difficulty supporting themselves and their families, which had impacted their overall well-being. One community member confirmed this saying:

“To be honest, we put in a lot of time, working straight from evening until morning without receiving any payment. Last year, we were given M100 for the entire night’s work”.

Additionally, the respondents claimed that people outside of Thaba-Bosiu had taken their jobs as they traveled from their different places to attend the events and sold items that local vendors in the community had already been selling. They suggested that the outsiders were given preference due to their greater financial resources. They gave an example that they had been compelled to buy expensive stalls for them to sell at the venue. Some said they found this unfair because the vendors were already struggling financially. They went on to say that this had led to the loss of livelihoods for many individuals and their families, and it had bad consequences for the overall economic well-being of the community.

Parking space was the last category that emerged during data analysis. The participants indicated that the parking space was an important source of income and livelihood for them in the past years. They emphasised that due to a lack of parking space at the venue, they had provided guests with space to park in their yards and were compensated for it. Nonetheless, participants reported that they no longer had equal access to parking spaces during the events as they had in the past years. They demonstrated that the management of the cultural village was no longer providing the community with the chance, as they had a few selected people they were collaborating with who had access to larger land, such as huge fields. The participants pointed that their ability to derive income and maintain their livelihoods from parking spaces was reduced. The inequality in access to these income-generating spaces disrupted the once-established source of income and financial stability, ultimately impacting their overall economic well-being.

According to the literature, cultural activities have a good economic and social impact on the local community, Zunaidi et al., (2022) stated in resulting in more job opportunities, greater living standards, and local economic growth. However, the study found that the socio-economic status of Thaba-Bosiu communities was not improved by these activities. The disparity between the anticipated benefits of cultural activities and their observed impact on the socio-economic status of Thaba-Bosiu groups could be attributed to a combination of factors related to implementation, marketing, cultural appeal, infrastructure, and external circumstances. In the analysis, it was noted that many group members were dissatisfied with the competitions that had been opened for groups outside Thaba-Bosiu. This served to confirm the presence of external factors affecting the situation. Likewise, the participants pointed out that the event organisers were giving individuals with financial resources, even those not residing in Thaba-Bosiu, more priority than the local community. This highlighted that both the execution and community involvement remained problematic.

4.5 The Role of Cultural Tourism Policies on Community Livelihoods

The findings revealed that various local policies were formulated within the community of Thaba-Bosiu with the aim of developing it as a tourist destination, thereby enhancing the livelihoods of the community. The data uncovered that measures and steps that were taken to preserve cultural heritage sites, archaeological sites, and traditions. The Thaba-Bosiu local chief stated that they formulated a policy prohibiting community members from grazing their animals in the pastures on and around the historic mountain as a precaution to safeguard the environment. He indicated that violators were fined a certain amount of money. Regarding the question of whether the policy impacted livelihoods or not, most participants emphasised that the policy benefited them significantly. This was due to the fact that when the assets were safeguarded, they continued to attract visitors, leading to the creation of a consistent stream of income while also enhancing the community's standard of living. Similarly, another participant reported that conservation promoted the distinctive cultural assets of a place, enhancing its appeal to cultural tourists and drawing more visitors to our village.

The area chief and councillor reported that the conservation of the land and attractions helped their community because they kept attracting more tourists to visit Thaba-Bosiu. This in turn generated job opportunities in the community, enabling locals to work as guides, eco-tour operators, or craftspeople who presented their local expertise and knowledge to tourists. Participant 4 confirmed this highlighting the importance of the initiative, and mentioned that she started working as a volunteer at the Thaba-Bosiu Information Centre. However, she eventually created a job for herself within the tourism sector. She further indicated that a regular income enabled her to meet basic needs such as food, housing, and health care.

Another participants who shared the same sentiments said:

Since I came into the tourism sector, my life has changed a lot. I am no longer unemployed as tourism has created a stable job for me. Today I am confident to say that I can provide for my family because even though I am paid on commission I have a reliable source of income.

The involvement and empowerment of local communities was another local policy that was identified during data analysis, even though differing viewpoints emerged amongst the community members regarding the actual impact of these policies on their livelihoods. Key participant 4 mentioned that the objective of the policy was to conduct different programmes such as workshops to equip the communities with knowledge on how to use tourism as a means of living to improve their livelihoods. He indicated that the programmes played an important role for the communities because they were able to generate employment for themselves within the tourism business. A few participants claimed that they had profited from these programmes since they were able to put the knowledge into practice in their everyday life as well as in the tourism industry.

Many community members, however, reported that the policy was not helpful to them. They believed the policy only helped a specific group of people. Highlighting an example of community-led initiatives within the policy, many participants pointed out that these initiatives were attended by educated people holding certain positions and qualifications, not just ordinary community members. They continued to say that people who were responsible for these projects lacked openness and were favouring some people over other community members. They suggested that

the exclusion of some people encouraged economic inequality and left others financially marginalised.

Another category that emerged from the data analysis was that Thaba-Bosiu communities were being given first priority in nearly everything that was occurring in the area, although community members did not perceive it in that manner. The primary objective, as stated by the key participant 2, was to grant the Thaba-Bosiu communities the highest priority when it came to hiring. He pointed out that the established policy was to favour the Thaba-Bosiu communities in nearly every job opening. Even though there were experts from outside the community, if the position did not necessitate specific experience, members of the community were accorded the primary consideration. He highlighted that this practice contributed to enhancing the community's way of life for many years.

However, most community members felt that the policy was unfavourable to them and had an adverse effect on their lives. They pointed out an example where, even though they were given top priority, the number of jobs available that did not demand expertise and experience was limited. In instances where such jobs were present, the openings only accommodated a small portion of the population. Furthermore individuals opted to work with people they worked with before. In situations where a job vacancy emerged, former employees were frequently called back and granted priority for re-hiring.

Another way of further giving back to the community was through the allocation of 10 percent of gate earnings, which were dedicated to community development purposes. Participant 1 mentioned that the development of infrastructure in cultural tourism destinations had extensive impacts on the livelihoods of local communities. It created employment opportunities, foster economic growth, safeguard cultural heritage, empower communities, and contribute to the promotion of sustainable development.

Nonetheless, community members did not know about the policy. They stated that there were no developments that were made, and some of the local attractions were still abandoned, while others remained inaccessible due to their locations. Some members further stated that their livelihoods were not improving because the lack of developments led to reduced access to basic services, which affected the overall quality of life and well-being.

The data also revealed that many groups and members of the community did not know about the national tourism policy. Additionally, the majority of these groups did not have their own local policies, with the exception of a single handicrafts group. The members of this group indicated that it was composed of six females from Thaba-Bosiu. They specialised in crafting Basotho Hats, Mats, baskets, and Jewellery. They were guided by their own local policy, which entailed working in shifts. In this arrangement, each member worked for a week, as the business was no longer performing well.

However, differing views emerged during the interviews when participants were asked about the impact of the local formulated policy on their livelihoods. Some members highlighted that working in shifts to address the business's challenges demonstrated a strategic approach to sustaining their livelihoods. They emphasised that by rotating the work among members, they shared the workload and potentially mitigated financial risks. On the contrary, a subset of members pointed out that the policy did not entirely benefit them, primarily because there was no consistency because some members did not put in enough effort in terms of product production. They indicated that some members, when it was not their turn to work, did nothing, which put a lot of work on those who were working. As a result, the production of the products declined.

Although the Lesotho National Tourism Policy states that local communities should benefit from tourism in their area, the findings presented a different picture. The findings did not align with the observations of Ramaano (2022), who suggests that well-crafted tourism policies can act as catalysts for comprehensive community development, positively influencing economic, social, and cultural aspects of community livelihoods. The current study revealed that the Thaba-Bosiu communities did not fully reap the benefits of cultural tourism. This discrepancy could be attributed to inadequately structured local policies. This situation possibly arises from policymakers not engaging with the community to understand local needs and aspirations. Many participants highlighted in the findings that they were unaware of the existing policies. Poorly designed policies might fail to encourage the growth of tourism-related businesses, potentially leading to limited job opportunities, decreased income prospects, and fewer chances for local entrepreneurs to thrive. Consequently, community members might encounter difficulties in securing stable livelihoods from activities related to tourism.

4.6 Challenges facing Thaba-Bosiu communities in cultural tourism

Though the study did not set out to assess the challenges facing the community, the data analysis constantly revealed that Thaba-Bosiu communities were facing challenges. The challenges included COVID-19, exploitation, unequal opportunities and unclear knowledge of policies. The participants demonstrated that the COVID-19 presented the biggest challenge, whereas other obstacles were more manageable. According to the participants, COVID-19 had a negative impact on their lives, businesses, and tourism between 2020 and 2021. They said that in 2020, The government of Lesotho ordered a complete closure of the country's economy for several weeks, which the participants claimed was bad for them because they relied on tourism for a living at the time and there were restrictions on both locals' and visitors' freedom of movement. The restrictions on both locals and visitors' freedom of movement reduced the number of potential customers for tourism-related businesses and impacted the ability of tourism workers to access job opportunities

The participants indicated that after COVID-19, they did not fully recover. They pointed out that small businesses catering to tourists, such as local shops, handicraft stores, and restaurants, often struggled to survive due to decreased foot traffic and reduced consumer spending. With the decline in tourism, many individuals who relied on the industry for their livelihoods, including hotel staff, tour guides, and restaurant workers, faced unemployment or reduced working hours. Participant 5 confirmed this by stating that in recent times, he found himself needing to adjust his sales strategy. He even started going out to sell on specific days because he noticed that tourists tended to come primarily on Fridays.

The data analysis also revealed that the participants raised another sensitive topic, asserting that they had been exploited. The majority of participants complained that the event organisers offered them jobs that were not aligned with their qualifications. Community members further emphasised that the impact of not aligning job opportunities with their qualifications went beyond just individual job dissatisfaction. It could have had ripple effects on the community's overall well-being, development, and social cohesion, ultimately shaping the livelihoods and prospects of both individuals and the community as a whole. In addition, the community members reported that the organisers worked with individuals from outside Thaba-Bosiu who held the same qualifications as the community members, performing certain tasks like marketing events and designing posters. Meanwhile, there were community members with those skills who could have filled those roles.

A community member confirmed this saying:

I am a talented designer with experience in designing posters and logos. I believe I can establish a career in the tourism sector by creating posters and logos for the events happening here. Unfortunately, the organisers currently prefer to employ individuals from outside of Thaba-Bosiu.

The majority of the community members have expressed that a further obstacle that hindered their advancement and their ability to derive benefits from cultural tourism had been the unequal opportunities present within the Thaba-Bosiu communities. They presented an illustrative instance of training offered to a specific faction within the community, aimed at enhancing a variety of skills to improve productivity. They communicated that, on a quarterly basis, two distinct training sessions focusing on customer service and fire handling were organised by different companies operating within Thaba-Bosiu. Furthermore, they pointed out that these training sessions were accessible only to a particular group and not to the entire community. This approach, they emphasised, was misaligned with the skills and knowledge relevant to them.

Based on the findings, most community members and groups in Thaba-Bosiu lacked clear knowledge concerning locally tailored policies. Most community members indicated that the absence of widespread awareness regarding these regulations could potentially complicate the community's ability to benefit from the opportunities, resources, and services designed to be provided. They expressed concerns that this informational gap might have resulted in missed opportunities for socioeconomic growth, preventing community development, and reducing participation in decision-making procedures. They emphasised the necessity of receiving adequate information on matters of relevance and the importance of effectively participating in local governance and decision-making processes to enhance their empowerment.

4.7 Chapter summary

The study's findings from a qualitative one-on-one interview were given in this chapter. The participants' introductions and demographic profiles have been presented. The themes that resulted from the thematic data analysis have been used to present the study's findings. The themes have been cited to illustrate the responses to the study questions and are supported by the data and participant extract categories. Four themes emerged from the data analysis, as shown by the table

that summarises the themes and categories from the findings. Although the themes were initially defined by the research question, the process of data analysis revealed unexpected challenges the Thaba-Bosiu communities were facing. This unexpected theme was incorporated into the analysis in alignment with the employed method of thematic analysis for this study.

Chapter five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings and objectives of the study as outlined in chapter one which was to:

- To identify cultural activities that local communities engage in to create jobs for them.
- To determine the skills and knowledge the workers and communities from the institutions possess to promote cultural tourism.
- To investigate whether the tourism policies are benefiting the community.

5.1 Summary of key findings

The findings showed that Thaba-Bosiu communities were not fully benefiting from cultural tourism due to a lack of skills and knowledge, resulting in their livelihoods not improving. However, there were a few individuals who possessed the necessary skills, mainly those in office positions with stable jobs or those who pursued education to acquire these skills. The theme has been supported by different categories, such as the lack of communication skills. Many participants did not acquire these essential skills, making it difficult for them to benefit from cultural tourism. Additionally, several participants mentioned that they ventured into businesses despite not possessing the relevant skills. They simply saw the opportunity and took it, similar to the theoretical framework used in this study, where it was stated that residents generated income by selling goods related to the local culture to tourists.

The findings also revealed that the Thaba-Bosiu communities did not benefit from cultural activities such as traditional dances. The participants reported several reasons preventing these activities from improving their lives. The primary reason was inequality, as some groups were given more opportunities than others. Unfair competition was also identified as another obstacle since the competitions were open to outsiders. Another significant concern expressed by most participants was related to events. Thaba-Bosiu, being one of the tourist attractions, hosted various events that took place almost every year. However, the participants highlighted that they were not fully benefiting from these events. They felt dissatisfied, especially the vendors, as the events were

not exclusively open to them but also allowed other people from outside Thaba-Bosiu to sell items that were already being sold within the community. Additionally, the participants mentioned that they were not adequately compensated for their work during these events, having to work long hours for insufficient pay.

The study also revealed that participants holding official positions felt that there were numerous tourism development policies implemented in order to enhance the livelihoods of the community in Thaba-Bosiu. These local policies focused on training and capacity building for the local workforce, land conservation, Host-community preference, community development, as well as community involvement. However, many participants from the community highlighted that the policies were not well established because they did not serve the interests of the entire community; instead, they favoured a certain group of people.

Furthermore, the findings of this study established the challenges facing the Thaba-Bosiu communities. Though these challenges were not pre-determined using research questions like other themes, the constantly emerged hence they were given serious consideration. The major challenges presented by the participants included COVID-19, exploitation, unequal opportunities and unclear knowledge of policies. The findings demonstrated that COVID-19 had a negative impact on tourism business, leading to a decline in the number of tourists visiting the area, thereby affecting the livelihoods of the community.

Lastly, According to several scholars, the Community-Based Tourism model offers local residents an opportunity to manage natural resources to promote the local economy and generate greater benefits. The residents earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, and employees. However, the findings did not align with the Community-Based Tourism theory, as they showed that the Thaba-Bosiu communities were not equally benefiting from Cultural Tourism. For example, individuals with relevant skills, such as entrepreneurial skills, were the ones who were able to create jobs and generate income.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concludes that cultural tourism does not fully improve the livelihoods of Thaba-Bosiu communities. This limitation is attributed to a significant portion of

the population lacking necessary skills to effectively engage in the tourism sector. The study's participants supported this point by noting that those who possessed the required skills occupied elite positions within the industry, leaving others at a disadvantage. Furthermore, the research indicates that individuals with the necessary skills have a better chance of benefiting from cultural tourism compared to those who lack such expertise.

Similarly, the activities associated with cultural tourism do not play a significant role in enhancing the community's livelihoods. The study highlighted that unequal distribution of opportunities was a major impediment to the progress of the Thaba-Bosiu community. The participants supported this observation, pointing out that those in higher positions tended to favour people they knew when providing opportunities. Regarding tourism development policies, the study concludes that they are not substantially transforming the lives of the people in Thaba-Bosiu. Many participants expressed dissatisfaction with the implementation of these policies, asserting that they primarily benefited certain privileged groups. For instance, the Host-community preference and Involvement and empowerment initiatives were cited as examples where specific individuals within the community received preferential treatment.

Additionally, it has been concluded that the Thaba-Bosiu community was facing numerous challenges. The challenges encompassed COVID19, exploitation, issues related to a lack of information and unclear knowledge of policies. The participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the post-COVID-19 situation, as the businesses were not functioning as they did before due to a decrease in the number of tourists visiting the area.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings revealed that most of the participants lacked skills and knowledge, hence they were not benefiting fully from cultural tourism. In order to alleviate this issue, the Ministry, together with the Lesotho Development Tourism Corporation, should organise training programmes and workshops for local community members. These initiatives aim to enhance their skills in hospitality, cultural interpretation, language proficiency, and other relevant areas. This, in turn, will empower them to effectively engage with tourists and share their cultural heritage. Furthermore, the training programmes can serve as a catalyst for inspiring the community to develop new tourism offerings based on their unique skills and knowledge. This diversification of

experiences has the potential to attract a broader range of tourists, thereby increasing the overall economic impact on the community. By improving language proficiency, especially in widely spoken tourist languages, community members can communicate more effectively with visitors. This will reduce barriers to interaction, enhance the overall experience, and build stronger relationships between the tourists and the local community.

In addition, technology provides the means to develop digital content that can be easily accessed and regularly updated. This content may encompass historical facts, cultural traditions, local stories, and tourist recommendations. Disseminating this information digitally enables the community to reach a broader audience, offering accurate and up-to-date insights into their culture. Audio guides and interactive applications play a crucial role in empowering tourists to explore cultural sites and attractions at their own pace. This feature proves especially beneficial for those who prefer self-guided tours or might not have constant access to tour guides. With the assistance of community members, self-guided tours can be organised, adding a personal touch and ensuring that tourists have a meaningful and authentic experience.

The community of Thaba-Bosiu expressed dissatisfaction with the visitors, particularly school children, who visited the area. According to participants, the teachers accompanying the children discouraged them from purchasing items from local vendors. Instead, the teachers brought similar items and encouraged the children to buy from them, undermining the support for the local vendors. Consequently, the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) should enact laws to safeguard Thaba-Bosiu vendors from such practices. Additionally, the LTDC should establish regulations that guarantee event owners provide fair and standard wages for casual workers and traditional dancers during events. This measure aims to address issues of exploitation and ensure fair compensation for those involved in the events.

Lastly, the data revealed that local structured tourism policies were not improving the livelihoods of the Thaba-Bosiu communities. In order to mitigate those impacts, it was essential for local policymakers to include the community in the implementation and structuring of policies, to know and understand their needs.

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Appendices

Appendix: Interview Guide

The research sought to investigate cultural tourism and socio-economic conditions of the Thaba-Bosiu communities.

Section A: Personal Information of Key participants

Section B: Questionnaire

Section A

- Age
- Sex
- Educational background
- Occupation

Section B

RQ1: How do skill and knowledge affect cultural tourism in improving livelihoods in Thaba-Bosiu communities?

- What do you do in order to attract tourists to buy the products that you sell?
- How does the impact of good communication skills between tourists and local people contribute to a more positive and enriching travel experience for both parties?
- What entrepreneurial activities do people engage in within the context of cultural tourism to benefit from the presence of cultural tourists?

RQ2: What is the effect of cultural activities at Thaba-Bosiu on community livelihoods?

- Have you seen any cultural events in your community? If so, what are they and how do they affect livelihoods?
- Have you taken part in any community cultural activities? What kinds of activities have you engaged in? Please indicate if yes
- Do you believe it is important to preserve and enhance cultural activities in tourist areas? In what way?
- How, in your opinion, might cultural events encourage travellers' appreciation and understanding of other cultures?

RQ3: How do tourism policies affect cultural tourism in improving the livelihoods of local people?

- Do you have any knowledge of tourism policies? If so, how have they affected life in your community?
- Are you familiar with the rules and regulations that apply to tourism in your area?
- Do you think there are any particular tourism policies or programs that have been effective in promoting community development? Please give examples.
- Has your community implemented any measures or programmes to ensure the survival of its cultural heritage? Explain if so.