

**ADVENTURE TRAVEL AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN
LESOTHO: THE CASE OF PONY TREKKING**

by

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Executive Summary

Tourism in Lesotho reached a peak in the mid-1970's, based upon the opening of modern hotels and casinos in Maseru and the attraction of gambling. This was an activity which was not then available in the neighbouring country of the Republic of South Africa. Casinos became Lesotho's dominant tourist product. The legalising of gambling in South Africa increased competition in the casino market and Lesotho could therefore no longer capitalise on casinos. Furthermore, the casinos in the country were externally owned and controlled. This form of tourism was therefore not economically viable for the greater proportion of the host population because most of the revenue generated drained back to parent countries. As a result, the strategy for tourism development shifted to the development of natural environment, landscape and outdoor pursuits such as pony trekking.

Pony trekking became popular in the late 1970's and has since become one of the most important tourist products of the country. In the 1980's community pony trekking associations were established. These pony trekking initiatives were identified as one development option that could provide economic opportunities for rural communities where few other opportunities exist.

The purpose of this study is to examine whether pony trekking initiatives in Lesotho can yield maximum possible economic, social and environmental benefits for the present and future host communities. While investigating its potential to meet the needs of host communities for improved living standards, it also examines whether this tourist product satisfies the demands and expectations of visitors.

The field work described in this dissertation was carried out in three pony trekking centres, namely: the government owned Basotho Pony Trekking Centre located at Molimo-Nthuse in the Maseru district; the privately owned Malealea Pony Trekking Centre at Malealea in the Mafeteng district; and the community owned- Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre at

Bokong in the Thaba-Tseka district.

This study has revealed that pony trekking activities provide substantial socio-economic opportunities for local communities along the trek routes and around the trekking centres, from the renting of overnight facilities and horses, the production and selling of crafts and tour guiding by local people. Furthermore, the majority of members of pony trekking associations surveyed revealed high support for the activity due to the economic benefits. It was also found that the demands of the majority of visitors are being met. They were satisfied with the facilities and services offered in these centres and regarded public reception as being good.

Though pony trekking contributes to social upliftment of the host communities, it is found, however, that there are major drawbacks. The survey indicates that at present limited number of people are involved or participate in pony trekking associations. Not only that, but even communities that are directly involved in pony trekking associations do not have control of such initiatives. Further, the survey shows that there is insufficient community capacity building and lack of government involvement in funding in the investment in infrastructure. Finally, the potential to attract more visitors remains relatively untapped due to a lack of proper marketing strategies; a lack of integrated marketing efforts in promotional campaigns; and weak advertising of the product between the public and private sectors.

On the basis of these findings suggestions are made for further improvement. These include, firstly, a need to launch education and awareness programmes on the important role that tourism can play in socio-economic development of the communities. Secondly, more opportunities for the local population and new areas for pony trekking development should be opened. Finally, stronger support, from both the government and private firms for the tourist industry is needed.

Preface

Unless otherwise specified, this study is the original work of the author. It has not been previously submitted in any form of any degree or diploma in any university. The research was carried out between March 1997 and January 1999 under the supervision of Prof. R. Fincham and Mrs L. Grant.

Signed Lieketseng Mohasi

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List of Abbreviations

ARC	Associate Research Consultants
CU	Customs Union
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
ICDP	Integrated Conservation Development and Programme
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
KNP	Kruger National Park
LDCs	Less Developed Countries
LNTO	Lesotho National Tourist Office
LHWP	Lesotho Highlands Water Project
LTB	Lesotho Tourist Board
MDCs	More Developed Countries
M(Maloti)	Lesotho's currency
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACUA	Southern African Customs Union Agreement
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The growing Importance of Tourism

Lesotho has a predominately rural economy. The ability to generate income is closely linked to the country's capacity to productively use its natural resource base. Some of its more important resources are land, water and labour.

There are high levels of underemployment and unemployment and far too few employment opportunities in Lesotho, particularly in rural areas. More than 85 percent of Basotho households are rural and poverty levels are also higher in rural than in urban Lesotho. Because of Lesotho's climate, mountainous topography and poor farming methods, the economic return from the major economic (agricultural) sector is small. Hence poverty is greatest among those households whose main income source is farming or livestock production (World Bank, 1995).

In order to alleviate the problem of poverty in rural areas, the government uses, *inter alia* tourism projects to enhance employment and income opportunities for rural communities. Though tourism did not feature prominently in Lesotho's economy until recently (early 1980's), it is now seen as an instrument for development of the country's peripheral regions which have few resources. Current tourism initiatives such as the formation of pony trekking associations are examples of tourist activities based in the rural areas to provide an opportunity for the rural communities to increase their income and improve their social status (Government of Lesotho, 1996).

However, increasing concern about the harmful effects of mass tourism led to calls for more sustainable forms of tourism development (Cater and Goodall, 1994; Craik, 1991;

Murphy, 1994; Oppermann, 1997; Sharpley, 1997; Theobald, 1994). Such an approach is relevant to the current tourism developments in Lesotho given the environmental fragility of many of the countryside areas. Furthermore, because it is the form of tourism that is generally consistent with indigenous values.

This chapter is the introduction describing Lesotho's background; geographical features, population and economic framework. It further gives a brief overview of the research problem and a change in focus on tourism development in Lesotho. Finally, the objectives and justification of the study are presented.

1.2 Background to the Kingdom of Lesotho

Lesotho is situated between 28^o and 30^o South latitude and between 27^o and 30^o East longitude. It is surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. It has a land area of 30 355 square kilometres. The country is commonly divided into four zones, known as the mountain zone which comprises 65 percent of the land area, the lowlands (19 percent), the foothills (8 percent), and the Senqu Valley (8 percent) (Figure 1.1). Lesotho is distinct in that it is the only country in the world where the lowest elevation is 1500m above sea level (Gill, 1994). With its highest elevation at 3500m, the country also boasts the highest elevation in Southern Africa and the second highest in Africa as a whole - a feature which has earned it a number of epithets, for example, "Kingdom in the Sky", "Roof of Africa" and "Switzerland of Africa".

1.2.1 Population

The 1996 Lesotho Population Census estimated the population at 1.8 million with a growth rate of approximately 3.0 percent (Government of Lesotho, 1996). About 80

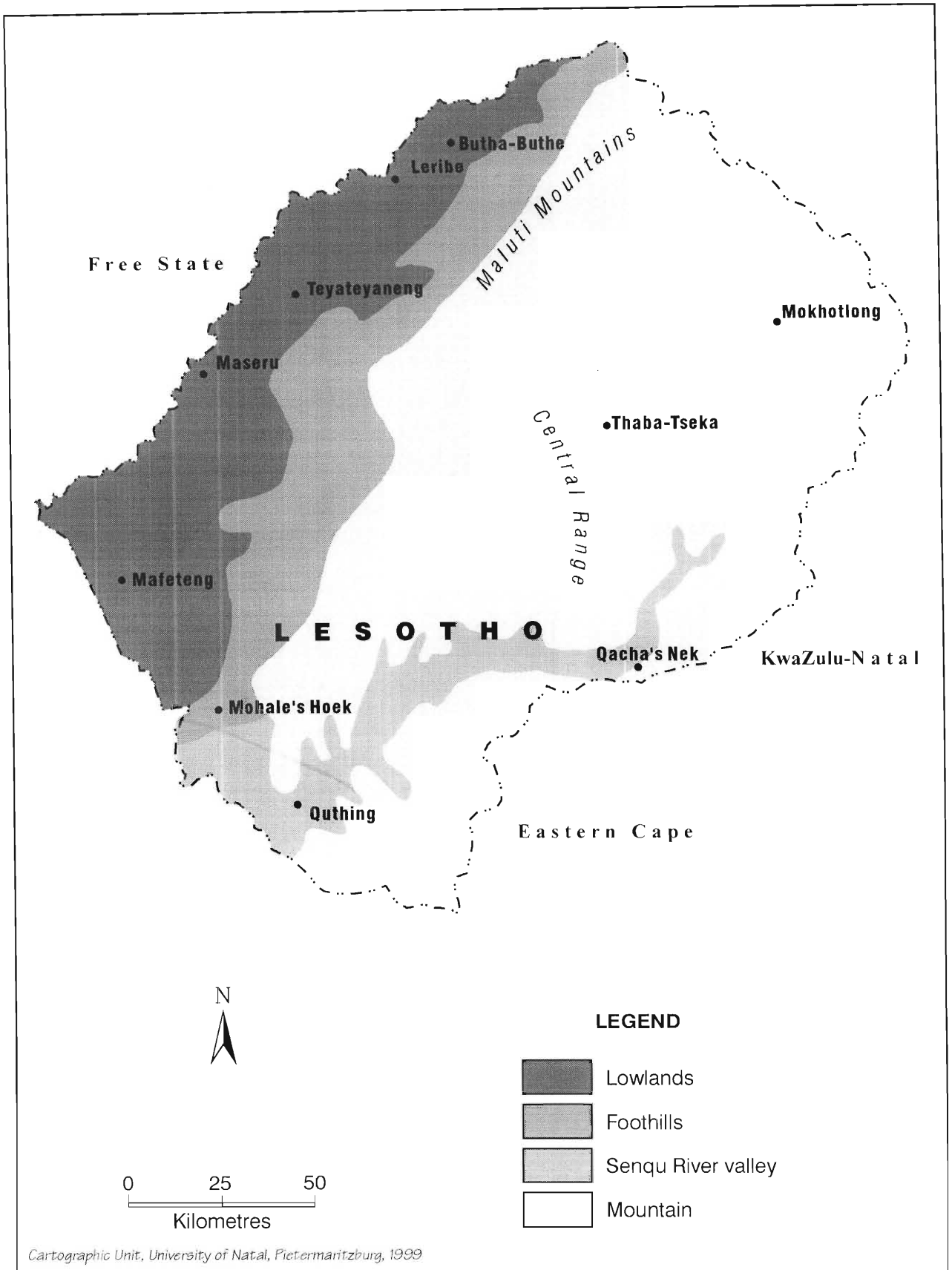


Figure 1.1 : Topographical Map of Lesotho

percent of the country's population live in the lowlands and foothills which comprise roughly 30 percent of the land area encompassing most of the country's arable and productive land. The highlands and Senqu Valley have low populations and the land is mostly suitable for grazing. Due to factors ranging from poor land management, massive soil erosion and the encroachment of human settlements on cultivable land, only about 9 percent of the country's land is reported to be arable.

Published statistics about the rural sector vary widely. According to Gill (1995) and World Bank (1995) over 60 percent of the rural population was engaged in the agricultural sector, while and the last Household Budget Survey conducted by the Bureau of Statistics estimated that the majority of rural household derive the largest proportion of their income from migrant labour remittances (Government of Lesotho, 1989). The World Bank (1995), further points out that more than 85 percent of the population live in rural areas, engaging in informal economic activities. However, the 1996 Population Data Sheet for Lesotho, published by the Ministry of Development Planning, puts the urban population at 20 percent (Government of Lesotho, 1996).

1.2.2 Natural Resources

Conflicting reports exist on the mineral potential of the country, but it is recorded that sizeable diamond deposits exist although they are not amenable to large scale industrial exploitation (Strom 1986). The only other natural resource which the country has in abundance is water, which is currently being harnessed in a giant Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP). Sandstone is one abundant resource in respect of which the export potential has only partially been exploited, although its usage in large industrial and state office complexes and its exportation is on the increase. There are already a number of co-operative stone-workers around the capital, Maseru, and other urban centres.

The country also possesses an abundance of scenic beauty; a major asset for tourism. The mountainous topography found in many parts makes Lesotho an ideal destination for pony trekking (World Bank, 1995). Tourism has been on the agenda of the government of Lesotho as one of the prime sectors for development since independence in 1966 (Associate Research Consultants, 1973). There is general consensus in the literature and among government officials, however, that much less than the potential rate of growth in this sector has been achieved.

1.2.3 Economy

Lesotho currently ranks amongst the world's lower income countries. It is not only poor, but has a highly dependent economy. Ninety-five percent of imports come from the Republic of South Africa (RSA), 40 percent of exports go to the RSA and 40 percent of the male labour force is employed in the mines of the RSA. The economy of independent Lesotho traditionally rested on primary exports of wool, mohair, raw diamonds and, most notably, labour migration to the mines of South Africa. The latter activity not only provided an escape valve from unemployment for able-bodied males of the country, but also accounted for a significant share of household income and national government revenue in the first twenty years of independence (Matlosa, 1993). Whereas the country's export performance was generally weak because of dependence on unprocessed products, it also depended heavily on imports for aggregate consumption.

Lesotho has long lacked, a sound diversified manufacturing base. While this chapter is not intended to enter into debates about the economic ills of the country, it is perhaps useful to point out that its current economic status is the subject of continuing debate. A number of writers routinely refer to apartheid and the small state dilemma to explain lack of expansion of the economy over the years (Mahao 1994; Makoa 1994; Matlosa 1993). Others refer to state policies of deliberate neglect (Strom 1986; Selinyane 1995; Baylies and Wright 1993). As befits the traits of a developing and hardly industrialised country,

agriculture is the largest sector in Lesotho. This qualification, however, is valid only insofar as it refers to a sector that holds the largest population of working age persons. The sector's performance in the national economy has however been in an erratic downward trend from the 1970s (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Sectoral distribution of GDP in percentages (1970-1992)

YEAR	AGRICULTURE	INDUSTRY	MANUFACTURING	SERVICE
1970	34.9	9.2	4.4	55.9
1975	32.5	13.2	5.7	54.2
1980	26.5	24.5	5.3	49
1985	21.5	29.6	11.1	48.8
1990	20.8	39.7	13.8	39.5
1991	13.7	42.1	15.6	44.2
1992	10.6	44.9	17.1	44.5

Source: Selinyane 1995:p14

Note: Percentage totals do not add up to 100. Since manufacturing is an industry, it is included in the industry sector, but it appears that this table treated it as a separate sector hence the totals exceeds 100. For instance, in 1991, agriculture, industry and service without manufacturing contributed to 100 percent of GDP.

What is common to the various sources (Gill, 1994; UNDP, 1995; World Bank, 1995), however, is that the agricultural sector has suffered a decline in production and productivity since the 1970's due to a scarcity of land, soil erosion, sporadic and unreliable rainfall and drought and hailstorms that often wipe out entire crops. Despite agriculture's declining share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), from an average of 35 percent in the 1970's to less than 20 percent in the 1990's, it is an important main source of employment and income generator for the rural population.

However, there seems to be an emerging disagreement about the causal factors for agricultural decline. While it has become customary to explain Lesotho's poor agricultural performance by referring to labour migration to South Africa (Murray, 1981), there have been a few dissenting voices in recent years. Some argue that agriculture was abandoned by the government because of a flood of food aid from abroad, especially under conditions of apartheid where Lesotho was seen as an engulfed victim of South Africa's policy of destabilisation of its neighbours (Selinyane 1995). Neocosmos (1993), on the one hand contend that the Southern African Customs Union Agreement (SACUA) made it virtually impossible for the Lesotho state to provide protection and pursue independent remunerative policies for its farmers. As a result, Lesotho's small producers were always open to highly subsidised South African exports. Strom (1986), however, points to Lesotho's condition of deliberate *laissez faire* policies as the main cause. The argument put forward is that; while South Africa's government went on a resolute course of supporting its industrialists and agriculture with state subsidies and protecting them with laws, the Lesotho government always preferred a minimum role for the state in the economy.

The bulk of literature on Lesotho further shows that the country lacks a national economy of its own. It is characterised as the labour reserve economy, depending on its only neighbour (the Republic of South Africa) for employment. The country also depends on the RSA for food supplies, energy, manufactured textiles and intermediate goods. The perception in the literature is that most of the productive activities have been constrained by a number of internal and external factors and that engagement in wage labour is the only viable avenue of livelihood for the majority of the population (Matlosa, 1990; Matlosa, 1995; Murray 1981; Strom 1986).

The country's economic survival has been predicated on three external factors of capital formation: Southern African Customs Union (SACU) receipts, migrant remittances and foreign aid (Matlosa, 1995; Vale and Matlosa, 1996). Since the first renegotiation of the SACU in 1969, government receipts from the SACU have accounted for over 50 percent

(Table 1.2) of the total revenue (Lundahl and Petersson 1991).

Table 1.2: Customs Union (CU) receipts as a proportion of total government revenue

(million maloti)

Year	Customs Union revenue	Total government revenue*	CU revenue as % of total government revenue
1979-80	71.4	111.7	63.9
1980-81	71.4	125.5	56.9
1981-82	70.8	124.8	56.7
1982-83	76.7	144.2	53.2
1983-84	109.9	179.1	61.4
1984-85	151.5	243.1	62.3
1985-86	161.1	256.3	62.9
1986-87	144.3	301.2	47.9
1987-88	157.4	310.7	50.7
1988-89*	193.2	403.9	47.8
1989-90**	263.6	535.1	49.3

* including grants

** preliminary

Source: Lundahl and Petersson, 1991: p 224.

In spite of the fact that by 1986-87, CU revenue had decreased to 47.9 percent, it still remains the single major source of government revenue. In 1993-94, however, the breakdown of the government receipt was 91 percent revenue and 9 percent grants. The breakdown of revenue by sources was 59 percent customs, 11 percent sales tax, 18 percent all other taxes and 13 percent non-tax revenue (UNDP, 1995).

Since 1973, miners' remittances have also contributed significantly to government revenue. Secondly, due to ever-declining agricultural productivity and the domestic employment

crisis, part of these remittances has been critical for the survival of 70 percent of rural households (Matlosa, 1995). However, the prospect for continued employment of Basotho in South African mines has become increasingly gloomy over the past ten years due to factors ranging from mechanisation to policies of replacing foreign workers with local labour in South Africa (Matlosa 1993; Matlosa, 1995; Davies and Head 1995). The average number of Basothos employed in the RSA mines fell from approximately 126 000 in 1987 to 110 903 in 1994 (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Basotho mineworkers in South African mines (1983-1994)

YEAR	NO. EMPLOYED
1983	115327
1984	114071
1985	116223
1986	121450
1987	125934
1988	124781
1989	126733
1990	125786
1991	122188
1992	119596
1993	113555
1994	110903

Source: Government of Lesotho (Central Bank of Lesotho -Annual Report), 1994: p15

Despite the fall in the numbers of workers employed in the mines, migrant labour remittances remain a critically important source of both income and foreign exchange for labour supplying states. A survey carried out in Lesotho in the mid-1980's found that migrant wage remittances accounted for 39 percent of the rural household income and an equivalent of 65 percent of the country's GDP in 1990 (Davies and Head, 1995: p447). The implication of these findings needs to be considered against the information supplied in

Table 1.1 page 6. While the classical reporting categories are necessary for considering the country's sources of GDP, they in reality mask the importance of migrant remittances for Lesotho, that is, a great deal of GDP is generated outside the country.

The retrenchment and repatriation of many Basotho mine workers is accelerating the problem of unemployment in the country, where the labour market can barely absorb half the number of new entrants into the labour force, said to be an estimated 25 000 a year. The other sectors of the economy have not grown at a pace sufficient to compensate for the collapse of traditional sources of livelihood for a majority of Basotho. The textile and manufacturing sector, which has become more important than agriculture in recent years, does not generate sufficient employment to take in retrenched men. It focuses mainly on female employment (Baylies and Wright, 1993).

It is evident therefore that the decline in external sources of revenue (SACU, remittances from mining workers, donors and grants) in addition to the decline of the agricultural sector will adversely affect Lesotho's future development prospects. To alleviate these problems the government of Lesotho requires a more pro-active approach to development for alternative sources of employment and income opportunities.

Consequently, tourism has been identified as one of the development options that may have an immediate effect and direct impact on local (particularly rural) people. Tourism is regarded as a means of improving the livelihoods of the communities of non-industrial areas such as Lesotho which have limited natural resources other than climatic and scenic attractions (Government of Lesotho, 1994).

In Lesotho, tourism is small but important. It has the potential to meet the government's objectives relating to poverty reduction, increasing employment opportunities and foreign exchange earnings. Though its economic contribution is small, this industry has the potential to become a source of economic growth. It could generate substantial employment for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers in a range of sectors (Government of Lesotho, 1996).

1.3 The Research Problem

Most literature on tourism describes this sector as a potent force for the transformation of societies and their environments. But these changes can have negative effects (Craik, 1991; De Kadt, 1979; Murphy, 1983; Oppermann and Chon, 1997; Sharpley, 1997; Theobald, 1994; Young, 1973). After the second world war, a new era of 'mass tourism' began with a powerful socio-cultural effect on both tourist and host populations. Mass tourism refers to the participation of large numbers of people in tourism and inevitably involves rapid and uncontrolled tourist developments (Burkart and Medlik, 1981; Murphy, 1983; Theobald, 1994).

Tourism is probably one of the oldest industries known to the modern economy. Lickorish and Kershaw (1975a) trace the beginnings of tourism to travels undertaken by young men for learning in the age of the Roman empire. Latter diversification in most of Europe was associated with travel to places believed to have healing qualities - mountain tops for fresh air, spa water spots, sea-front destinations and others. Lickorish and Kershaw (1975b) contend that the greater expansion of tourism was associated with the eruption of the Romantic movement in the eighteenth century, which emphasised the appreciation of nature for its own sake.

Investment in touristic developments after the second world war was essentially driven by economic and business considerations despite the multifaceted genesis of tourism (De Kadt, 1979; Murphy, 1983). Unfortunately, such development initiatives were not always compatible with recipient communities' social and economic objectives. They were accompanied by various side effects including destruction of old lifestyles, disruption of existing economies and competition for scarce resources. Over time, a need was realised to shift from a purely economic growth industry to a more sustainable form of tourism development. Hence the contemporary, international trend in tourism development focuses on the adoption of alternative forms of tourism whilst attempting to grapple with the negative impacts of tourism. These have been termed "ecotourism, sustainable tourism,

alternative tourism, responsible tourism, soft tourism, green tourism, adventure

tourism, ethnic tourism" (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). Although these forms of tourism have been given a number of names, they have one aspect in common: the conducting of tourism in harmony with nature and the creation of socio-economic opportunities for local citizens. Frequently, alternative tourism has been presented as being synonymous with sustainable tourism (Hunter and Green, 1995).

Sustainable tourism as an alternative form of tourism to mass tourism is characterised by the conservation of natural resources, respect for limitations on growth, respect for local culture and local community involvement in tourism (Cater, 1992). Sustainable tourism seeks to achieve a dynamic balance between economic growth and environment in line with the principles of sustainable development outlined in the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987: p43) and defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

It is against the background of the development of, and approaches to, tourism that this study seeks to assess the opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism in Lesotho, taking the case of pony trekking as a nature-based touristic activity.

1.4 A Changing Focus for Tourism Development

Tourism in Lesotho followed the South African-inspired hotel and casino tourism model in the late 1960's to mid 1970's. Tourist development was focussed largely on attracting visitors of South African origin for gambling, which though flourishing, was legally prohibited in the RSA. The Legalisation of gambling in South African former Bantustans stiffened competition against Lesotho destinations (Crush and Wellings, 1983; Lea, 1988). This form of tourism development was found to be economically and socially unsustainable in

Lesotho. The country needed therefore to diversify away from casino attractions where its former competitive advantage had disappeared.

Current development is based on historic and natural products such as rock paintings, dinosaur footprints, trout fishing, mountain scenery, pony trekking and other products. The perception is that such development will have significant economic and social returns (Government of Lesotho, 1994). The efforts of government have become particularly intense since the inception of the giant Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) approximately a decade ago. The reservoir offers an opportunity for Lesotho to reinforce the development of natural attractions with new tourist products (lakes and mountains). Lesotho has a beautiful mountain scenery and this has become a popular tourist product. While 4x4 cars can go to many inaccessible areas, pony trekking is the only way to explore most of the mountain areas that are inaccessible by other means of transport (Lesotho Commerce, Industry and Tourism, 1995).

Pony trekking in Lesotho is increasingly becoming one of the important components of the country's tourist product and urgently needs to be managed and developed sustainably. Since the 1980's the Lesotho Tourist Board (LTB), which is an executive arm of the government, has launched intensive mobilization campaigns aimed at rural communities forming pony trekking and handicrafts associations. Establishment of these pony trekking associations was identified as one development option that could help to alleviate problems of poverty and unemployment in the rural areas where most of Lesotho's tourist attractions are found (Government of Lesotho, 1996).

Geographically, the study is limited to three Pony Trekking Centres (Figure 1. 2), namely:

1. Basotho Pony Trekking Centre at Molimo-Nthuse in the Maseru District
2. Malealea Pony Trekking Centre at Malealea in the Mafeteng District
3. Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre at Bokong in the Thaba- Tseka District

1.5 Study Objectives

The broad aim of this research is to assess prospects for, and constraints to the sustainable development of tourism in Lesotho and to suggest the means by which the former may be enhanced and the latter minimised. The key objectives of the research are:

1. To identify the economic, social and environmental impacts of pony trekking as nature-based tourism on affected areas.
2. To investigate whether or not pony trekking promotes sustainable tourism development as outlined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) of 1987 and Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry (1995).

1.6 Justification of the Study

Pony trekking has been identified by the Lesotho government as one of the few touristic developments that can have immediate and direct impacts on rural communities. Lesotho has a potential to attract more tourists than it does, and to develop rural areas because of their scenic beauty. But tourism has not always received the attention it deserves.

At present, neither formal policy nor specific objectives formally promulgated by the government exist with regard to the tourism sector. Rather, a series of broad sector objectives have been outlined in Five-Year Development Plans for tourism but the plans have not been adopted. Moreover, government investment in tourism development has thus far been minimal.

The potential of Lesotho's nature tourism is relatively untapped. As such, very few people have been given an opportunity to participate in the development of the industry and its benefits are not well known to them. The study attempts to understand how pony trekking initiatives in the country can provide the greater proportion of the local rural communities with the means to improve their livelihoods. This gives the study strong justification. The research will give useful insights into the promotion and development of pony trekking in the country.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters inclusive of chapter one. In the next chapter, the author examines the literature which provides insights into different theories, models and results obtained by previous researchers elsewhere, from which major questions to guide the present research were drawn. The third chapter presents the instruments and methods used in carrying out the research and justifies their selection and the ways in which the limitations imposed by their adoption were minimised. The fourth chapter provides a broad background to the evolution of pony trekking tourism in Lesotho and discusses the operational features of the three study areas. Chapters five and six present the results of the field research; the author presents an analytical synthesis and juxtapose findings with objectives, literature findings and draws tentative conclusions. Finally, the seventh chapter draws conclusions and make suggestions for future development.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries worldwide (Theobald, 1994; Murphy, 1983) and has the potential of contributing directly and indirectly to the quality of life of host communities. Within the tourism industry, the fastest growing sector in the third world destinations is that of adventure travel. However, the rapid growth of this sector has raised serious questions related to the destruction of the social, cultural and environmental interests of the host destination (Boo, 1990; Cater, 1992; Cater, 1993; Cater and Goodall, 1994; Dearden, 1991; Wheller, 1991; Zurick, 1992).

This chapter aims to illustrate that there has been a shift from purely profit-oriented tourism to a form of tourism which aims to be more sustainable. The concept of sustainable tourism is considered as a basis for a tourism management strategy which aims at an harmonious interface of development and the environment. Furthermore, the relationship between sustainable tourism and sustainable development is examined. Lastly, the chapter outlines the development of tourism in Lesotho and the way in which the country is attempting to develop sustainable tourist programmes through pony trekking.

2.2 Contemporary Global Trends in Tourism

The desire to discover the unknown, to explore new and strange places, to seek new experiences and changes in environments is no longer a privilege of a few elite, but has grown to become a mass movement (Briguglio *et al*, 1996; Murphy, 1985). Since the second world war, tourism has grown into an industry of mass patronage and the growth

of the revenues from tourism industry has been substantial (Murphy, 1985). The visitor volume slowed down during the late 1970's and early 1980's due to the oil crisis and inflation, but in spite of this tourism is being seen as the growth industry of the future (Briguglio *et al* 1996; Murphy, 1985). Indeed, current estimates suggest that tourism has overtaken oil to become the world's largest industry (Carter, 1992; Oyowe, 1990).

There is a growing demand from travellers to search for unspoiled natural areas and cultural heritage. The developing world has the potential to offer these, hence growing numbers of tourists go to developing countries (Lindberg, 1991). The main consumers of developing countries' tourist products are developed countries' citizens with leisure time and affluence (Cater and Goodall, 1994). The reasons for increased travel to developing countries are many and include the opportunities for exploring unique natural environments and the rich cultural heritages of many third world places (Zurick, 1992).

Within the tourism industry, the fastest growing sector is that of adventure travel which, with its strong links to conservation efforts, has generated considerable interest in the travel trade (Carter, 1992; Cater, 1993). The search, in particular for, out-of-the ordinary experiences by the so-called 'post tourist' or modern tourist (Urry, 1990), has led to a spectacular increase in adventure tourism. The most popular activities for adventure tourism are trekking, hiking, bird watching, nature photography, camping, mountain climbing, fishing and similar pursuits (Whelan, 1991). The growth rate of adventure tourism is estimated to be between 10 and 15 per cent per annum, which is estimated to be double the average growth rate of tourism as a whole (Carter, 1995). Urry's (1990: p3) explanation for this trend is that tourism is a paradigm which involves 'day dreaming and fantasy, and the anticipation of intense pleasures either on a different scale or involving different scenes from those more customarily encountered'. Zurick (1992), also indicates that authenticity, 'unadulterated or real thing' is achieved by most adventure travellers in finding unknown and unvisited places.

Apparently, authenticity has become scarce and tourists seldom get access to authentic cultural experiences in destination areas because cultural traditions have been turned into commodities (Theobald, 1994). This quest for authentic experiences therefore propels tourists into more and more remote locations. Social, environmental and spatial impact of adventure travel is therefore a key consideration, yet adventure travel receives little attention in the literature (Zurick, 1992).

Lindberg (1991), notes that the growth of adventure nature-based travel can contribute to sustainable development of the host area. Sustainable development is defined by the 1987 Brundtland Commission as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs" (WCED, 1987:p.43). While adventure tourism is being adopted by many less developed countries, its impact on local societies, on the environment and on the economic development of remote areas are not fully investigated. For instance, in Thailand, tourist trekking is now advertised internationally (Dearden, 1991) and where some evaluation has been undertaken, both the positive and negative impacts of adventure tourism on host communities have been recorded. Thailand, for example, enjoys considerable financial benefits (US\$2,131,000) from approximately 100,000 trekkers per annum because most of the income derived is profit. Benefits stem from accommodation, handicrafts, and transport and miscellaneous services with very few costs having to be outlaid.

It has been suggested, though with little supporting data, that trekking in Thailand encouraged prostitution, provided little economic benefit to the host villages, endangered traditional hill-tribe lifestyles and was associated with various forms of environmental degradation such as trail erosion, littering and deforestation (Dearden 1991).

Within substantial literature on tourism, a growing number of studies, especially concerning third world countries, though not exclusively, have argued that while there are benefits of tourism on host destinations there are also costs. The expansion of tourism developments

have been seen to have profound economic, socio- cultural and environmental effects on many destination areas (Craik, 1991; De Kadt, 1979; Murphy, 1983; Oppermann, 1997; Sharpley, 1997; Theobald, 1994; Young, 1973).

2.2.1 Costs and Benefits of Tourism : Pointers For Lesotho

- ***Benefits***

Tourism erupted on a grand scale in the 1960's in western industrial nations and later in the developing countries. Most of the developing nations see it as a new opportunity to secure foreign exchange and stimulate economic growth (De Kadt, 1979). The economic and social significance of the growth of tourist industry has been noted worldwide. Tourism is considered an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational and economic sectors of national societies and their international relations (UN, 1981 cited in Murphy, 1985).

According to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of the Republic of South Africa (1996), tourism creates opportunities for the small entrepreneur, promotes awareness and understanding among different cultures, links with the informal sector and the promotion of a unique informal sector, creates economic linkages with agriculture, light manufacturing and curios (art, craft, souvenirs), establishes links with service sectors (such as health, entertainment, banking) and provides employment opportunities.

Because of its highly labour intensive character, the tourist industry is a source of employment for the semi-skilled and unskilled. In areas where unemployment is a problem, adventure tourism could provide prompt relief from unemployment and new opportunities for marginalised groups such as women. (De Kadt, 1979; Murphy, 1985; Young, 1973). It is argued, however, that most women are either involved in domestic tourism employment such as food production, laundry and or are self-employed. Self-employed

people are in the lowest income decile and self-employment is not synonymous with improved well being (Weekes-Vigliani, 1980). Tourism has also been criticised for providing seasonal or temporary, low-skilled, unskilled and low-paid jobs with a high proportion of women and with little promotion prospects (Young, 1973). Because of its seasonal nature employment becomes profitable during peak seasons while, for the rest of time, the people become unemployed or underemployed. Moreover, where particular skills are required, the industry often looks for outside expertise rather than providing training for local people (Gunn, 1994).

Though Lesotho's tourism contribution is small, this industry has a potential for growing and making a great contribution to the country's economy as it requires few imports . For instance, tourism contributed 2.8 percent to the GDP and 1.5 percent to the GNP on average over the period 1981-1993 and M32.7 million to government revenue from 1982-1993. It has also generated significant employment opportunities for more than 5600 people in the handicraft, hotel and restaurant sectors. The growth of employment opportunities is evident, from 1664 to 5620 between 1985 and 1993 respectively (Government of Lesotho, 1995/1996).

However, adventure tourism has still not realised its full potential for development in Lesotho. It is, however, identified as a development option that can help alleviate the problems of poverty and unemployment, especially in a country which, because of geographical reasons, is relatively unsuited to industrial or agricultural development (Government of Lesotho, 1995).

Tourism has a potential to establish some protected areas and raise money for sustainable management of these areas (Whelan, 1991). Protected areas such as national parks are currently not only seen as preserves for indigenous plants and animals, but also as recreational grounds for the people (Whitelock, 1985). Protected areas play a central role in implementation of the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) in terms of the

achievement of its principal objectives and encourage a more effective protection of wildlife for tourism revenues (Murphy, 1985; Talbot, 1984). People gain inspiration, enjoyment and recreation from parks and reserves, mountains, forests, seacoasts, lakes and other natural features. These resources are a 'cornerstone' of tourism for many developing and developed countries, with a potential for foreign exchange and employment opportunities (Lucas, 1984). However, without sound planning, tourism and its development can destroy the very resources on which it is based.

Unlike most of other African countries which have developed their tourist industry by conserving large natural or inhabited areas, Lesotho has only a few conserved areas developed for tourist attraction (Associated Research Consultants, 1973). The proposal to conserve inhabited areas and to improve the Sehlabathebe National Park for the economic, social and environmental benefit of the country was made as far back as the Associate Research Consultants (ARC) Development Plan for Tourism in 1973. Additional parks proposed were the Qeme Royal National Park, Ongeluk's Park in the South, and the Drakensberg Royal National Park which would stretch from Mt Aux Sources to the Sani Pass (Figure 2.1). However this proposal was never implemented.

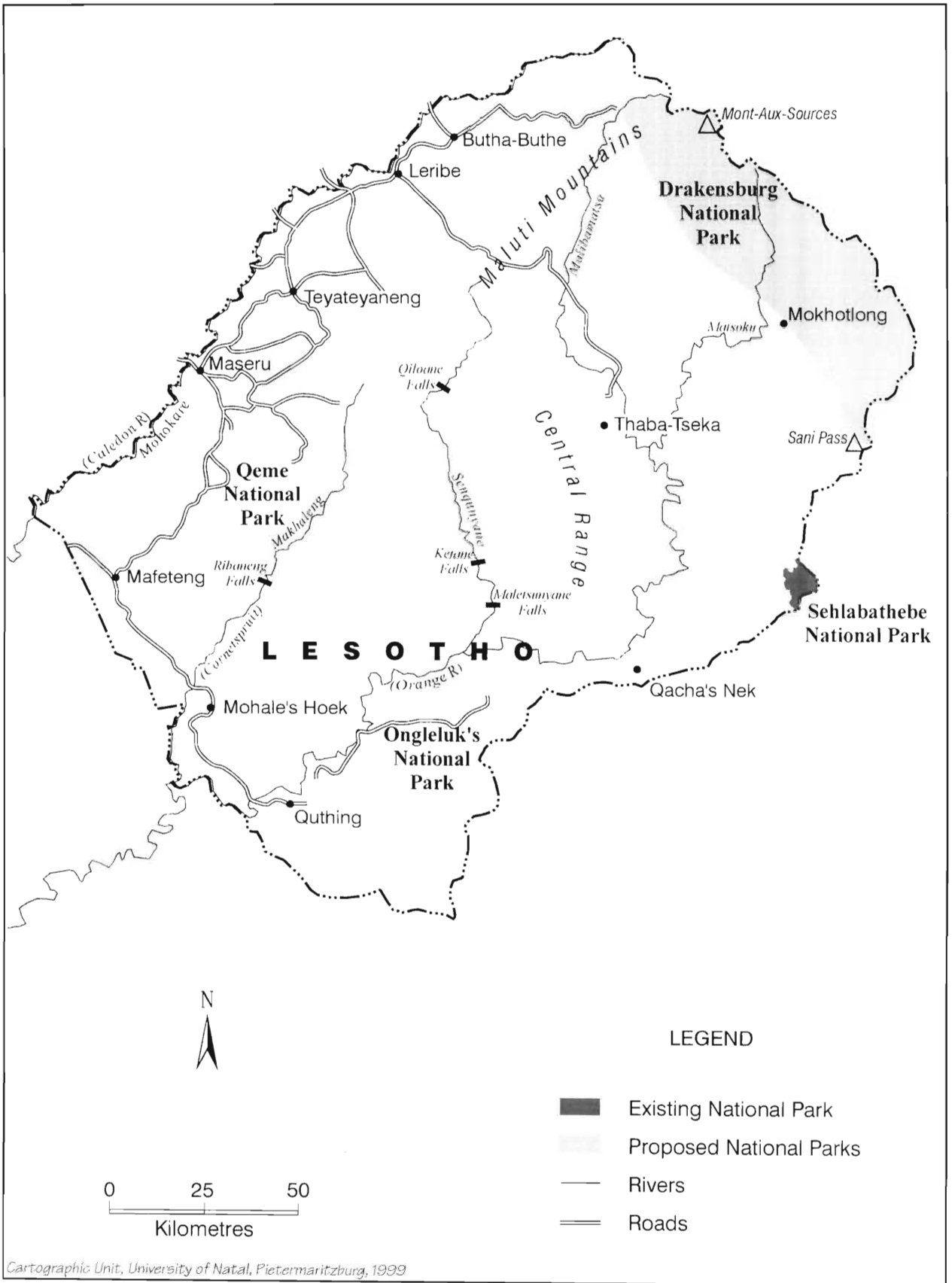


Figure 2.1 : National Parks of Lesotho

Since the publication of the WCS of 1980, conservationists have initiated or proposed Integrated Conservation and Development Programmes (ICDP) linking conservation with sustainable development for the local people. Within this context, Africa's nature reserves are adopting ICPD strategies, with underlying principles of participation, economic growth and environmental conservation. Thus the Kruger National Park (KNP) in South Africa is developing a mutually beneficial partnership between the reserve and the neighbouring communities (Venter et al, 1994), with the following objectives:

- i) to develop an open system management structure which allows local communities to participate in the managerial decision making process of the KNP;
- ii) to promote the socio-economic interdependence of the KNP and the communities bordering on the KNP, based on an ethic of sustainable utilisation of financial, human, cultural and natural resources; and
- iii) to actively promote the environmental, educational, and ecotourism role of KNP and minimize leakage of ecotourism benefits out of the area

(Venter et al, 1994: p3).

Although the programme is still in its infancy stage it has a potential to improve the social, environmental and economic status of the nearby communities.

It has also been argued that tourism can play a positive role in strengthening local cultures of the host regions, enhancing local population interest in local culture and pride in local traditions and improving sense of cultural worth (Craik, 1991; Richards, 1996).

De kadt (1979) further points out that arts, crafts and culture have been revitalized as a direct result of tourism. Again, indigenous architecture is often reconstructed for tourism use. Hence tourism is recognised as a stimulant and even rejuvenator of the local arts and crafts industry.

Finally, tourism can make a strong contribution to the processes of balanced growth between industry and the countryside and an equitable balance between industrial areas and the rest of the country (Bramwell and Lane, 1994; Dearden, 1991; Murphy, 1985; Young, 1973).

- **Costs**

Though it is regarded as being kinder to the environment than most other industries, adventure tourism has been criticised for its detrimental environmental and social effects on host regions (Boo, 1990; Dearden, 1991; Zurick, 1992). Trekking for example, has been associated with various forms of environmental degradation such as erosion, soil compaction, deterioration of vegetation, deforestation and litter left by trekkers. Such damage is mainly associated with paths, tracks, and with points at which tourists concentrate. In some areas tourist gulying is a dominant feature of national parks (Coppock, 1982). Moreover, tourism is associated with changes in cultural values and a decay of native languages and customs (Murphy, 1985). For instance, villages which were established along trekking routes in Thailand soon became so modernized that they lost value as adventure travel destinations (Dearden, 1991). The modernisation of destinations leads to the decline in their appeal to tourists.

Moreover, tourism is associated with pollution, especially of water, either because of the lack of facilities such as toilets along the trails (Boo, 1990), or the inability of sewerage plants to cope with large capacities at peak periods (Coppock, 1982). In some destinations, water pollution is also evident in the form of untreated sewage discharged into coastal waters and pollution by fuels during boating activities (Cater, 1995). Pollution by emissions and by effluence often accompanies an influx of tourists. Putting in place developed touristic facilities and infrastructures has also resulted in the loss and removal of large quantities of land for agricultural production or in a detracting from the undeveloped status of such land as a natural habitat (Lea, 1988).

Many of the negative environmental impacts of adventure tourism on host communities stem from exceeding the local carrying capacities. Carrying capacity is defined as point the beyond which further levels of visitation or development would lead to unacceptable deterioration in the physical environment and of the visitor's experience and satisfaction (Hunter and Green, 1995; Murphy, 1994; Getz, 1983 and O'Reilly, 1986 quoted in Archer and Copper, 1994; Wheller, 1991). The capacity thresholds of a destination depend on sets of factors; volume, profile characteristics of tourists and the magnitude and frequency of interaction between tourists and a destination area and its people. Secondly, on the character of the resource itself, social structures, political organisation and the pre-existing level and nature of tourism development also play a role. A growing number of studies show that rapid uncontrolled floods of tourism combined with the behaviour of foreign visitors heightens environmental destruction and social tension (Cohen 1987 quoted in Zurick 1992; Murphy, 1985; Young, 1973; Zurick, 1992). Therefore, the issue of carrying capacity is closely related to the notion of management.

Hence, conservationists, managers and governments are trying to solve their carrying capacity problems by targeting fewer, higher-paying visitors to stay within carrying capacities. But this, however, has elitist implications (Whelan, 1991). It is argued that tourism must make a positive contribution to the host region and Wheeler (1991) and Zurick's (1992) argument, therefore, is that small-scale development catering for small numbers may have a corresponding small effect on income and employment. They further demonstrate that adverse effects may not necessarily be curbed by keeping the numbers of visitors small. Therefore, with different planning and management approaches and consensus building amongst the stakeholders (residents, developers, operators, governments), the maximum number of visitors may not strain the environment of the destination regions and the desired conditions may be maintained (Archer, 1994).

Previously, the impact of tourism on host regions was primarily focused on economic aspects since tourism offered the net economic benefit to host destinations. But it has become apparent that tourism, by its very nature, is sometimes attracted to unique and fragile environments and societies and therefore economic benefits may be offset by the adverse environmental and social effects of tourism (Archer, 1994). Dearden (1991), therefore shows that the economic benefits of tourism must be weighed against the social, cultural and environmental effects of the industry. Tourism must not only be concerned with minimizing costs and maximizing monetary and other benefits but must also ensure an equitable and just distribution of benefits and costs (Wheeller, 1991). As such, Zurick (1992) devised a model for positive and negative relationships between tourism and local culture, economy and the environment (Figure 2.2).

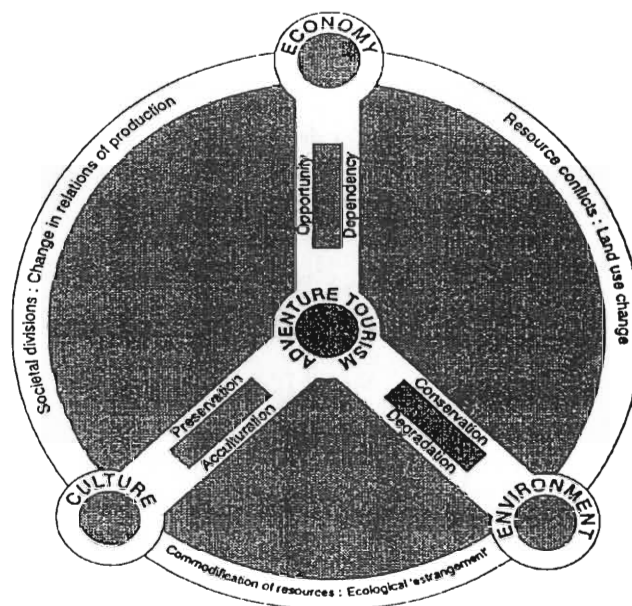


Figure 2.2: Positive and negative linkages between tourism and local culture, economy and the environment

Source: Zurick 1992: p622.

In summary it is clear that the host destination tourism's future is linked to the destinations' environment and heritage. The quality of tourist experience depends on the quality of the destination environment (Cater and Goodall, 1994). The contemporary

trend in tourism planning is to shift away from purely growth-oriented economic tourism development towards more sustainable forms of development. The concept of ***sustainable tourism*** is currently being used as a form of tourism that both acknowledges the negative impacts and facilitates a more positive role for tourism (Cater and Goodall, 1994; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Zurick, 1992).

2.3 Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable Tourism is defined as environmentally and socially responsible travel to natural or near natural areas that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact and provides for the beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local people (Cater, 1992; Cater and Goodall, 1994; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Oppermann and Chon, 1997).

Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism (1996), illustrates that sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is recognised as development of the tourism industry that leads to management of all resources in a way that can fulfil economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems. All of the above dimensions are interrelated hence Kaufman (1993), views sustainable tourism as an option that seeks to achieve a dynamic balance in line with the principles of sustainable development as outlined in the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987).

Rees (1989), defines sustainable development as positive socio-economic change that does not undermine the ecological and social systems upon which communities and society are dependent (Rees 1989 in Gunn, 1994). The definition demonstrates key application to sustainable tourism. Firstly, development in tourism must provide social and economic good to destination areas. Secondly, such growth or change must not undermine the ecological and social systems that are the foundation upon which

communities and societies depend. Sustainable development could be a planning principle for sustainable tourism.

Since tourism is an industry that sells both the physical and human environment as its products, its interests in sustainable development is therefore logical (Murphy, 1994). Sustainable tourism products are the products which are operated in harmony with local environment, community and cultures, so that these latter categories become the permanent beneficiaries and not the victims of tourism development.

Hunter and Green (1995), perceive sustainable tourism as a product of long term viability of economic investment in tourism projects and programmes and policies which will ensure successful management of natural, man-made and human resource bases. Finally it acts as a link between destination areas and their wide environment and also seeks to contribute to regional, national and global resource conservation and preservation (Hunter and Green, 1995; Murphy, 1994).

Conservation encompasses preservation, maintenance, sustainable utilization and restoration and enhancement of the natural environment. It enhances sustainable use of resources which safeguards the ecological and genetic diversity (WCS, 1980).

However, one of the strong arguments against the use of concepts like sustainable, soft, green, eco, appropriate, responsible tourism and others when trying to address problems of mass tourism were put forward by Cater (1993), Cater and Goodall (1994) Wheller (1991), and Wheat (1994) who are against the idea that sustainable tourism is an automatic answer for all tourism ills. They show that this alternative form of tourism shares many of the drawbacks of conventional mass tourism.

Sustainable tourism emphasizes, firstly, that the pace of development must be controlled, relatively slow and capable of being absorbed into host environment without negative effects. Secondly, the prevailing power base should be altered in such a way that decision

making on tourism and tourism development are in the hands of the host communities. Thirdly, raising awareness of the traveler prior to departure is a vital element.

What seems indisputable, however, is that the idea of small scale development does not tackle the problem of large, uncontrolled mass visitors. The argument is that even small scale developments have had very evident adverse impacts (Cater, 1993). Wheller (1991) and Wheat (1994) also argue that increasing number of tourists searching for authentic experiences can inflict severe damage on host environments in spite of their low numbers. Similarly, Cater and Goodall (1994) explain that sustainable tourism is destructive in its own way by advertising unspoiled destination away from tourist pollution. It also appears elitist- an operation seeking tourists committed to quality crafts, organic foods, heritage and quietness.

Tourism is supposed to be an agent for regions' regeneration and creation or generation of substantial income and significant jobs. Though small scale projects may have significant impact on raising the living standards of local populations, they are, however, unlikely to meet the needs and demands of a growing numbers of tourists and the needs of the greater proportion of the local populations (Cater and Goodall, 1994). Furthermore, Craik, (1991) advocates that though mass tourism has greater negative impacts than responsible or sustainable tourism, it does however deliver greater economic returns. Pearce (1989) also argues that large scale development can be the precursor to small-scale development.

According to Wheat (1994) and Wheller (1991), sustainable tourism is just a marketing label which claims to offer sustainable development options to countries short of cash. Consequently it is being adopted enthusiastically by many Less Developed Countries (LDCs) which have weaker economic bases and are in greater need of foreign exchange. As a result, most developing countries are in a dilemma in terms of imposing strict controls on the scale and form of tourism development.

It is argued that appropriate tourism already exists. The argument is that the future of tourism lies in the way mass tourism is conducted and not in a move to alternative tourism (Wheller, 1991; Wheat 1994).

Secondly, the concept of sustainable tourism advocates the degree of control of host communities over tourist activities and benefits generally as being a significant element of sustainability (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Murphy, 1985; Murphy, 1993; Price, 1996). By the same token, Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism (1995) emphasizes the need for all sectors of society; women, indigenous people, the young and the old to be given an opportunity to participate in sustainable tourism development projects in their areas. As Cater (1993) points out, this is an idealistic situation in LDCs because tourists to LDCs originate from more developed countries (MDCs) and consequently their tour, travel and accommodation needs are largely coordinated by firms based in those countries. Again, foreign developers based in the MDCs have become increasingly involved in tourism development in the LDCs. Despite the fact that tourism provides an important source of foreign exchange to LDCs, the leakages from LDCs are evident. Again, due to the high degree of foreign investment, land and property prices have often gone up beyond the means of an average low-income resident.

The studies also show that local populations have been denied the right to manage and benefit in tourist developments in their localities. The policies for the creation of national parks in many LDCs such as the National Parks of East Africa, have been cited as example of policies in which local populations have been denied access to local resources such as land for agriculture and the gathering of fuel, fodder and building materials. Simultaneously local populations rarely benefit from such conservation projects. Apparently, such policies seem to satisfy the needs of conservationists and those of tourists but pay little regard to the needs of host populations (Cater and Goodall, 1994; Venter *et al*, 1994).

However, individual examples of successful tourism projects such as Communal Areas Management Plan for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe has been acknowledged and often cited as one of those projects which have made significant efforts to bring the benefits of tourism to certain rural communities within Zimbabwe. Like most of other countries' policies, Zimbabwe's conservation policies based on the establishment of national parks previously ignored the rights of local people to inhabit and utilize designated land and wildlife. The programme's aims are to promote wildlife utilization as an economic and sustainable land use option in agriculturally marginal rural areas and to empower local communities to manage wildlife resources areas and to realize benefits from them indefinitely (Price, 1996). The programme has however enabled the greater proportion of the rural communities to manage and benefit directly from indigenous wildlife and other natural resources in their areas. The benefits include meat for the community, revenue from safaris and trophy hunting received at grass roots level. CAMPFIRE attempts to balance the needs of the local population, tourists and the natural environment. It demonstrates that wildlife can be integrated with people in such a way that conservation which is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable can be enhanced (Pinchin, 1993). But it does not follow that such success could be guaranteed in another location or be automatically transferred from one situation and be adopted readily at another (Wheller, 1991).

Thirdly, sustainable tourism encourages education of the tourists in destination awareness prior to the departure. The idea is that more environmentally aware tourists are more likely to behave according to the customs of their destination and to travel in an ecologically responsible way. But according to Wheller (1991) this notion is idealistic. As indicated earlier in this chapter, there is a growing demand for LDCs natural environments and cultural heritages by tourists from More Developed Countries (MDCs). It is therefore becoming difficult for LDCs to keep up with the growing demands of the growing tourist numbers. Again, LDCs do not seem to have even the capacity and resources to manage the rapid rate of tourism growth.

In this regard, Wheller (1991) poses the following questions:

Just how is the utopian sensitive traveller to be created?
 How is the exercise to be coordinated?
 Who pays for it?
 What time span is envisaged for the effect of the educative process to reach fruition? and;
 what precisely is meant by educating? (Wheller, 1991: p92)

There is also a view that raising awareness would inevitably raise demand- one of the main factors in the growth of tourism. Hence the so called “aware, educated, I’m going ethnic” also have some degree of environmental impact in their search for new exotic, unspoilt, vulnerable environments in trying to escape the mass tourists (Wheller, 1991).

In summary, tourism development has thus been criticised in many developing regions for its inability to promote sustainable development in terms of community access to wealth generating resources and in the distribution of development costs and benefits to local populations (Hunter and Green, 1995). Hence, up to now, none of the alternative forms of tourism have truly constituted sustainable tourism development.

2.4 Tourism in Lesotho

Tourism in Lesotho reached a peak in the mid-1970's based upon the opening of modern hotels and casinos in Maseru. This boom was led by the casino's special offer of a brand of 'forbidden fruits' of gambling and the possibility of inter-racial sex, an activity which was denied neighbouring South Africans. Gambling, pornographic films and the availability of sex across the colour line became the cornerstone of Lesotho's tourist attraction (Crush and Wellings, 1983). The availability of forbidden fruits in Lesotho, however, was not the only motive for all tourists visiting Lesotho. Ten to fifteen percent of the total visits in 1975, rising to 24 percent in 1980, were for business purposes. There is reason to believe, however, that many business visitors partook of the forbidden fruit when they were in the country (Crush and Wellings, 1983).

This form of tourism had high social and financial costs. One of the most significant social impacts was prostitution which was culturally offensive to many inhabitants. The crime levels also increased. The adoption of foreign, sophisticated life styles also impacted negatively on the household incomes of many poor people (Crush and Wellings, 1983; Lea, 1988). The growing of tourism, as illustrated by Young (1973), made the gambling casinos more profitable and more popular touristic destinations. However, the gambling areas became unattractive areas which acted as a magnet for crime and prostitution and in some other countries were suspect of drug smuggling.

Furthermore, the casinos in the country were externally owned and controlled; this form of tourism was therefore not economically viable for the host population because most of the revenue generated drained back to the parent countries. It is realised however, that the product is now aimed at attracting the domestic market. For instance, the casinos in Maseru have buses which carry people from public places to casinos and from the casinos back to their respective places. This poses a serious challenge to the government as it results in a drain of effective money in circulation and exerts financial pressures on the household finances of those who participate. (Crush and Wellings, 1983).

Though this form of tourism produced negative social effects and limited economic benefits to the host destination, it appeared, however, to be a reasonable earner of foreign exchange in Lesotho where the economy is far less diversified. In 1976, for instance, it contributed 5 per cent to GNP and in terms of job creation, 200 to 1,500 workers were employed in 1968 to 1980 respectively.

Lesotho is almost entirely dependent on the South African market for tourists. In the 1970's, more than 85% of Lesotho tourists were from South Africa, reaching 90.5% in 1979 (Crush and Wellings, 1983). These figures reached 95% in the 1980's, before declining in the mid 1990's (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Source of visitor arrivals 1983-1994 , ('000)

Year	RSA	Other African Countries	Europe	Other countries
1983	148.5	2.4	1.8	1.8
1984	177.9	3.3	2.1	2.1
1985	198.6	2.7	1.3	1.3
1986	203.4	1.5	1.2	1.2
1987	209.2	5.6	1.4	1.4
1988	154.0	4.7	2.4	2.4
1989	204.1	6.2	2.0	2.0
1990	230.1	5.8	2.6	2.6
1991	431.7	7.5	3.0	3.4
1992	401.0	7.5	2.8	2.8
1993	335.4	6.1	4.6	2.8
1994	241.9	5.3	4.6	2.0

Source: Government of Lesotho, 1994: p18

A restructuring of the Homelands policy in 1975 and construction of the casinos in South Africa, however, led to significant changes in the whole character of intra-regional tourism. The establishment of gambling facilities in former South African homeland areas such as Sun City and the Thaba-Nchu Sun increased competition in the casino market (Crush and Wellings, 1983). This resulted in a steep decline in tourist numbers, length of stays and hotel occupancy rates (Government of Lesotho, 1994).

Consequently, the strategy for the promotion of Lesotho tourism shifted to marketing focussed on natural based products. But this reaction was slow as the country was not prepared for this change and hence no advanced measures were taken to fill the vacuum left (Government of Lesotho, 1994).

In marketing Lesotho as a tourist destination, more emphasis is now placed on promoting its natural environment and historical attractions (its dramatic topography, rock paintings, dinosaur footprints, special scenic attractions such as Africa's highest waterfall at Semonkong, the huge lake created by the Katse Dam, adventure activities such as pony

trekking, hiking, Lesotho's unique cultural and historical traditions and its wide range of handicrafts). It is on adventure travel, specifically pony trekking in Lesotho that the present research focuses.

As indicated earlier in Chapter one, Lesotho is distinct in that its lowest point is 1500m above sea level, which makes it the highest in the world. This mountainous topography makes it an ideal destination for pony trekking. Pony trekking entails travel to remote rural areas of the country by a horse. Due to Lesotho's terrain which is rough, particularly in the mountains where most of the treasure of the country's tourism is found, adventurous tourists enjoy exploring and crossing the mountains by horse. This has increased the usage of horses in the country and pony trekking has therefore turned out to be one of the most significant and popular component of the country's tourist products. The table below (Table 2.2) presents the results of the tourists' awareness of the various tourist products and illustrates the prominence of the product hierarchy.

Table 2.2: Visitor knowledge of product

Product	Aware (Percentage)	Visited (Percentage)
Mountain Scenery	62.1	84.0
Pony Trekking	47.7	30.0
Waterfalls	40.1	22.7
Bushman Painting	44.0	13.1
Thaba-Bosiu	36.7	18.2
Dinosaur Footprints	27.4	5.1

Source: Lesotho Tourist Board, 1995/1996 Peak Season Survey

According to the LTB 1995/96 peak season survey, of all visitors, the most popular products well known to the visitors were mountain scenery which recorded 62.1 percent followed by pony trekking which accounted 47.7 percent. Mountain scenery and pony trekking were the products most visited with 84.0 percent and 30.0 percent visitors respectively.

- ***Merits of Pony Trekking Against Other Touristic Products***

Because of its nature, pony trekking fits in well with national development policies that aim at regional diversification and equitable distribution of benefits for the rural poor. It is also an important tourism component in Lesotho for it tallies with the ideas of sustainable tourism development in that it involves community participation and minimum damage to the environment (government of Lesotho, 1994).

It is not too expensive to develop and it requires simple accommodation made of local materials. Its development is not hampered by lack of adequate infrastructure and it entails very little infrastructure investment. The construction of bridle paths to places of interest for instance, does not require large amounts of land nor private land ownership and hence, no competition for land for this particular touristic development exists. This eliminates potential conflict around indigenous against western views of land. Further, it does not require the importation of foreign expertise, but rather skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled local people (Government of Lesotho, 1994).

Because of their small compact bodies, Basotho ponies are easy to ride, manage, and feed. As such even inexperienced horse riders can easily ride a pony and feel comfortable on the horse's back. Furthermore, Basotho ponies have small round hard hooves, a feature which makes them sure-footed and able to climb steep and rough places easily (Ketola 1995). Additional factors favouring pony trekking are that the ponies are locally bred and their grooms are Basotho. Foodstuffs are available from local farmers and small businesses and as such most of the income derived from this activity is profit and leakages of such profits from the host country or from rural to urban areas are very few and this is important because the development is rurally based. Though pony trekkers are encouraged to bring their own foodstuffs, they do however purchase some goods from local farmers and shops, but this brings few economic returns to the host population.

The Lesotho horse trails are a unique experience, not only because of the ponies and the scenery, but because the trails are run by Basotho and not expatriates and so display much of the country's culture and outlook to the tourists (Gateway magazine, 1995).

2.5 Summary

This chapter evaluated some of the key features of tourism industry; the potential economic, social and environmental effects of tourism on host areas. Because tourism produces a range of impacts which are complex and intertwined, perhaps it is best that benefits are not seen in isolation without equal attention to the associated costs.

What is evident from the literature is that the fundamental problems of tourism are related to growth of the industry, uncontrolled tourism development and increases in the volume of tourists. Unless these problems are addressed, the claims that there are answers to the problems of tourism are misleading.

Although the concept of sustainable tourism appears to offer solutions to the detrimental effects from conventional mass tourism, it still retains many problems of conventional mass tourism. At best, the solution could be ideally to plan not only to minimize the cost of tourism and maximize the benefits, but also to ensure equitable and just distribution of these costs and benefits.

Tourism planning must however be comprehensive enough to consider the ecological and social systems. This can be possible provided the governments, tour operators, conservation groups, and local communities plan together during the establishment of tourists sites and how they should be managed (Gunn, 1995). Because of tourism's complex nature and the fact that it takes place in many different social and political contexts, planning for specificities of each destination area is crucial because what works in one place may need adaptation and modification for another. Furthermore, there is a need for improved understanding of the issues in promoting sustainable tourism of

whatever type, for instance, an understanding of various roles played by destination, tourists and tourism enterprises in promoting sustainable tourism (Cater, 1993).

The concept of sustainable tourism can therefore be used to provide a framework within which people can begin to develop a more sensible way of organising tourism at local, national and global level. It can also help policy makers to examine the promotion and development of tourism projects from a new perspective.

In the case of Lesotho, this chapter has shown that since the country ventured into the tourist industry in the 1970's, the development of tourism, as in many developing countries has been proven unsustainable. Perhaps through planning and implementation of workable policy options greater gain and control over the economic destiny of nature based tourism development, in this case, pony trekking, could be obtained.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes various methods used to get both the quantitative and qualitative data for the study. These included literature review and quantitative and qualitative methods. Basic information needed to assess the role of pony trekking was obtained through quantitative data. Qualitative methods such as observation and discussion with key informants were mainly used. The quantitative and qualitative methods were therefore used to complement each other.

The discussions in this chapter have been organised under the following sections; literature review, sampling procedures, qualitative and quantitative methods, limitations of the study and a summary.

3.2 Literature Review

Due to explorative and descriptive nature of this study, review of relevant literature was ideal for the study to obtain new insights into a phenomenon and determine priorities for further research. The research was guided by a theoretical framework based on tourism models drawn from sustainable development paradigms. In this regard, considerations of sustainable tourism, sustainable development and community participation are central to the study. The relevant literature review was done before commencement of the field research. This facilitated better understanding of critical issues and served to guide the interviews and data gathering process more effectively. In Kumar's (1989, p. 7) words "a well formulated flexible framework helps to sharpen the focus of an inquiry and keep the interviews focus on critical issues." This helps in the formulation of concepts and

hypotheses before field research, thus providing a guideline for the selection of data collection instruments (Bailey, 1987; Garbers, 1996).

Relevant background information to the study was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were personal communication with concerned parties and minutes of meetings. Secondary sources included books, government records and documents such as government development plans and reports, project reports, monthly and yearly reports, minutes of meetings and statistical data from government departments. Moreover, published and unpublished studies were also used. Publicity brochures, leaflets produced by the pony trekking centres, particularly Basotho Pony and Malealea and magazines were sourced. Maps were also used to locate the study area.

3.3 Sampling Design

Sampling is a way of collecting information from some members of the population and using this to represent the whole group (Allison *et al*, 1996; De Vaus, 1986). The sample for this study is based on three pony trekking activities:

1. the government owned Basotho Pony Trekking Centre located at Molimo-Nthuse in the Maseru district;
2. the privately owned Malealea Pony Trekking Association at Malealea in Mafeteng district, and
3. the community owned Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Association at Bokong in the Thaba-Tseka district.

There are six pony trekking centres in the country and the above three were selected on the assumption that they would be representative of the existing pony trekking activities. Secondly, only these three were selected because of time constraints. A map showing the location of these centres is found in Figure 1.2.

Four categories of respondents were identified as sources of information for this study. The four categories included: (i) the pony trekking centre managers, (ii) members of pony trekking associations, (iii) the tourists and (iv) officers of the Lesotho Tourist Board responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of pony trekking. Only these four groups were selected with an assumption that they were relevant to the study. The questions posed in these different categories are to be found at the end of this report as Appendices 1(a), 1(b), 1(c) and 1(d).

Table 3.1 gives the total number of members of pony trekking associations and respondents interviewed in the three selected centres.

Table 3.1 Number of respondents interviewed from each pony trekking centre

Centre	Active members of the association	No. and % of Respondents
Basotho Pony	16	12 (75.0%)
Malealea	56	31 (55.6%)
Khohlonts'o	20	11 (55.0%)
Total	92	54 (58.7%)

On average, 58.7 percent of the respondents who are members of the pony trekking associations were interviewed. The researcher had hoped to interview all the members since they are few in numbers, but this ideal was not realised due to time constraints and unwillingness of the member of the pony trekking associations to be interviewed. The author is therefore unaware of any circumstances which could have resulted in substantial sample bias.

In this study, each pony trekking centre was allocated 50 questionnaires for tourists on the basis of the approximate number of visitors to the centres per month. Out of a total of 150 questionnaires, a total of 93 were recovered from the three centres, that is, 37 from Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, 31 from Malealea Pony Trekking Centre and 25 from

Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre.

3.4 Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

3.4.1 Quantitative Methods

Interviews using structured questionnaires to obtain quantitative data are the most important source of information for tourism analysis, planning and decision making (Smith 1995). This study used a structured and unstructured questionnaire to collect quantitative data.

- ***Questionnaires***

A set of structured, open-ended and closed ended questions were used. The questionnaires were generally handed over to the respondents, with an explanation by the researcher about the subject matter. Interviewees included members of the pony trekking associations, trekkers, officers from the LTB and managers of the pony trekking centres. The trekkers who participated in overnight treks were given questionnaires before the treks began so that they could fill them in during their leisure time. Day trekkers were asked to fill them in when they had completed the trek.

In cases where respondents could not write, the researcher administered questionnaires face to face, particularly to the farmer community, reading the questions to the respondents and recording the answers. Questionnaires to the farmer community were written in Sesotho (first language) given that most of the community respondents included apparently uneducated persons who did not understand English. The questions to the chairperson of the committee from Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Association were translated into Sesotho by the researcher for the same reason that the chairperson could not understand English fully.

Face to face interviews are time consuming but were found to be advantageous, since the researcher could sometimes change the wording of questions and probe the interviewees for clear and detailed responses. In support of this, Kumar notes that skilful probing is essential in seeking elaboration, details, and clarifications. Moreover, successful interviews depend on the capacity of the interviewer to probe the respondent without indicating that the respondent's answers are inadequate or not helpful (Kumar, 1989, p16). The researcher was able to draw out all relevant responses from the respondents and also gave the respondents every chance to express their views.

3.4.2 Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods such as observations and discussions with informants were used in this study. These methods are normally used to clarify or to investigate and probe further any interesting issues which might be observed during the data collection process.

- ***Observations***

This involved sight or visual ways of data collection and included other senses such as hearing. There are two types of observation; participant and non-participant observers. Participant observers participate in the activities being observed (Bailey, 1996). In this study both types were used. The researcher participated in one overnight and two day treks. This was useful because it allowed the researcher to witness the nature of pony trekking first hand and to record important aspects of the study which the researcher might not be aware of, such as the organisation of the tour, the role of the guides and attitudes of local people towards visitors and of visitors towards local people. These observations gave the researcher the best chance to assess the meanings behind the behaviour and the understanding of the environment in which pony trekking occurs. Observations were therefore recorded in a journal at every level of the study.

- ***Discussions with Informants***

Though it has been stated earlier that some of the respondents were given questionnaires to fill in , the researcher held discussions and interviews with them as well. This was done where the respondents had given unsatisfactory answers such as 'I cannot remember or I am not sure' and thus the researcher needed to explore responses more fully.

Interviews and discussions were held with a range of involved parties (communities, managers in the pony trekking centres and officers of the LTB) at the selected pony trekking centres. The interviews were both formal and informal. Formal interviews were conducted whereby a set of preplanned questions were asked and answers were recorded .

3.5 Limitations of the Study

It was anticipated that the data from field research would be collected within three months, but it took about four months, from August to November 1997. This was due to problems beyond the researcher's control. Firstly, it was difficult to get some of the information from either the Lesotho Tourist Board, the Ministry of Tourism or managers of the pony trekking centres due to a lack of written documents. For instance, there was no background information on the establishment of Matelile/Malelea Pony trekking Association, and no records or estimate of the number of trekkers visiting Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking.

Statistics are important in tourism as a means of evaluating the magnitude and significance of tourism to a destination and quantifying the role and contribution of tourism to economy and society. Moreover, statistics are required in planning, marketing and promotional activities which can be effective if based on concrete knowledge of the actual and potential markets and their characteristics (Burkart and Medlik, 1981). Though some

of the relevant statistics were ultimately not found, for instance, estimates of the number of trekkers visiting the two above mentioned centres, this research was not a waste of time because the data gathered provided useful information for the study.

Most of the information was obtained through personal communication and discussion with the interviewees and key informants. At times contradicting statements were made by different people on a similar issue and as a result one had to go back to the respondents or informants for some explanations and clarifications on certain aspects of the subject. The problem of the lack of documents has led to omission of important data such as the exact dates on which some of the events took place.

The other problem was that some data was inaccessible to the researcher. The estimates of the number of trekkers in the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre over the years is missing in this survey because the researcher was told that such information was not accessible to students for reasons known to the manager of the centre only. This, however, did not constitute a major handicap to the findings of the study.

Most of the villages with participants in the pony trekking activity are scattered and are only accessible by horse. As such very few villages were visited. Many of the farmers were interviewed at the respective centres when they came for meetings, payments for their trekking horses or when they brought horses for trekking. Very often only a few interviews were done each day because at times very few members would attend the meetings and others refused to participate or to be interviewed.

Though the respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study and given assurance of confidentiality, some of the farmers still felt uncomfortable with the interviews. The researcher learned later that they were afraid that they might put their membership of the association in jeopardy by the responses they would give.

The researcher's place of residence is far from the study areas, and therefore the researcher had to stay in lodges close to the centres. Financial constraints made it difficult to stay for more than three weeks in one centre. Since the trekkers did not come every day and because of a lack of telephones at the centres, the managers of the centres were asked to give out some of the questionnaires to trekkers. While some trekkers failed to return the questionnaires, others returned blank questionnaires and many were always too hurried to afford time for interviews. The fact that trekkers came in 'stochastically', and sometimes failed to appear, despite having made prior bookings, and failed to return questionnaires, caused the study to drag on as the required data trickled in.

Finally, one of the limitations of this research has been the absence of data from local people residing around pony trekking centres and along trekking routes who are not involved directly with pony trekking business. The opinions of these local residents about pony trekking and its effects could be particularly relevant and important, as this group represents a large segment of those who have to live with the ultimate consequences of pony trekking development in their areas. As such, there is a need for further research on some aspects of this tourist activity.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has outlined a variety of methods used for data collection, and provided justification for their use in the study. Discussion has been done on how the questionnaire was administered, discussions were held with informants and observations were made. The selection of a sample and the source of a sample were also explored. The chapter has also given an overview of the main limitations of the study, the problems encountered during the field investigation and the means by which some of the problems were overcome in the course of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EVOLUTION OF PONY TREKKING TOURISM

4.1 Introduction

Pony trekking, which started as an ordinary horse riding activity for leisure by expatriate civil servants in Lesotho in the mid-1960's, has developed into a thriving commercial business operation. The rise of adventure tourism saw the formation of pony trekking organisations like Maluti Treks and Travel and the Lesotho Expedition Centre in the 1970's, with local guides taking explorer-type trekkers to a few places of interest in the country such as, waterfalls, rock paintings, dinosaur footprints and other products. Trekking was founded on the horse breed popularly known as the Basotho Pony which was introduced into the country through an Irish Aid-Supported Pony Project in 1978. In the 1980's more trekking centres were established (LTB officer,pers. comm. 1997). These centres, which are the focus of this study (Figure 1.2), are:

1. Basotho Pony Trekking,
2. Malealea Pony Trekking; and
3. Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking.

This chapter presents background information and provides a broad overview of the current state of developments and constraints in the above selected pony trekking centres. Before considering the individual centre, some general points about all three centres will be instructive. Again, the sections that follow assess the situation in each of the centres.

The Basotho Pony Trekking Centre is government- owned; the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre is run by a private entrepreneur, whilst the Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre is a community-based project.

The Malealea and Khohlonts' o pony trekking centres depend entirely on horses supplied by local farmers whilst the Basotho Pony trekking centre keeps its own horses and mules as pack animals but also hires horses from the communities around to supplement its herd during periods of high demand. The three pony trekking centres also depend on local villagers to provide overnight accommodation for trekkers.

The pony trekking activity falls into two main categories. The first involves trekking to relatively isolated local attractions for several days and staying overnight in villages. The second involves trekking for a number of hours to easily accessible areas. As such, treks are tailored to meet different needs, varying from one hour to seven day adventures. The treks are graphically presented in specimen leaflets attached as Appendix 2. It is important to note that the appendix does not include Khohlonts' o pony trek information because the operation is still new and small.

4.2. Basotho Pony Trekking Centre

4.2.1 Background

The Trekking Centre, originally part of the Basotho Pony Project funded by Irish-Aid, commenced in 1978, with the main objectives of:

- i) preparing and marketing ponies both locally and abroad; and
- ii) upgrading the Basotho pony breed, a potentially valuable natural resource that could provide the farmers with a marketable commodity.

The trekking operation was introduced in 1984 with the aid of European Economic Community (EEC) capital amounting to M50,000.00. Pony trekking was developed as a pilot project because of the ineffectiveness of the marketing component, which could not provide all-year financial support to cover all operational costs. The funds granted were used for building costs, the purchasing of horses and saddlery, promotional literature and the development of trekking routes (Kenny, 1986).

The establishment of trekking as a commercial enterprise was closely associated with tourism. Because of Lesotho's unique combination of scenic beauty and availability of horses, the development of pony trekking was seen as an excellent foundation for attracting tourists. Pony trekking did not only generate income but it also attracted many tourists seeking ponies to explore mountains, rivers, gorges, cultural assets, waterfalls (Qiloane Falls, Phororong Waterfall, Maletsunyane Falls) and other places of interest (Figures 1.2 and 2.1). It was therefore decided to develop trekking to its full potential and not simply pursue it as a sideline to the breeding and marketing of Basotho ponies.

To exploit the full potential of the operation, efforts were made to develop a programme which would include the following:

- i) The construction of extra facilities at the market centre or the adaptation of existing buildings.
- ii) The development of extra trekking routes and the upgrading of existing bridlepaths.
- iii) The development of satisfactory stop-over facilities at selected villages on the routes of the treks.
- iv) The strengthening and expansion of existing areas of promotion and marketing.
- v) The comprehensive training of staff.

The Pony trekking activity was maintained and controlled under the Basotho Pony Project at the marketing centre in Molimo Nthuse (Figure 1.2). At the beginning of the trekking operation by the Irish, the centre had 60 horses. It used its herd of horses and mules as pack animals and the pony trekking operation developed to a stage where, during holiday periods in South Africa, all horses would be booked in advance. As pointed out earlier, these horses were often complemented by farmers' horses during busy periods. The Basotho Pony Project mobilised the communities living around the pony trekking centre to form a trekking association. This facilitated the participation of and spread benefits to everybody who owned horses and ensured a ready supply of horses from the farmers. It also stemmed the problem of horse theft from the centre. Forty six people came together to form an association which, however, has not been registered legally as yet. During the field research undertaken for this study, only 16 of the 46 members were actively involved (Table 3.1).

When the Irish-funded project was phased out, the Basotho Pony project was absorbed by the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1992. By the time the project was handed over to the government the number of trekking horses was down to 37 from the original number of 60 in 1987. Some had died while others were showing signs of decline in quality (O'Donovan, 1993). At present the centre has only 14 riding horses (Table 4.1). These horses are inadequate, hence the number of hired horses from the villagers has increased and relatively little income accrues to the centre from the trekking component as the centre now relies on farmer's horses. This, however, raises the prospect of the local communities benefiting from adventure tourism and in a way justifies what the literature indicated. The literature illustrates that the local people in Thailand derive substantial income from trekking and this income is a profit as there are few costs to be out-layed for the services provided such as transport and accommodation (Dearden, 1991).

Table 4.1: Horses kept by Basotho Pony Trekking Centre: 1987 - 1997

Year	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No. of riding horses	60	72	72	64	39	37	35	30	28	20	14

Sources: Basotho Pony Project annual reports (1993, 1994 & 1997), unnumbered pages

O'Donnovan, 1993 unnumbered pages

The Basotho Pony Marketing and Pony Trekking Centre at Molimo Nthuse is also used as a training centre to train members of the pony trekking associations. This includes programmes of training and education for tour guides and farmers (horse renters). The training is conducted by the Basotho Pony Project staff who have been trained in stud management, horse management and equestrian skills. However, this opportunity for training has not been used regularly by the two other centres- for example, since the establishment of Malealea Pony Trekking Association in 1991, no member of the association has been for training.

The members of the pony trekking community association are trained in the ways of maintaining good breeds of ponies and horse management. The latter includes proper horse feeding practices and treatment of horse diseases. Tour guides are especially trained in proper handling of tourists with additional training in areas relating to preservation of the country's cultural heritage and its precious indigenous animal and plant species.

The Basotho Pony trekking Centre provides treks lasting from one hour to seven days (Appendix 2a). Reservations are made through the Department of Livestock in Maseru, though some bookings come through directly to the centre by post and are later confirmed

and reconciled with those recorded in Maseru. Basotho Pony Trekking uses 10 guides who are employed by the government on a permanent basis and extra guides are contracted on a temporary basis during busy periods. However, information on payments for the permanent staff and guides employed temporarily is not made available for this research. Table 4.2 below summaries the number of guides who accompany trekker parties for both the day and overnight treks.

Table 4.2: Size of trekker party and associated number of guides supplied

trekkers	guides
2-7	1
8-14	2
15-20	3
21-25	4
26-30	5
31+	6+

This employment creation also confirms the points raised in the literature that one of the spin-offs of tourism is employment. It further substantiates the intention of government, observed in chapter two on literature review, that it promotes employment and economic benefit to remote communities.

The farmers are expected to bring their horses with saddlery. Alternatively, the farmer may hire it from other people or the centre. In this way it seems even the non-members can ideally hire out trekking accoutrements to the pony trekking association members and realise some income. A certain percentage is, however, deducted from a farmer's payment if the centre has used its own saddlery.

At the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre the farmers (horse owners) are paid by the government for services rendered (Table 4.3). However, the farmers are not paid

immediately after treks have been completed. The manager at the centre has to make a requisition/ application to headquarters in Maseru for the money to pay farmers.

Table 4.3: Payments for a horse (in Maloti)¹

Available ⁽²⁾ Treks	Cost to tourists	Payment for a horse to farmer (% trek income)
Day treks		
Trek 1 (1 hour)	M20.00 per person- more than five M25.00 per person- less than five	M12.00 (54.0%)
Trek 2 (2 hours)	M30.00 per person -more than five M35.00 per person -less than five	M15.00 (46.5%)
Trek 3 (4 hours)	M45.00 per person -more than five M50.00 per person -less than five	M25.00 (52.8%)
Overnight Treks		
Trek 4 (1 night)	M125.00 per person- for parties not less than 2	M41.00 (32.8%)
Trek 5 (2 nights)	M175.00 per person- for parties not less than 2	M75.00 (42.9%)
Trek 6 (old Trek) (3 nights)	M200.00 per person- for parties not less than 4	M100.00 (50.0%)
Trek 6 (4 nights)	M250.00 per person- for parties not less than 4	M125.00 (50.0%)
Trek 7 (6 nights)	M405.00 per person-for parties not less than 4	M202.00 (49.9%)

Note: ¹(1Maloti = 1 Rand)

² see appendix (2a) for details of each trek

The centre and the farmer get about 50 percent, on average from each trek. The income from this source is, therefore, distributed, on average, equally between the centre and the farmer.

4.2.2 Constraints to Development

4.2.2.1 Institutional Constraints: Financial Problems

Since the handing over of the project in 1992 to the Department of Livestock Services, the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre has been operating uneconomically and unproductively. This is because all the revenue collected at the centre from pony trekking goes to the state coffers. There is no revenue readily available for immediate use at the centre.

For more than two years the facility was run without a specific budget allocation. A tremendous decline in facilities, trekking horses and equipment has occurred due to lack of funds for purchasing or maintaining of trekking stock (O'Donnovan, 1993). Little has been done to either maintain or improve the existing facilities. The 1994 annual trekking evaluation report demonstrates however that visitors were sometimes turned away because of the shortage of horses. As a result Basotho Pony Trekking has suffered a general decline in the number of tourists who come for trekking over the last few years (Figure 4.1).

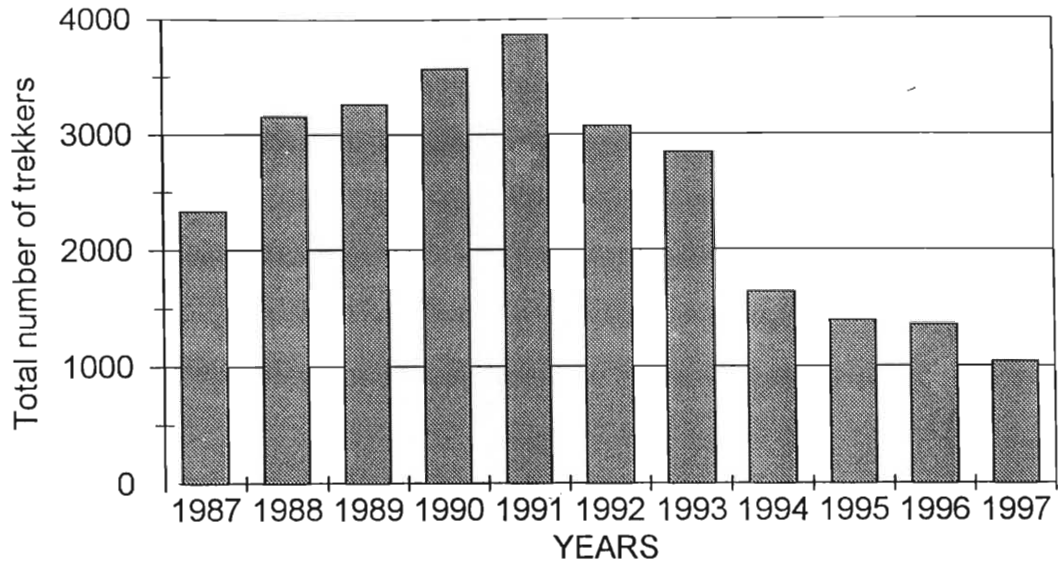


Figure 4.1: Number of trekkers at Basotho Pony Centre: 1987-1997

Source: Information from various annual trekking evaluation reports by the Basotho Pony Centre (1993, 1994 & 1997)

Figure 4.1 underlines the tremendous decline in the number of tourists in recent years. In 1987, the total number of trekkers at this centre was estimated to be 2336. It increased to 3158 in 1988 and reached its peak in 1991 with 3866 visitors coming for trekking. The number of trekkers began to decline in 1992 and a marked decline was observed from 1639 trekkers in 1994 to 1035 trekkers in 1997.

Financial constraints at the centre have also led to delays in the payment of farmers for their horses rented by the centre. Before the handover to the GoL, the farmers were paid immediately after the treks. Since the GoL's takeover, they often get their money after three to six months and often do not even know when the cheques will be coming. This has had adverse effects in that it has lowered the

morale of the farmers and now the centre is facing the problem of farmers unwilling to release their horses. For two years after the handover the staff was kept on a daily-paid status instead of being timeously absorbed full-time into the government service. This lowered staff morale and led to apparent acts of vandalism and theft of the centre's property and materials like saddlery, gas stoves and other assets. Since the GoL takeover in 1992 the guides are no longer given the stipend which they initially received before the commencement of treks. The system changed and the staff are required to make claims for all expenditure incurred.

The centre previously had three tractors. Two were sold (at give-away prices) while one is still broken down and awaits repair. As a result the centre has to buy fodder which could otherwise be planted by the centre itself (Tsiu Ntabe, pers. Comm. 1997)

4.2.2.2 Inappropriate Institutional Framework

Interviews with the Head of Basotho Pony Marketing Centre and the DLS officer show that they feel the industry has been jeopardised by placement in an inappropriate government department. While it is felt that the DLS should be concerned with livestock production and providing advice on husbandry, it is felt that this department is inappropriate as pony trekking belongs to the realm of tourism. The staff spoken to suggested that the industry could be better managed as a joint enterprise between the DLS in the Ministry of Agriculture and the LTB in the Ministry of Tourism.

4.2.2.3 Other Constraints

The trekking industry is founded on the maintenance of an adequate herd of healthy horses. However, several limitations make this difficult. In addition to financial constraints, the decline in the horse population at Basotho Pony Trekking Centre is caused by other problems namely:

- Senecio Poisoning/ Livercuriosis

Senecio is a plant poisonous particularly to horses. It is common in Southern Africa. This plant is found in abundance in range lands which are under severe conditions of overgrazing. Senecio infection is a serious problem at the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre. Research has been carried out to find a cure but to no avail. To solve this problem, considerations were made, firstly to rest the range lands to allow recovery of other plants which would kill senecio by competition because hoeing this manually or spraying seems expensive and labour intensive. Secondly, consideration was given to immunising the horses so as to ensure that they would develop a low level of illness (Kenny, 1986).

- Stock Theft and Trespassing

Stock theft is a problem to both farmers and the Basotho Pony Project at large. It has been a problem since the beginning of the project. Kenny (1986) records the loss of 14 colts in November 1985. According to the management of the project, the theft was an operation involving many people from surrounding communities.

Trespassing is another serious problem at the centre resulting in damage to grazing lands, cropping and the loss of extensive runs of fencing. The report

(Kenny, 1986) illustrates that the root cause of this was a lack of understanding by the local people about the role of the pony project in their locality. However, the DLS officer reported that trespassing is no longer a major problem compared to stock theft.

4.3 Malealea Pony Trekking Centre

4.3.1 Background

In the late 1970's, around 1978/79 the Lesotho National Tourist Office (LNTO), which was the Lesotho government's instrument for the promotion of Lesotho tourism (ARC, 1973), learned that the Frasers (store) manager who also owned a lodge at Qaba (Figure 1.2), had three horses which were used for trekking. It was something informal but a form of entertainment that the Frasers manager used for visitors who lodged there. He organised a few people as guides to accompany these people to Semonkong (Figure 1.2) and other places of interest. Since this activity was closely associated with travel for pleasure to places of interest, LNTO became interested and wanted expansion of this operation in that region. They decided to hire Fraser's horses and other horses from farmers living around the Qaba area. The number of visitors who came for trekking increased and as such the LNTO had to hire more horses from the communities living around Malealea, Matelile and Qaba (Figure 1.2). The payment for each horse went to its owner. Some of the farmer community members were trained in tour guiding by the LNTO (LTB officers, pers. Comm, 1997).

In 1988, a Farmer Community Pony Trekking Association was formed by the Lesotho Tourist Board (LTB) and this was called the Matelile Pony Trekking Association. The LTB was established in 1983 as a statutory executive arm of the Ministry of Tourism Sports

and Culture responsible for facilitating the development of tourism products and promotion thereof. Farmer communities around Malealea, Matelile and Qaba were mobilised by the LTB to form an association through which they could earn income through taking tourists on their ponies to places of interest such as Ribaneng, Ketane, and Maletsunyane Falls, (Figure 2.1). The Matelile Pony Trekking Association which initially co-ordinated these activities was located at Ha Qaba in the Matelile region and it had 65 members all of whom were farmers. The treks which took place in this area were controlled by the association so that any queries pertaining to trekking could be efficiently and centrally handled. A constitution was formulated to protect the rights of all members of the association and to regulate the use of ponies.

According to the Constitution of the Matelile Pony Association (1988), objectives of the organisation were as follows:

- i) To come together for the purpose of maintaining a good quality of studs for riding by tourists.
- ii) To establish a centre for improvement of the pony stock for members and a veterinary centre for treatment of horse disease.
- iii) To find means of training members in ways of maintaining good breeds of tourist trekking ponies.

The LTB's role in this operation was supposed to be supervision or guidance, though it became more instructive since communities did not have much knowledge about tourism. The operation was serviced by the LTB, bookings for tourists were done through the LTB, it provided materials like gas stoves, cooking utensils, mattresses and other assets at overnight stop-over areas as well as saddlery. The trekkers were catered for and the prices included the meals. Payments for hiring of horses were, however made to the Association and 10 percent of the payment went to the Association as a subscription. In

this way, the profits were being channelled directly into the local community.

Out of 65 members of the pony trekking association, eight were sent for training for two weeks at the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre at Molimo Nthuse in 1988 by the LTB. They were trained in stud management, horse management and equitation and those that were to be tour guides received additional training in areas relating to tourism.

The tourists previously lodged at the local Qaba lodge but it was overwhelmed by the influx of tourists during busy seasons. As a result, a local trader, Mr Jones, started venturing into the business of accommodating tourists for cash on his premises. The Malealea lodge was bigger and therefore accommodated most visitors. Mr Jones, who later started a local lodge used by tourists, was one of the first members of the association committee. In 1991, Mr Jones established the Malealea Pony Owner's Association which acts as a pony trekking service for establishments such as the Malealea Lodge. This new privately-owned enterprise however adopted the Constitution of the then Matelile Pony Trekking Association and was therefore called the Malealea Pony Trekking Association. Interviews with the farmer communities revealed that almost all visitors to this region now lodge at Malealea. The local people of the Ha Qaba area have since been marginalised from direct involvement in the tourist industry as a result of this shift since most of the horses used for trekking belong to the people around the Malealea area.

At present Malealea Pony Trekking Centre arranges treks lasting from one hour to six days (Appendix 2b). Unlike Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, Malealea Pony Trekking Centre depends almost entirely on horses supplied by local farmers. At its establishment in 1991, the Malealea Pony Trekking Association had 69 members but during the survey for this study, the number had dropped to 56.

The Malealea Pony Trekking Centre has 24 guides. The farmers or members of the Malealea Pony Trekking Association are themselves chosen to be guides while Basotho Pony Trekking uses its own guides who are employed on a permanent basis. The bookings are handed over to the Association which then organises which horses and guides are to go on treks. The number of tour guides per each trek depends on the number of visitors and the length of the trek (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Size of trekker party and associated number of guides supplied

Day treks		Overnight treks	
trekkers	guides	trekkers	guides
2-8	1	2-5	1
9-14	2	6-10	2
15-20	3	11-15	3
21-25	4	16-20	4
26+	5+	21+	5+

Compared to Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre is independent and self-financing. As a result, the owners of the horses and tour guides get the money immediately after the trek. Horses are hired for visitors and the payment for each horse goes directly to its owner (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Payments for a horse (in Maloti)

Treks available ⁽¹⁾	Cost to tourist	Payments	
		Horse	guide
Day treks			
Trek 1 (1 hour)	M30.00 per person	M12.50	M25.00
Trek 2 (2 hours)	M60.00	M25.00	M50.00
Trek 3 (4 hours)	M70.00	M27.00	M54.00
Trek 4 (5 hours)	M90.00	M30.00	M60.00
Overnight treks ⁽²⁾			
Trek 5 (1 night)	M100.00 per person	M35.00	M70.00
Trek 6 (2 nights)	M200.00	M70.00	M140.00
Trek 7 (3 nights)	M300.00	M105.00	M210.00
Trek 8 (4 nights)	M400.00	M140.00	M280.00
Trek 9 (5 nights)	M500.00	M175.00	M350.00

Note: ¹ each trek has a minimum number of 2 trekker parties

² see appendix (2b) for details of each trek

Table 4.5 summaries the survey of payments to the farmers and guides. The important point to make, however, is that the payment to the guide includes that of a horse that a guide uses. This is because for more than 90 percent of the time, the guides use their own horses. Since each tour party has a minimum number of two trekker parties, the centre receives approximately between M4.00 (6.7% (trek1)) to M41.94 (23.3% (trek4)) on day treks; and between M20.00 (trek 5) and M200.00 (trek 9) on overnight treks which is 20 percent, while the Malealea lodge receives 10 percent from each trek for making bookings.

Example of payment

i) Day trek (Trek1): Cost to 2 tourists	= M60.00
Payment for 2 horses	= M25.00
Payment to a guide	= <u>M25.00</u>
Total payment	M50.00 (83.3%)

Malealea lodge receives 10 percent of M60.00 which is M6.00 and the centre gets the remaining M4.00 which is about 6.7 percent.

Therefore payment for each horse is approximately 20.8 percent (M12.50).

Payments for each horse ranges between 20.8 percent (trek 1) to 33.3 percent (trek 4) on day treks.

ii) Overnight trek (Trek 5): Cost to 2 tourists	= M200.00
Payment for 2 horses	= M 70.00
Payment to a guide	= <u>M 70.00</u>
Total payment	M140.00 (70.0 %)

Malealea lodge receives 10 percent (M20.00); the farmer receives 17.5 percent (M35.00) for each horse while the centre receives 20 percent (M40.00).

The example above demonstrates that the benefits are not shared equally; there are differences in income opportunities between the guides and ordinary farmers. Again, the owner of the enterprise benefit more than the horse owners, hence a deduction that can be made from these results is that, while the community could make substantial profits from their horses, such profits are often not realised.

Ten percent of each member's income from trekking is also kept in a fund as a subscription. Some of this money has been used to buy necessary equipment for the Association such as saddlery, bridles, and saddle blankets. To get trekking on its feet members of the pony trekking association used their own saddlery. However at present, all the equipment used for trekking is the property of the association.

4.3.2 Constraints to Development

Though statistics are not available, interviews with Mr Jones and the members of the Association showed that the demand for pony trekking at the centre is increasing at a dramatic rate and the numbers of trekkers are expected to rise. However, it was found that lack of training is the major constraint to the full scale development of this activity. Interviews with the pony trekking association members revealed that ever since the establishment of the Malealea Pony Trekking Association in 1991 none of them had gone for any training. Only 8 people were sent for training for two weeks in 1988 by the LTB when the Matelile Pony Trekking Association was established. The Lack of adequate training has resulted in;

- i) Poor maintenance of horses; most of the horses are in poor condition and few are fit to take a seven day trek.
- ii) Guides being largely inexperienced in handling tourists.

4.4 Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre

4.4.1 Background

Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre is located at Bokong in the Thaba-Tseka district, where the Katse dam of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is located (Figure 2.1). The association was founded in 1991 after some communities living in the proximity of the project lost their arable and grazing land to the project. The initiation of trekking was part of efforts made by the project to provide the affected communities with alternative means of livelihood.

During construction of the roads and the dam, the LHWP hired horses from the communities because the horses were the main means of transport in this area and in many highland areas of Lesotho. With the improvements of roads in the project area horses are no longer a major means of transport (Lesotho Tourist Board, 1994).

The LHWP is one of the largest projects of its type in the world and tourism is said to have been one of its major spin-offs during construction and after completion. The Katse reservoir has exceptional features:

- i) the lake is actually in the midst of mountains - access to the lake is through a high pass (3000 metres above sea level), giving it considerable visual and scenic effects;
- ii) the area has been virtually inaccessible, therefore it has a considerable appeal as a new area; and
- iii) the lake itself is long and appealing to travel by boat (Government of Lesotho, 1990).

Since this project has a great potential for tourist attraction and to make horses valuable again, the LHWP mobilised horse owners and encouraged them to form a Pony Trekking Association through which their horses could translate into sources of income. Pony trekking activities in the area have a potential to increase the usefulness of these horses.

Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Association started its operations in mid-1992 under the encouragement and support from the LHWP in collaboration with the LTB. The Association tailored its constitution along the lines of the constitution of the Malealea Pony Trekking Association. Initially, 75 men showed interest, but only 25 were allowed to form the Association, of whom 16 members were horse owners. The reason for taking fewer people was to minimise organisational problems that are normally encountered in big organisations especially because this was a new venture where everybody was to

learn. However, it was hoped that those who were left behind would be taken on when the Association started to prosper. As such it was "outsiders" who determined the numbers to take part in the Association. What is ironical is that managers of projects usually complain of slow response and low population support for initiatives apparently meant for community benefit, yet in this particular case the managers of the projects felt the response was larger than desirable (Lesotho Tourist Board, 1994).

The objectives of the Association are as follows:

- i) To generate employment and increase incomes by promoting tourism in the area through well organised pony trekking activities.
- ii) To contribute to the development of the Basotho pony in the area.

The project was funded by the Microprojects Management Unit (MMU) within the Ministry of Economic Planning. The funds were used to purchase saddlery and support training for the members of the pony trekking association. Training was provided by the Basotho Pony Project through the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre (Government of Lesotho, 1994). The members were trained in professional horse keeping, handling tourists on pony treks and the promotion of pony trekking. The LTB makes reservations and bookings for the Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre.

Unlike Basotho Pony Trekking Centre and Malealea Pony Trekking Centre, Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre can offer treks lasting from one hour to two days only. Due to a lack of overnight accommodation, only one overnight trek (Trek 3 - 2days and 1 night) is offered by the centre. the centre offers more day treks than overnight treks because of lack of overnight accommodation.

Like the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre, the Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre depends on local farmers' horses which are supplied through a farmers' pony association.

Similarly, farmers are chosen by other members of the association to go for training for tour guiding and the proper maintenance of horses. The centre has only five guides.

Table 4.6: Size of trekker party and associated number of guides supplied

Trekkers	Guides
2-8	1
9-15	2
16-20	3
20-25	4
26+	5+

At Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre, farmers used to get money for their rented horses on a monthly basis at the beginning of the project but now they get the money immediately after the treks. Table 4.7 below represents the cost to tourists and payments to the farmers at this centre.

Table 4.7: Payments for a horse (in Maloti)

Treks available ⁽¹⁾	Cost to tourist	Payment for a horse
Day Treks		
Trek 1 (1 hour)	M10.00 per person	M9.00
Trek 2 (2 hours)	M20.00	M18.00
Trek 3 (4 hours)	M50.00	M45.00
Overnight Treks		
Trek 3 (1 night)	M100.00	M90.00

Note: ¹ each trek has a minimum number of 2 trekker parties

Only ten percent of each member's income is kept in a fund as a subscription. This means that the community enjoy the greater proportion of economic benefits brought about by pony trekking in this trekking centre.

4.4.2 Constraints to Development

Although tourism in the area is still in its infancy, the demand for pony trekking is increasing. However, full scale pony trekking activity in this centre is constrained by several factors:

- i) A lack of good saddlery and poor maintenance of horses,
- ii) limited experience in handling tourists,
- iii) inadequate training for farmer association members in the pony trekking activity; only 3 members out of 20 of Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking were sent by the LTB for training for a week in 1992 at Molimo Nthuse,
- iv) the absence of an office where bookings can be made, as a result of which bookings are made through LTB's office; and
- v) primary day visitors are from the nearby towns in the country (Maseru, Teyateyaneng, Leribe and Butha Buthe) and the RSA (Ladybrand, Ficksburg and Bethlehem). Because of its long distance from major sources of day visitors, it lacks a large nearby catchment population of day visitors. Furthermore, insufficient accommodation at Katse catchment constrains both the potential day and short holiday markets.

4.5 Summary

This chapter demonstrated the development background of the three pony trekking centres run by three different organisations, namely the government owned Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, the private enterprise Malealea Pony Trekking Centre and the community-based project Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre.

The Basotho Pony Trekking Centre was established by the Basotho Pony Project in 1984. Communities living around the centre were mobilised to form a pony trekking association.

This widened the participation and spread of benefits to even non-members who owned horses. It also ensured a ready supply of horses from the farmers. It also stemmed the problem of horse theft from the centre. The Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre and the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre on the one hand were founded under the encouragement of the LTB in 1991 and 1988 respectively. However, the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre became a privately-owned enterprise in 1991. Similarly, the communities living around these centres formed pony trekking associations through which their horses could translate into sources of income. The viability of people's organisations may well be affected by whether they are initiated by the people themselves or on the orders of outsiders. We shall return to this point in Chapter 6.

Though there are differences in how these three centres operate, this chapter has illustrated that there are also similarities. There are benefits as well as drawbacks to these operations. The initial overview of the establishments suggest that there are major drawbacks in Basotho Pony Trekking Centre compared to the other two. The Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, especially, has suffered a tremendous decline in facilities, trekking horses and equipment and consequently a decrease in the number of trekkers. The main problem is due to management problems. On the other hand, full scale operational development of the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre is constrained mainly by a lack of training for farmers in good maintenance of horses, and for guides in good handling of tourists. Although the LTB organises training programmes for members of the Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Associations, by Basotho Pony Project, the training is insufficient because the training period is short and there is no in-service training.

CHAPTER FIVE

OPERATION AND DEMAND FOR TREKKING

5.1 Introduction

The measurement and understanding of the demand for tourism is of fundamental importance to the overall planning and management process. Without such information relating to historical, current and forecast demand for tourism, it would be difficult for government, tourism agencies and individual operators to effectively formulate policies, plan marketing and promotional campaigns or make effective investment decisions.

As indicated in chapter two, the RSA happens to be the main origin of visitors to Lesotho. In the past years, from 1988-1992 for instance, Basotho Pony Trekking developed to a stage where, during holiday periods (Easter and Christmas) in the RSA, all horses would be fully booked in advance. Moreover, accommodation was always saturated with trekkers out on overnight treks. Malealea Pony Trekking has also recently begun to have its supply of horses fully booked over holiday periods (O'Donnovan, Pers. comm, 1997). But the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre is showing a marked decline in the number of trekkers since 1994 as illustrated in the previous chapter.

The increase in demand for pony trekking and reasons for its success at all locations include accessibility, guideship, trek format and general efficiency of the centres (O'Donnovan, 1993).

This chapter discusses and analyses the responses to questions posed to participants (trekkers) in the pony trekking activity (Appendix 1c). It also considers the nature of the

demand for trekking with special attention to consumer's characteristics such as motivation to participate, previous experience with the product and their perceptions of the industry. Finally, it demonstrates marketing and promotional activities of the trekking industry.

5.2 Visitors' Profile

As has been illustrated in chapter three, the surveys were conducted over a period of four months (August to November 1997) and each pony trekking centre was allocated 50 questionnaires for trekkers. Out of 150 questionnaires, a total of 93 questionnaires were recovered from these centres. The respondents included day and overnight trekkers, both categories in turn encompassing those who had previously participated in pony trekking and those who had not trekked before. Table 5.1 shows the number of respondents from each pony trekking centre.

Table 5.1: Number of trekkers surveyed from each trekking centre

Trekking Centre	No. and Percentage Surveyed
Basotho Pony Trekking Centre	37 (39.8%)
Malealea Pony Trekking Centre	31 (33.3%)
Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre	25 (26.9%)
Total	93 (100.0%)

A greater number of responses were obtained from the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre and the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre, accounting for 39.8 percent (37) and 33.3 percent (31) respectively, while Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre accounted for 26.9 percent (25) of the surveyed trekkers. Though the originally intended respondent population target of 50 persons per destination area was not reached, the figures

obtained were not far from their target. The results from the survey therefore indicate a high response from the three centres. Lesotho's tourism peak season is around December to January while the survey was done between August and November. Further, Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre is located at Katse catchment which is inaccessible from major source markets for day visitors and the existing attractions justify a relatively short visit for visitors staying overnight.

Information was collected on such items as the origin of the visitors and their satisfaction and their perceptions about the trekking operation and the behaviour and attitude of the host population. These were used as the basis for the evaluation of pony trekking by visitors who come to Lesotho for pony trekking. Figure 5.1 summarises findings on the origin of the pony trekkers and therefore the potential market for pony trekking in the country.

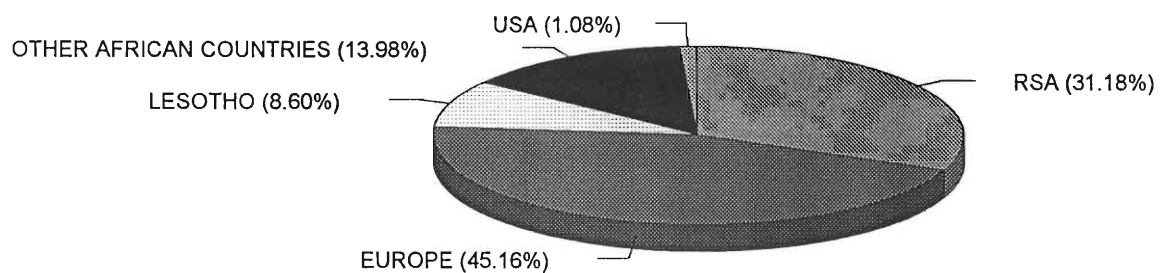


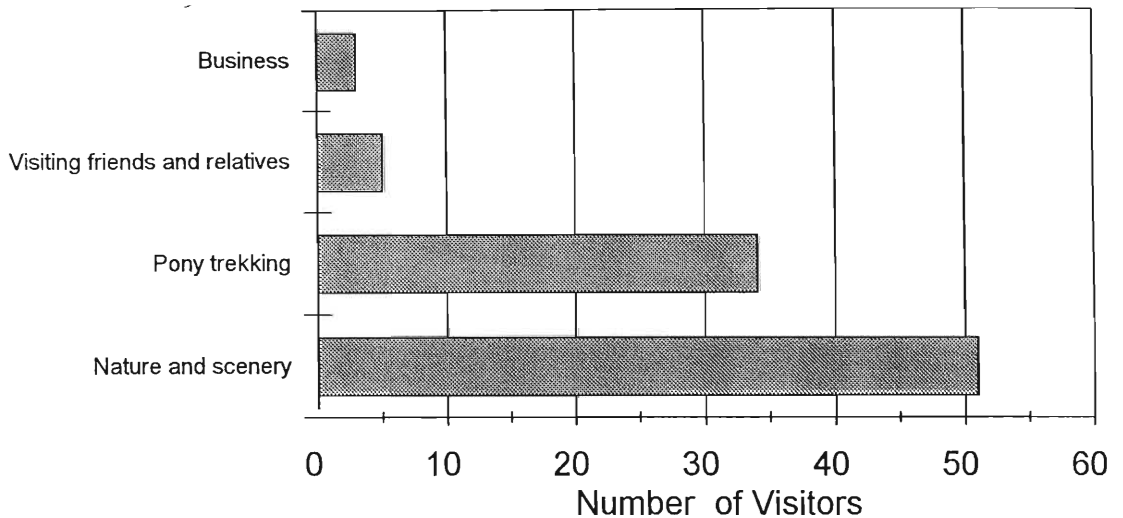
Figure 5.1: Trekkers' country of residence: August-November 1997

Figure 5.1 shows that Europe constitutes a major market for Lesotho's pony trekking with 45.16 percent of visitors. The next significant regions of origin are South Africa with 31.18

percent and Other African Countries at 13.98 percent. These are followed by Lesotho at 8.60 percent and the United States at 1.01 percent which registered the lowest figures for the origin of visitors. The results therefore indicate that most of the patrons of this product come from outside the country. Though the horse became a universal form of transport in the country, results reveal a very low level of support for pony trekking by local people, if their low representation in the statistics of consumers of this product is anything to go by. This could be the result of insufficient local marketing of the product since the government is prioritising foreign earnings.

This outcome confirms the point raised in literature that a larger part of patronage enjoyed by third world tourism is from developed countries (Zurick, 1992). The expansion of local patronage is however essential as it helps convert local citizens into ambassadors of nature tourism, and hopefully they can become jealous guardians of the country's tourist products, thus auguring well for long term sustainability of the industry.

People travel to different parts of the world for different reasons. The study surveyed the trekkers' reasons for travelling. Figure 5.2 below summarises reasons given by surveyed tourists for visiting the country at the time the research was conducted.



Total No. of visitors=93

Figure 5.2: Main purpose of visits

Visitors on sightseeing comprised a higher percentage. Fifty one respondents (54.8%) of the total in this survey visited Lesotho to enjoy nature and the beautiful scenery of the country, while visitors who came solely for pony trekking were 34 constituting 36.6 percent of the total. Of the 51 who came for nature and scenery, the majority (43), making up 84.3 percent were from outside Lesotho. Five respondents (5.4%) visited friends and relatives and the remaining 3 (3.2%) came for business purposes. The results show that the majority (91.4%) of the trekkers surveyed were people travelling for pleasure, for nature and scenery of the country and for pony trekking. This indicates that, for the most part, people do not end up in trekking by default, the intrinsic value of the natural surroundings attracts visitors to trek. The results also portray that even visitors who come to Lesotho for various reasons do enjoy themselves by participating in pony trekking while visiting the country.

This points to a viable demand for adventure tourism in the form of pony trekking in Lesotho. This implies that increased investment in the improvement of the product is likely to yield reasonable economic returns. The point made in chapter two that sustainable investment in tourism can lead to sustainable tourism development is supported by this finding.

Pony trekking is a popular and unique tourist product in Southern Africa offered in Lesotho. About 91.4 percent of the pony trekkers surveyed were aware of the existence of pony trekking in the country from a variety of sources prior to their visit (Figure 5.3).

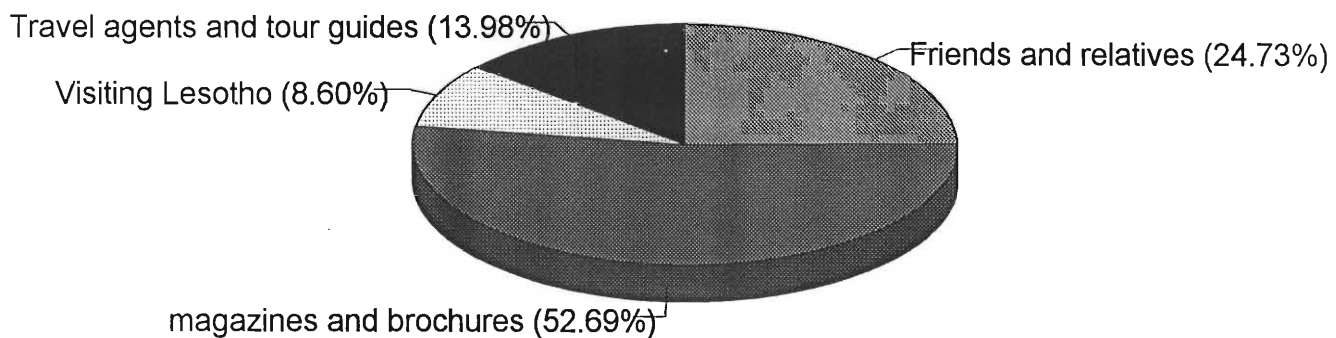


Figure 5.3: Sources of knowledge about trekking

Twenty three (24.7%) of trekkers got to know about pony trekking through friends and relatives, while 49 (52.7%) got information through brochures and magazines, eight (8.6%) through visiting Lesotho, mostly through the LTB which is responsible for the promotion of tourism in the country and helps the visitors in selecting destinations and a

range of activities. Thirteen (14.0%) of them got to know about the product through travel agents and tour guides. The observation made was that most of the international trekkers came as a group through the travel agents of the Republic of South Africa. As such, it may be concluded that the number and category of participants depends largely on prior knowledge and the effectiveness of marketing strategies used to promote pony trekking in Lesotho.

5.3 Trekkers' Perceptions About Pony Trekking

In order to determine whether pony trekking meets the needs and aspirations of trekkers, visitors in respective pony trekking centres were asked whether they were satisfied with the services and facilities (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Trekkers' opinion about services and facilities

Evaluation	Responses per Centre			Total (% in brackets)
	A	B	C	
Satisfied	32	23	18	73 (78.5%)
Not Satisfied	4	5	2	11 (11.8%)
No Response	1	3	5	9 (9.7%)
Total	37	31	25	93 (100%)

* NB: Centre code: A Basotho Pony Trekking Centre
 B Malealea Pony Trekking Centre
 C Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre

The results indicate that 73 (78.5%) trekkers were satisfied with facilities, services and operations at the centres, while 11 (11.8%) of the trekkers population were not satisfied

and the remaining nine (9.7%) did not respond to the question. The results therefore indicate that the expectations of most trekkers were met. Hence, the visitors are more likely to come back for the product because they were satisfied with the services provided.

It is not sufficient to know that customers are not satisfied, it is more important to know what aspects of the product satisfy them, so that these can be enhanced for stronger market performance of the product. The pony trekkers were also asked to state whether they would like to come back for more trekking. This information was to establish factors that prompt visitors to continue coming for pony trekking. The following is the summary of responses obtained from the trekkers:

- ▶ It is exciting and relaxing to be on horse back.
- ▶ To participate on a four day trip and to sleep in the villages.
- ▶ For more sightseeing, access to remote areas.
- ▶ To spend more time and see more places.
- ▶ I was given good treatment and horse riding is enjoyable experience.
- ▶ Trekking is a special experience and it is very interesting to see the Basotho way of life.
- ▶ Trekking was accomplished and well organised.
- ▶ The country and the people are lovely.

There appears to be a high demand for overnight trekking from Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre respondents (32.0%) , with trekkers stating that they would have liked the opportunity to spend more time in the villages. Unfortunately efforts to satisfy this demand are hampered by shortage of overnight accommodation.

These responses confirm the observation picked up in the literature that the potential of exposure to exotic experiences and cultural life are among important factors influencing people to travel, especially from the more developed to the still developing societies. It

is also clear that the treatment given tourists created a good impression about the areas and management of the product. This is a critical factor for sustainability and is discussed in the next chapters.

Table 5.3 below shows trekkers' participation and the type of trek.

Table 5.3: Visitors' participation and type of trek

Type of Trekkers and Previous Trekking Experience					
Day		Total	Overnight		Total
Trekked before	Not trekked before		Trekked before	Not trekked before	
9 (9.7%)	43 (46.2%)	52 (55.9%)	15 (16.1%)	26 (28.0%)	41 (44.1%)

Note: The type of trek refers to the trek on which the respondents went at the time of the current study, not on previous occasions.

Out of 93 responses that were obtained in this survey, 69 (74.2%) of the tourists had not participated in pony trekking before, while the remaining 24 (25.8%) had previously trekked, although 3 (12.5%) of them had trekked in some places other than Lesotho. The majority of the participants were day trekkers representing 52 (55.9%) of the total sample while 41 (44.1%) were overnight trekkers. But a greater proportion of those who had trekked before were overnight trekkers. It could be that they came back for more trekking for some of the reasons given above, such as 'access to more remote or exotic areas'. These could have been modern tourists who are seeking for new adventurous experiences as illustrated in chapter two. Amongst the day trekkers there were those who had trekked before and amongst overnight trekkers there those who had not participated in pony trekking before and vice versa.

Information was also gathered from trekkers about the behaviour of the local population along the trekking routes and at stop-over villages. Table 5.4 below illustrates the feelings of the trekkers about the communities.

Table 5.4: Tourists' impression on the behaviour and attitudes of local communities

Tourists' Impression	No. of Responses	Percentage
Friendly and welcoming	68	73.1
Unfriendly	8	8.6
Do not know	17	17.2
Total	93	100

According to the results from the table above, the majority of trekkers 68 (73.1%) found the local communities friendly and welcoming, while a very small percentage (8.6%) of them described the host communities as unfriendly. The remaining 17.2 percent did not form an opinion. Some of those who indicated that they received good reception from the host communities, however, noted that at different overnight stopover areas, the reception they got varies, meaning that some were friendly while others were not. Factors determining these differentials in the ability to satisfy the tourists will be dealt with in detail in the next chapters. It is important to remark, at this juncture, however, that majority responses pointing to the satisfaction of tourists portends a bright future for the industry if the necessary improvements are introduced and tourists views are handled with the required sensitivity and responsiveness by the communities and officials. It is crucial to point out in advance that a way has to be found for getting the views of tourists on a regular basis to achieve this end.

The trekkers were also asked to give suggestions about how the services, facilities and trekking operations could be improved. Below is the summary of responses received:

- ▶ better explanation before the start, for instance, what could or could not be put on what mule or pony.
- ▶ explanation about the country and life of local people by the guide.
- ▶ provide cooking facilities in the villages because transportation of such facilities is not always easy.
- ▶ provide enough ponies for everybody and in time.
- ▶ overnight posts could be cleaner and the provision of facilities for refuse disposal and toilets in the villages and along trekking routes should be improved.
- ▶ provide beverage outlets and or shops in the villages.

While many of these are clearly candidates for improvement, implementation of some of the suggestions could easily affect the appeal of destination areas. The literature points out that attempts to modernise facilities make them less appealing. The absence of shops and beverage outlets makes trekking an adventure. The presence of canteen type outlets could require some good market to sustain it, but could also change the social life of communities.

5.4 Problems Encountered

Finally the trekkers were asked whether they encountered any problems during their stay in the country. According to the responses obtained, the majority 82 (88.2%) of the trekkers surveyed did not encounter any problems, while a minority of nine (9.7%) noted that they encountered problems and two (2.2%) of the trekkers did not respond. When asked to explain the problems that they encountered, the respondents outlined the following:

- ▶ Trekkers did not know how to deal with people begging for money.
- ▶ Traveller's cheque were not accepted.
- ▶ Trekkers had difficulty finding places of interest because there are few signposts and little information about their existence.
- ▶ Road signs and sign boards from Maseru to trekking centres and other places of interest are insufficient.
- ▶ Not many people could understand me when I talked (visitor from Switerland).

The points made here are important. The travellers would like to be handled in a manner that produces minimum discomfort and inconvenience. While the LTB usually takes tourists from Maseru to trekking centres (particularly Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre) it is important that tourists who prefer to travel by themselves for personal reasons should not get lost. It is also important that adventure for tourists should not start in Maseru. The transition from the airport, or from the national border gates into the city of Maseru and from Maseru into the trekking centres should be as smooth as practicable and travellers must begin to feel the air of adventure only when they get to the remote horse riding places. There is a clear need for co-ordination between the LTB and the Roads Department to ensure that the infrastructure and the roadsigns are provided in a way that satisfies requirements for the smooth development of pony trekking tourism. It is also imperative that the LTB should impress on the local communities the importance that young children are made to respect the tourist related infrastructure and the general national infrastructure from early childhood. In some places it is common to find posted roadsigns twisted in a way that gives wrong directions, or to find naked metal poles from which the road signs have been plucked.

5.5 Marketing and Promotional Activities of Pony Trekking

The LTB markets Lesotho as a tourist destination at macro and micro levels. It coordinates and arranges trails for tourists with the Basotho Pony Centre, and Khohlontso Pony Trekking Associations. The LTB initially serviced the Malealea Pony Trekking Association as well but, at present, Malealea handles all aspects of its operations. Activities to promote pony trekking include advertising campaigns in magazines, brochures, leaflets, and promotional videos.

However, there are no coordinated efforts in product development and marketing, since marketing (attendance of fairs, exhibitions) or all promotional campaigns are pursued by the LTB without involvement of the members of pony trekking associations in the marketing process. Interviews with the staff of the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre show that they are unable to attend such promotional campaigns because of a lack of money and there are no funds for the centre to advertise on its own either, using brochures or in magazines.

Moreover, the attendance of promotional forums, especially outside the country, is monopolised by the marketing division of the LTB without active involvement of the development division of the same body. Consequently, it becomes rather difficult to fully promote and improve this product so as to satisfy and increase consumer demand and fully harness market potential. The Lesotho Tourism Analytical Report (1984-1993) thus indicates inconsistency of all promotional campaigns for the period 1984/1993, due to lack of follow up and or continuity. Repetitive promotion programmes are never done. The LTB is, however, currently conducting Tourism Peak Season Surveys during the course of the peak season (December-January) as the basis for facilitating sound marketing and development of the product and the industry at large.

Apart from marketing and promoting the pony trekking activity, the LTB has the following roles to play:

- i) It has constructed routes (bridle paths) to places of interest, sanitary facilities such as toilets, rondavels and shelters at places of interest such as waterfalls in which trekkers could rest after trekking or swimming. These rondavels and shelters are intended to serve as half-way stations for trekkers (Plate 5.1).
- ii) mobilise communities to form pony trekking associations and help them to engage in self-help projects such as handicraft and souvenir production for tourists.
- iii) organise training programmes for association members.
- iv) find financial assistance for the associations from donors to buy trekking facilities such as saddlery and bridles.



Plate 5.1: Shelters at half- way stations

The LTB, however, does not have full control over the development and quality of the product. The Department of Livestock Services, for instance, has been very negligent in its management of the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre and the LTB has no say in these processes. It is of limited impact to have good marketing strategies for a poor and deteriorating product. It is true that most of the tourists got to know of trekking through the LTB but it is also true that in recent years the volume of trekkers has been declining and this may be related to a poor state of marketing.

It has been the intention of the Ministry of Tourism Sports and Culture, through its agency the LTB, to expand and to upgrade the existing trekking facilities in the country in order to absorb the current and increasing demand but the implementation of such initiatives is difficult because the ministry has no control over some of the operations such as the Basotho Pony and Malealea Pony Trekking Centres.

5.6 Summary

In this study, Europe and South Africa were seen to be a major market for Lesotho's pony trekking. Pony trekking is a unique tourist product in Southern Africa offered in Lesotho. Although the majority of trekkers surveyed (63.4%) demonstrated that pony trekking did not influence their decision to visit Lesotho, they were, however, motivated to explore the country's beauty on horse back.

The majority of the trekkers showed their satisfaction with the whole trekking operation and many of them indicated that they would like to come back for more trekking. Moreover, they found the host population very welcoming and very few of them noted that they encountered problems during their stay in the country. In spite of high levels of satisfaction recorded, some trekkers felt they that they were presented with inadequate

exposure to the socio- cultural and environmental background of the country. Interpretation of the destination social and environmental encounters is considered to be a vital element in enhancing the quality of the visitor's experience. Hence efforts to educate tourists about a destination should be encouraged and supplemented by distributing promotional material before treks begin.

Despite the strengths of the current approach to tourism development, the optimization of development is constrained by several factors. Though pony trekking has the potential to attract more visitors, marketing strategies for this product are very poor. Due to a lack of funds in the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre and Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre for promotional campaigns and advertising, the LTB is fully responsible for facilitating pony trekking promotion of these centres and all others in the country.

While the LTB is responsible for the marketing and promotion of tourism, it is difficult to successfully promote this product because LTB has no control over the pony trekking centres. Furthermore, there is lack of coordination between the marketing division and the development division of the LTB. Therefore, the limited marketing power is likely to constrain the tourist product's ability to make itself known to wider markets, thus placing the country at a competitive disadvantage with respect to other destinations. It is on this basis that the government must re-evaluate its objectives and policies and seriously consider investing in long term marketing strategies.

CHAPTER SIX

TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PONY TREKKING INDUSTRY

6.1 Introduction

It has been stressed throughout the preceding parts of this study that sustainable tourism depends strongly on community involvement from planning to implementation in the development and promotion of the product. It has also been emphasized that the flow of tangible economic benefits and improvements of the lives of host communities is the centre-piece of such sustainability. This chapter tests these ideals and assumptions against the findings of the study.

As pointed out earlier in chapter four, the three pony trekking centres rely on horses from the farmers. Malealea and Khohlontso depend almost entirely on horses supplied by local farmers. Although Basotho Pony has its own horses (14 horses) these are not enough, hence the centre has to hire additional horses from the neighbouring communities. The centre also uses its own mules as pack animals and does not employ farmers' horses for this purpose.

6.2 Economic Spin-offs to the Communities

Basotho Pony Trekking has 16 active farmers, Malealea Pony Trekking Association consists of 56 farmers and Khohlontso Pony Trekking Association has 20 farmers. These numbers include both men and women. All the members of the Associations are from villages around the pony trekking centres. However, not all members of the associations own horses and not all of them hire out their horses for pony trekking. There

are members of the pony associations who do not have horses but have certain skills and knowledge which are necessary for the development of this tourism activity. The association membership is open to all persons who rear or are intending to rear ponies and support the development of tourism in Lesotho.

6.2.1 Economic Activities of the Community Members of the Pony Trekking Associations

The three pony trekking centres are located in rural areas where agricultural crop and animal production is the main economic activity. The agriculture sector has suffered a decline in production and productivity over the past 20 years. This has been caused by diminishing arable land, erosion of the soil, overgrazing and the land tenure system (Government of Lesotho, 1995). The formation of pony trekking associations was intended to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. However, at the present moment, this activity does not form a major source of income for the local community. Table 6.1 shows the main sources of income for all the members of the pony trekking associations interviewed.

Table 6.1: Main sources of income of association members

Trekking Centre	Proportion of members per economic activity (in percentages)		
	Agriculture	Remittances & other	Horse hiring only
Basotho Pony	61.5	23.1	15.4
Malealea	90.3	6.5	3.2
Khohlonts'o	72.7	9.1	18.2
Average (%)	74.8	12.9	12.3

According to findings of this study, farming is the major occupation with an average 74.8 percent of the associations' members engaged in agriculture, while a small portion making up 12.9 percent depend on remittances from mines and income from low paying jobs. The remaining 12.3 percent depend on income from horse renting only. This is the category for which trekking tourism is an essential support for subsistence. If this group grows in size, it might require speedy expansion of the industry. The current trend in the return of migrant miners makes this expansion of trekking more urgent. This is important in order to ensure that the industry is not overwhelmed by new entrants seeking livelihoods and that it is able to generate a strong enough stream of benefits to support a larger number of participants. Only then can such problems as horse theft be prevented. Pony trekking must grow side by side with agriculture, so that the balanced growth that is advocated as the basis of sustainable tourism can be assured.

Although agriculture is the main income earning activity of these communities, the survey results show that it is not the sole economic activity. These people depend on income from horse renting, migrant workers and other economic activities such as selling of handicrafts. Almost all of the community members of pony associations interviewed (about 100%), regarded horse renting for pony trekking as a very important source of income for them.

The surveys done showed that income from horse hiring and tour guiding ranges between M200.00 to M1,000.00 per month. This depends on the number of horses the farmer has, the number of treks the horse has taken and the type of trek (day or overnight trek). This also depends on the frequency at which the visitors come for trekking. According to World Bank (1995) the statutory minimum wage of unskilled labour is approximately M290.00 per month. This therefore shows that pony trekking is an important source of income which may enhance the lives of the rural population provided it is developed sustainably.

- ***Tour Guides***

Tour guiding is also one way in which local communities derive a financial benefit from the operations of adventure travel in the context of pony trekking. Tour guides arrange all transportation and liaison with communities in which trekkers are to stay overnight and lead trekkers from village to village. As noted earlier in chapter four, the members of the pony associations of Malealea and Khohlonts'ō are chosen to be guides, while Basotho Pony Trekking uses its own guides who are employed on a permanent basis and extra guides contracted on a temporary basis during busy periods. Furthermore, the number of tour guides per trek depends on the number of visitors and the length of the trek from each centre.

According to the Matelile Pony Association constitution (1988), the duties of the guide include:

- i) Introducing or informing the chiefs about the presence of the visitors in the villages of their destinations.
- ii) Explaining local traditions of special interest if there are any known to the guide, as they pass by villages or a certain place.
- iii) Inspecting the horses before commencement of a trek and to report those which are unsuitable for trekking.
- iv) Being responsible for the safety and security of the trekking horses and riders over the duration of the treks.

The fact that guides are local indigenous people suggests that this touristic activity offers local populations fertile opportunities for employment and income. Again, it enhances local participation which is considered to be a significant element of sustainable development. Local guides are trained to offer visitors ready solutions to the problems of how to get to places of interest and how to deal with locals

because they have knowledge of their environment. This can have a positive effect in heightening the visitor's enjoyment and satisfaction. As Butler and Hinch (1996) point out, trained local guides may ensure that the host and visitors establish behaviours which will minimize potentially undesirable outcomes.

- **Accommodation**

Accommodation is a source of income in most villages in which the trekkers lodge overnight. All the centres use local villagers' huts to provide overnight accommodation on trek. The use of villages for overnight stops promotes host-tourist interaction, meaning that the tourists get close to the local way of life. Village accommodation gives propinquity to village life, an experience that is currently not easily available in neighbouring South Africa (plate 6.1). Fires are made from scrub or dried cowdung because firewood is scarce on most mountain ranges of Lesotho and meals are usually prepared in three-legged black pots.



Plate 6.1: Breakfast with the villagers

Source: Lesotho Tourist Board (promotion brochure- *Lesotho: Africa for all Seasons*), 1996: p14.

The overnight accommodation in Basotho huts is simple and there is no special infrastructure for trekkers. It does not require expenditure on purposefully constructed and maintained facilities. Local villagers are therefore not pressurized to adjust to an imposed tourist infrastructure.

The improvement of accommodation depends on the local initiative of the villagers and local hospitality is essential for sustainability. Surveys have shown that tourists are attracted to this form of accommodation and do not support suggestions for changes to trekking operations. It has been suggested that improvements can be made on existing structures already in place (O'Donnovan, 1993). Indeed, it has already been pointed out that sustainability and continued appeal owes a lot to maintenance of traditional "architecture" with which travelers are not familiar and which offers an air of exoticism. The status of this accommodation satisfies this requirement. It can be improved by better ventilation or orientation to minimise cold across the four seasons of the year, without compromising its essential attributes.

This type of rural accommodation satisfies a range of tourist requirements whilst making a significant contribution to local income needs. It is unique for its dependence on local resources and experience. It is also appropriate within the rural context and is of relatively greater economic benefit to local communities because the money goes directly to the local people. While the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre and Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre charge each trekker M10.00 per night, trekkers at the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre each pay M20.00 per night, directly to the villagers, for accommodation. The income generated increases the buying power of the villagers and may thus improve their standard of living.

- **Handicrafts**

Handicrafts are another source of income for local communities. Apart from providing a source of income, handicraft production has a positive effect in renewing ethnic identity and reviving the traditional arts and crafts of the country. This supports what the literature (Chapter two) demonstrates, that is, that tourism is important in maintaining and reviving traditional arts and crafts of cultures.

Most handicrafts produced in Lesotho are used locally in everyday life. These include the Basotho Hat (*Mokorotlo*) which is a national symbol, clay pots, jugs straw mats and baskets. The people of Lesotho are also masters of weaving, hand woven mohair, tapestries and rugs, jewelry design and pottery. Production of crafts is often related to the tourist industry.

Many handicraft centres exist in the country, both in the mountains and in the lowlands, but most are concentrated in the lowlands particularly in Maseru and its surroundings (Figure 1.2). Operations range from small to medium sized private commercial and self-help associations with workers from the local community which rely mostly on the local visitor market. These traditional crafts are not only for the local tourist market but have also stimulated the development of a growing and valuable export market (Government of Lesotho, 1994).

The local communities from villages surrounding pony trekking centres and along tourist routes make handicrafts for the tourists. Some of these people have been mobilised and encouraged by the LTB to make handicrafts for tourists so as to take the opportunity of tourism in their localities and to prevent the leakage of profits from rural to urban areas. Most of these handicrafts are produced by individual persons, or self-help associations, such as the one in the Katse area.

Many crafts activities involve women in communities and this contributes to the enhancement of female empowerment in economic activity.

Both straw and clay used to make these artifacts occur naturally in abundance locally. Therefore, the financial benefits obtained from the selling of handicrafts is profit because the people do not have to import the raw materials. Interviews with the local people and the LTB officers however indicated that there is no control over the use of such resources. Thus, lack of control measures in utilization of these resources could compromise the sustainability of handicrafts production and the ability for future generations to benefit from them.

6.3 Gender Representation and Distribution of Tourism Benefits

An assessment of gender representation in pony trekking activities is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Proportion of men to women involved in pony trekking

Pony Trekking Centre	Male (% in brackets)	Female (% in brackets)
Basotho Pony	14 (87.5%)	2 (12.5%)
Malealea	49 (87.5%)	7 (12.5%)
Khohlonts'o	17 (85.0%)	3 (15.0%)
Averages	80 (87.0%)	12 (13.0%)

Table 6.2 demonstrates that considerably fewer women participate in the pony trekking industry than men. This is because in Lesotho, where family wealth or property belongs to a man as a household head, animals like cattle and equines are ordinarily beyond the access and control of women unless the husband is deceased. Also, it is believed that animals should be owned by men because they can take better care of them than women

can and a women's participation in projects like pony trekking would normally be subject to her husband's approval.

Even those women who are privileged enough to become members of associations cannot be guides because they are not physically strong enough to handle the security of the horses, especially at stop-over areas where many of their horses are stolen. This representation of genders has implications for gender distribution of the benefits of tourism. Although women benefit from providing accommodation, entertaining visitors and selling handicrafts, more benefits from pony trekking activity still flow more to male than to female members of the host communities.

6.4 Perceptions of Pony Trekking by the Community Member Associations

Almost every member (54) of the pony trekking associations interviewed expressed a positive opinion about pony trekking in their localities. For them, the coming of tourists for horse riding means an increase of economic opportunities; from hiring out horses, selling handicrafts to the visitors and income from commodities that tourists buy from local stores. Some of the farmers said they had built houses from income received from guiding tourists and hiring out horses and others have been able to send their children for higher education.

Although all the farmers interviewed from different pony trekking centres have expressed satisfaction in the way the association operates, they have voiced several problems. They feel that maximum benefits can be obtained from this activity through expansion of the centres, better organization of associations, skills training for pony owners and for the guides, in better handling of the tourists and educating communities about the importance of tourism.

6.4.1 Main Constraints and Problems

a) Training

The Basotho Pony Marketing and Pony Trekking Centre at Molimo Nthuse (Figure 1.2) is used as a training centre for members of the pony trekking associations - tour guides and farmers (horse renters). The training is conducted by the Basotho Pony Project staff who have been trained in stud management, horse management and other equestrian skills. The farmers are also trained in treatment of horse diseases. Tour guides are also especially trained in proper handling of tourists with additional training in areas relating to preservation of the country's cultural heritage and precious indigenous animal and plant species.

Only a few guides and farmers are sent for training and they are expected to report to other members of the association. However, the training seems to be inadequate because only a few get proper training and for short periods. Moreover, there is also a lack of follow up and lack of in-service training. For instance, only 8 of the then 65 original members of the Matelile Pony Trekking Association were sent for training for two weeks in 1988 when facilities were still at Qaba and ever since the establishment of the Malealea Pony Trekking Association in 1991, none of the members have gone for any training. Moreover, only 3 members out of 20 from Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre went for training for a week in 1992.

Guides must be exposed to the practical and theoretical aspects of the guiding profession so that they may provide good services to their clients. They must also be trained in professional horse keeping and have a general knowledge of the destination area as well as cultural and environmental knowledge. However,

informal discussions with guides, revealed that they think that sometimes they provide poor services to their clients because they have very little knowledge about tourism and the guiding profession. They indicated that the present training opportunity is insufficient and inadequate (section 4.2.1:p52). They further suggested that training should be compulsory for every guide.

Training for guides is important to ensure better travel arrangements and to enhance communication and interpretation skills to improve interactions between the guests, hosts and the environment, with benefit to all parties.

b) Lack of coordination and communication

As has been outlined in chapter four, the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre had 46 members of the pony trekking community association, all of whom were farmers, but during the survey for this study, only 16 were active members. A lack of proper co-ordination and communication between the Department of Livestock Services and the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre has resulted in delays in payments for horses hired. This has also been noted as a serious problem that has resulted in fragmentation of the farmer association. For example, the farmers no longer attend meetings or pay subscriptions, they only come to the centre when they bring horses or when they come for their payments.

This problem of delayed payments has had adverse effects on the centre with even some of the few remaining 16 farmers unwilling to release their horses. Hence the centre is now forced to hire horses from individual farmers who are not members of the pony trekking associations. One of the reasons for the establishment of the farmer association by the centre was so that the centre could have a ready supply of horses from the farmers while the farmers would also benefit from such an

activity. On establishment of the farmer pony association, each farmer was to give a maximum of 3 horses but at present there is no limit, the farmer can give as many as he can. In this way, it seems even the members whose horses are not in good health are likely to benefit from trekking.

On establishment of the Malealea Pony Trekking Association, it was decided by the members that each member can give out a maximum of two horses and during busy periods if these horses are not enough, a member could bring more than two horses or they may be hired from other people who are not members of the pony trekking association. However, during the survey 13 (41.9%) of the respondents interviewed indicated that they had more than two horses being used while the remaining 18 (58.1%) had one to two horses hired out, though some of them had more horses to hire out. This has led to a few, wealthier farmers, benefitting more than others.

It was also agreed by members that bookings would be handed over to the members of the association committee to decide which horses and guides could take treks. According to the association's members, guides have to inspect horses before treks begin and have the right to complain if horses are unsatisfactory (but this should be without personal bias in respect of horse owners) and his opinion should be confirmed by other members. However, it seems that the decisions for the association are made by a small circle of influential individuals. For instance, some members complained that at present the guides on their own decide which horses qualify to take treks hence, sometimes thin, old and sick horses are used for long treks which need healthier animals. The same problem of association fragmentation pertains to the Malealea Pony Trekking Association which at its establishment in 1991, had 69, members but during the survey for this study, the number had dropped to 56. Therefore it seems that a lack of understanding and

communication among the members of the association is likely to hinder the sustainable development of the pony trekking association.

At the Khohlonts' o Pony Trekking Centre in contrast, this is not a major problem because each farmer can give a maximum of two horses and if the demand is higher, each can give as many as he can, with a provision for hiring supplementary supply of horses from other people who are not members of the association. The major problem however is that the visitors do not come regularly, particularly for pony trekking and hence the farmers' morale and that of those interested in joining has lowered. As a result members do not meet very often to discuss and make decisions about the developments that affect them.

The observation made in this survey was that the problem of communication is not only within the associations, but even between the individual associations. The three pony trekking associations from the three selected pony trekking centres do not know about one another's activities and initiatives. This is due to lack of understanding and/ or education about the importance of this industry for the development of their well-being and of their areas.

c) Stock theft

Stock theft is a problem facing the whole country. There is evidence of large numbers of illegal stock exchanges between Lesotho and the RSA, though the statistics are not always consistent and references not available in this study. Stock theft and stock exchange between these two countries has gained local and international news coverage. The farmers mentioned stock theft as a serious problem which needs to be dealt with immediately. Twenty five (80.6%) of the farmers from the Malealea Trekking Pony Centre and six (59.5%) from the

Khohlonts'o Pony Centre interviewed, indicated their major problem as horse theft. Horses are stolen at residential places and at stopover areas during trekking. This will have adverse effects on the development of pony trekking in the country in the near future.

d) Inadequate community education

Informal discussions with guides revealed that lack of community understanding has resulted in undesirable acts such as the scaring of tourists' horses along the trekking routes. This is dangerous because some horses are easy to scare and some of the trekkers are not good at riding horses especially on the steep slopes of the mountains of Lesotho.

The LTB officers spoken to alleged that the LTB holds educational campaigns for communities but this is still on a very small scale hence the majority of the population does not understand tourism and its importance. They indicated that even of those who participate in tourism activities, like the farmer communities who participate in pony trekking activities, only about 50% of them understand the importance of tourism in their areas. Due to lack of adequate training, even those who have been trained, for instance, the guides, still do not know how to handle tourists properly and/ or to protect the environment. This is sustained by the fact that the surveyed trekkers mentioned that they were neither informed about the country, for instance, the life of the local people, cultural heritage, nor about the environment of the places they were going to visit.

It could be that the trainees take these sessions as a mere formality. The adoption of peer training and villager-to-villager education could probably lift the spirits and enthusiasm of the communities. It must, however, be stressed that with the

prevailing problems of marginalisation of communities from decision-making (see below), delayed payments and other attendant problems - the efforts of "training" people without tackling their real disgruntlements with the schemes operated may not be effectual. The emphasis on education in many development endeavours has unfortunately been used to distract attention from the real cry of the communities for involvement in the processes allegedly intended for their (communities') good.

e) Decision making

According to the survey results, non-involvement of the members of pony trekking community associations in decision making due to outsiders who monopolise management of the industry, could hinder the development of pony trekking. The table below outlines the responses from the pony trekking associations' members regarding decision making on payments for horses from each centre.

Table 6.3 Decision making on payments from each centre

Association	Decision Maker			
	Association	Government	Manager	Don't Know
Basotho Pony		11 (91.7%)		1 (8.3%)
Malealea	15 (48.4%)		14 (45.2%)	2 (6.4%)
Khohlonts'o	9 (81.8%)			2 (18.2%)

According to table 6.3, the majority 11 (91.7%) out of 12 the respondents from the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre indicated that decisions regarding the payments are made by the government while only 1(8.3%) did not know. The reason for delays in payments is that someone higher (government) decides when and how

much the members of the association will be paid. The association cannot make decisions about the matters that affect it.

At the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre, the payment for each horse goes to the owner, and the Malealea lodge receives 10 percent commission fee for making bookings. Though the majority 15 (48.4%) of the respondents indicated that the members of the association themselves make a decision regarding the amount that must be paid for each horse for each trek, almost the same proportion 14 (45.2%) of the association members however felt that the manager of the centre is the one who decides on the payments. They also pointed out that the decision about the prices to be paid for each horse per each trek come from the manager. Furthermore, some members of the association felt that the money the lodge receives is far greater than the money they get for their horses.

Members of the pony association at the Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre by contrast, are satisfied with the way the payments are done and the greater proportion 9 (81.8%) of the respondents interviewed stated that decisions are made by the members of the association while only a small portion 2 (18.2%) did not know.

The occurrence of significant answers of "don't know" is cause for concern with respect to member involvement in association affairs, the representativeness of the associations and the commitment of members to fulfil their membership duties to the associations. In the case of Malealea the picture is even more different, as almost the same proportion of members give directly contrasting answers.

It is concluded therefore that the responses to the question of decision-making are mixed. It may be significant therefore to conclude that, in the case where the

government is involved, it monopolises decision-making. This defeats the goal of government-led, decentralised development planning of sustainable development outlined in chapter two. The quest for centralisation by the government would seem to obstruct prospects for community-based planning and the development of tourism. It is ironic as it was the government through its agency, the LTB, which touted the villagers to form associations to take advantage of trekking. It would be expected that the maximum advantage would be enjoyed by communities through full involvement in decision-making. This marginalisation appears to be a major constraint on sustainability.

6.5 Summary

The findings of this chapter indicate that agriculture is still the main economic activity of the surveyed rural community of Lesotho, despite its decline in productivity since 1970's. Pony trekking at present merely assists rural people to supplement their income. However, pony trekking is highly supported by the communities who are directly involved because of the economic benefits associated with it. Respondents reported considerably high earnings compared with the minimum wages of unskilled labour.

Although trekkers are expected to bring their own goods such as food, a greater proportion of tourism receipts from pony trekking remain in the community in the form of income and employment. Pony trekking is characterized by significant inputs of local supplies including small, often informal industries and services offered by the local people such as small guest houses, transport, entertainment, the production and selling of crafts, and tour guiding.

As pointed out earlier, pony trekking initiatives are perceived by the government as one of the ways of directing development towards community involvement and giving the

affected host populations the opportunity of taking responsibility for such development in their localities. While pony trekking appears to offer an important opportunity for the communities to generate income and employment, the findings of this study indicate that the principles of sustainable tourism development as set out in Chapter Two, have not been developed into a coherent programme of action.

The potential of pony trekking to live up to its promise as a more sustainable and locally controlled form of tourist development is hampered by several factors. Firstly, domination of management of the industry by powerful individual members of the associations has resulted in a lack of control of developments and benefits and has led to some members being pushed out of the industry. Secondly, participation in pony trekking related activities is gender biased, limiting women's chances of obtaining maximum potential income. Finally, the community and the LTB acknowledged insufficient and inadequate training of the members of pony trekking associations. Education is a significant element of sustainability, without which people are not able to take responsibility or have control over development in their area. Educating all the people involved in the pony trekking activity could also reduce undesirable behaviour of other members of a community such as stealing of livestock.

With a more proactive approach to the development of pony trekking, these problems could be monitored and addressed. Overcoming these barriers is the challenge facing the key players in the community and the government.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to test whether pony trekking initiatives in Lesotho have the potential to promote human betterment and to enhance the life opportunities and development of the host population areas. Further, it sought to identify the problems facing sustainable development of pony trekking in the country. The view of many scholars is that tourism development may be a correct course of action in developing areas that are characterised by high unemployment, relatively unskilled labour, few alternative sources of employment and few natural resources such as minerals and oil (Burkart and Medlik, 1981; Butler and Hinch, 1996; Oppermann and Chon, 1997). The notion of sustainable tourism development has its roots in the concept of sustainable development, as discussed in the previous chapters. This chapter sums up the findings of the study as presented in the previous chapters and draws out relevant conclusions. The challenge of sustainable tourism development is to maximize the benefits and minimize the disadvantages of tourism activities for present and future generations of tourists and host communities.

In order to be sustainable, tourism development should meet the following conditions (Cater, 1992; Cater, 1993; Cater and Goodall 1994):

- meet the needs of the host population in terms of improved standards of living in the short and long term;
- satisfy the demands of increasing tourist numbers and continue to attract them to

- achieve the first goal; and
- safeguard the environment to achieve the two foregoing aims.

This study set itself the task of assessing whether pony trekking tourism in Lesotho satisfies these conditions. The findings pertaining to these conditions follows.

7.2 Meeting the Needs of the Host Population

The results show that host communities around the pony trekking centres benefit economically from hiring out their horses. About 12.3 percent (Table 6.1:p92) of membership in the sampled pony trekking organisations indicated that they depended solely on pony trekking for income at the time of fieldwork. Some respondents mentioned that they have been able to send children to school and even build houses with this income. It had been found however, that the revenue from trekking activities does not constitute the larger share of household income for the majority of those involved in it. This is natural given that the research areas are among those where farming is a major economic activity and agricultural production surplus surplus is still feasible here. For the purposes of this study, however, it suffices that income from pony trekking is not a hand-to-mouth trickle consumed on the spot but households can and do realise savings from it.

The results further reflect that even communities along trekking routes benefit economically from provision of accommodation for overnight trekkers and selling of handicrafts. Pony trekking relies on small scale and often informal services and facilities offered by local people. However, pony tourism in Lesotho is still at the involvement stage as described in Butler's (1980) Destination Life Cycle Model (Figure 7.1).

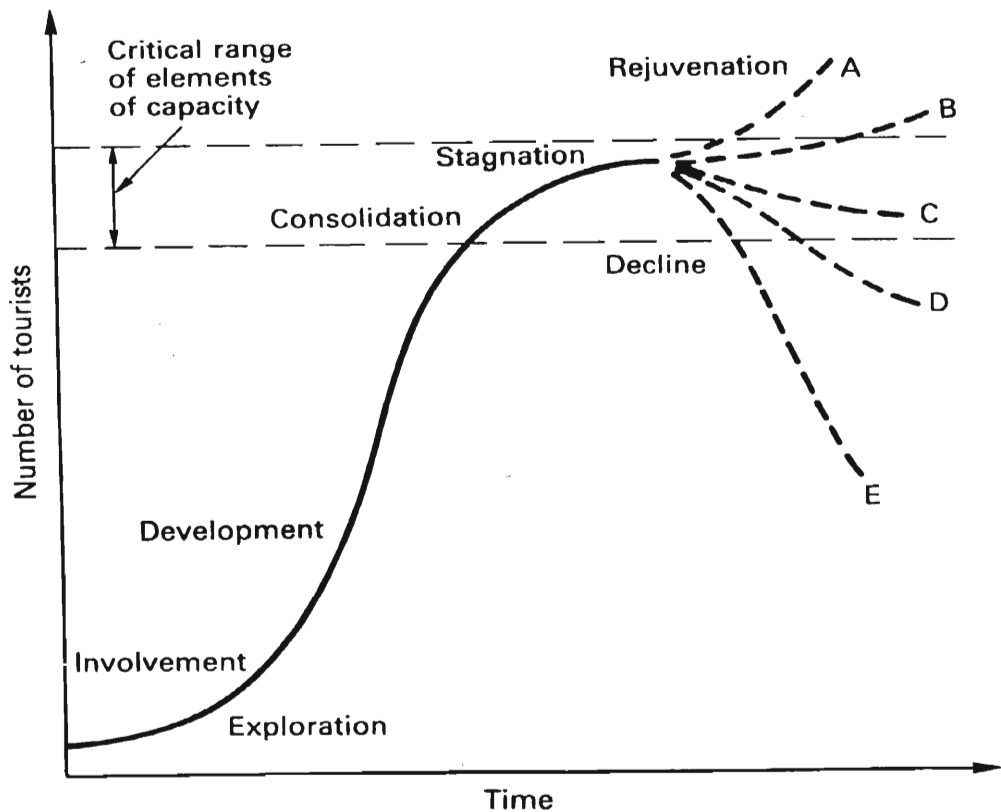


Figure 7.1: Destination life cycle model

Source: Butler, 1980: p7 in Ryan 1991.

This is a stage where host communities begin to respond to increasing numbers of visitors by providing some facilities but such entrepreneurial activities are still family-based, for example, accommodating visitors in ones own home.

7.2.1 Distributional Effects

The Generation of income and betterment of the lives of host communities, does not always lead to equal or even equitable development. The findings of the study reveal

that there is potential for accelerated differentiation of the host communities as a result of a rapid accumulation of cash at different rates by different categories of community members. This is largely influenced by the individuals' power in the community and in the pony trekking associations. The hiring of horses sometimes provides advantages for some members and marginalises others. This is because some members can get their horses to be used more often at the expense of others. This is the subject and result of community power politics which determines the influence of different members over the management of community affairs, even in the context of voluntary associations.

Some of the noticeable effects of tourism in the past have included the opening of previously non-existent social divisions or the increasing of already existing divisions. This emerged as a result of increasing differences between the beneficiaries in tourism and those who are marginalised by it (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). Though the majority of the members of the pony trekking associations interviewed showed that pony trekking increases their economic opportunities and enhances their livelihoods, the survey nonetheless indicates the potential for economic benefit brought by pony trekking to be skewed, in favour of individual powerful members.

7.2.2 Gender Equity

Of relevance here is also the place of gender in the spread of the benefits of trekking tourism. It has been noted that owing to the low participation of women in the pony trekking associations, they may be the odd ones out in the benefits of the industry. The handicrafts, which are the category in which women are greater in number, do not generate the magnitude of benefits resulting from the hiring out of horses for trekking. The categories like accommodation are the ones where women are more likely to square the deal with men in terms of benefits. It is important however to determine the use to which the income generated by women is put in the household as compared to that income

which goes directly to men. Some studies have found that women's income is usually used for frequently-occurring household needs and as such women's incomes become more promptly eroded than those of men (Maguire, 1984). This is an important area to which future studies looking at gender impact of tourism development must give attention. The cumulative effect of these developments is likely to be disproportionate distribution of the benefits of tourism in favour of rural men compared to women.

Although handicrafts may provide viable economic opportunities for most women, the craft centres to which these items are usually sold are not evenly distributed throughout the country. Most of them are concentrated in the lowlands particularly in Maseru and its surroundings. The operations around the pony trekking centres and in the mountains range from small clubs to self help associations which rely mostly on pony trekkers and very little on local village patronage. Furthermore, the tourists mostly buy the crafts from places like the Hotel Victoria and the Basotho Hat in Maseru where there are posh shops. Thus, the economic opportunities from crafts production are also not evenly distributed geographically.

Whilst craft selling and production might be obvious, establishment of more craft centres is important especially in the rural areas to avoid economic leakages to the urban areas. Here the government's role is fundamental in facilitating funds for community-owned craft production. The government should assist with subsidies or soft loans to encourage craft production schemes.

7.2.3 Community Participation

The needs of the host population could be met if the host population participates in tourist development initiatives in their localities. Community participation is not only about decision making by the communities in tourism development but also sharing of the

benefits from such development. The involvement of communities in any tourist development programme is paramount since tourism uses the community as a tourist resource (Murphy, 1983). Hence sustainable development of tourism should seek to fit tourism to the needs and aspirations of host communities in a way that is acceptable to them, to sustain their economies and should not be detrimental to their culture and traditions. Moreover, it should start with the existing resources in terms of the skills and knowledge of each local community. This type of tourism development would provide immediate benefit to the local community (Price, 1996).

The problem of participation has to be understood at two levels:

- i) whether association members are involved in major decisions including planning about the management and future of the trekking industry; and
- ii) the inclusiveness of member participation at association level.

a) Association Involvement in Tourism Development and Management

Community involvement in pony trekking development and management remains a crucial issue that has been covered in Chapter Four. The study found out that the involvement and the role of communities in tourism development, especially in pony trekking projects is extremely limited. The survey also shows that community involvement in pony trekking activities is not only limited but is also declining in two of the surveyed pony trekking centres (Basotho and Malealea Pony Trekking Centres).

b) Democratic Management of Association Affairs

Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism (1995) emphasizes the need for all sectors of society - women, indigenous people, the young and the old to be given an

opportunity to participate in sustainable tourism development projects. It has also been well documented by several authors (De Kadt, 1979; Murphy, 1985; Young, 1973) that tourism can provide relatively quick relief and new opportunities for marginalised population groups such as women. The survey however indicates that participation in association affairs is gender skewed. Most women participate in crafts activities but very few participate in hiring out horses for tourist's trekking. Moreover, even women who are privileged to hire out their horses are not allowed to be guides because they are said not to be strong enough to handle security of the horses.

Therefore attempts must be made to enhance the involvement of local communities in tourism development initiatives if it is to be a tool for the social and economic development of the marginal areas such as the rural areas. The level of involvement should range from local communities decision making and assisting local entrepreneurs to become suppliers of products and services such as production and selling of handicrafts, bed and breakfast and other services. Effective involvement of local communities is seen to be an integral and essential part of successful tourism development.

c) Training

Effective and full participation of local communities in the development and growth of pony trekking is also constrained by a lack of community training and empowerment as illustrated in Chapter Six. Community training does not seem to be of priority to the tourism initiatives in the country. At present the communities who are involved or who could be involved lack knowledge of the potential tourism hold for them and lack knowledge as to how to start an informal or small business to serve the tourism industry in the country. Furthermore, they lack simple

indigenous managerial techniques.

Training of community members particularly training of the members of the pony trekking associations in horse management, tour guiding and financial management is necessary to ensure sustainability of the pony trekking projects. Training is necessary for members of the pony trekking associations to make responsible management decisions and improve their benefits from their horses.

This public education may involve public meetings, seminars and workshops through which people are allowed to communicate their concerns and needs. There is also a need to encourage discussion on ways to broaden the local economy so as to avoid reliance on the visitor industry. For instance, the discussions could include ways by which local people could increase their agricultural production which is their major traditional economic activity.

The perception is that people would be approving and supportive of their tourism industry if they feel positive about local tourism efforts and activities and are actively involved in planning and implementing industry programs and activities.

It is therefore important that the government initiatives include a well defined training programme as a component of the social tourism development schemes. The government initiatives need to re-evaluate and enhance their education and training component for the purposes of community empowerment.

7.3 Enhanced Visitor Satisfaction and Capacity to Attract Tourists

According to Ryan (1997), tourism is about the experience that the tourist has within a place and the attributes of the place and its people. Gunn (1994) on the other hand

demonstrates that tourism begins with the desire by travellers to travel and ends with satisfaction derived from such travel, hence sustainable tourism development can be achieved if the desires and expectations of the tourists are met. Visitor satisfaction plays an important role in the destination's potential to continue attracting tourists.

7.3.1 Enhanced Visitor Satisfaction

Tourists come to a destination with a set of expectations and motivations shaped by socio-economic variables, knowledge and a perception of the area. This could either be shaped by past experience, hearsay or by means of a travel agent's brochure (Ryan, 1991). Trekkers gave various reasons for visiting the country and why they would like to come back for more pony trekking as indicated in Chapter Five. The return of visitors and attraction of more trekkers may have a positive socio-economic effect on the host population which may lead to enhancement of their livelihoods.

The survey results demonstrate that the majority (78.5%) of the visitors were satisfied with the services and facilities provided for pony trekking, as shown in Table 5.2. One exception here was the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre where the visitors were dissatisfied with the services provided. For instance, as illustrated earlier in Chapter Four, the centre was beginning to turn down visitor's bookings due to shortage of the horses at the centre. The placement of this facility under a government ministry without interests in tourism development was largely blamed for the deteriorating standards of services here. Therefore visitors are likely not to return and, worse still, potential visitors may have heard negative stories about this destination.

- *Infrastructure*

Attractions are a major reason for travel and play a major role in the travel experience but they need to be supported by travel services. The survey illustrates that the bad upkeep of infrastructure such as signposts and information centres are a constraint to trekkers for finding places of interest. Information centres and signposts are of utmost importance for tourists (foreigners) and for making tourist resources more accessible. Furthermore, they create more enjoyable and comfortable visits. Since tourism as an industry is not a single functional activity, but rather a variety of activities or components such as transportation and other service sectors (health, banking, entertainment), there is a need for co-ordination between the tourism sector and these other sectors. Therefore improvement of, and investment in tourist infrastructure by the government is necessary for smooth development of this tourist product. The government must provide tourism infrastructure such as lodges or bed and breakfast at Katse and overnight accommodation in the villages so that the Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre can provide for visitors' long stays and treks lasting for more days.

7.3.2 Capacity to Attract Tourists

Capacity to continue attracting tourists to a destination depends on a variety of factors, the three prominent of which came out in the study, namely; marketing effectiveness, proper briefing and therefore enhanced appreciation of the destination, and institutional capacity of the organisation(s) delegated with the responsibility of managing the tourist product.

a) Marketing

Marketing is an important organisational tool that exposes one's product adequately and effectively with the objective of increasing the demand for such a product. It involves more than functions of promotion and selling; it involves the whole process of providing a tourist product which promotes the customer's satisfaction and aspirations and at the same time ensures that the host destination's objectives are satisfactorily met (Cooper et al 1993; Roger and Slinn, 1993).

- *Instruments of Marketing*

The study shows that most of the tourists interviewed (52.69%) came to Lesotho for pony trekking because they knew about its existence through brochures and magazines. Thus brochures and magazines seem to be an effective marketing strategy for this product. Past experience could have also contributed to the coming of trekkers to the country as indicated in Table 5.3 and also the type of trek they participated in.

It is evident from the study that pony trekking is one of the country's most popular tourist products and has potential to attract more visitors. Apparently potential to attract more visitors remains relatively untapped. This owes mainly to the weakness of the marketing strategy observed in Chapter Five. Therefore, proper marketing strategies and a range of communication and sales activities geared to stimulate potential customers need to be strengthened.

b) The Market / Clientele

The results from this study show that the dominant market for pony trekking is Europe and South Africa which account for 45.16 percent and 31.18 percent, respectively, of the surveyed visitors in the three pony trekking centres. The local market for pony trekking ranks among the lowest with 8.60 percent. This indicates that Lesotho's tourist pony trekking industry depends overwhelmingly on an outside market. This could be explained by the fact that as indicated earlier, the government concentrates on international tourists to generate foreign exchange. It could be a dangerous situation if the outside market were to be disturbed because this could place the country's tourism in chaos.

The promotion of domestic tourism in any country is fundamental because it promotes the redistribution of domestic currency spatially within the boundaries of a country, that is, the money earned by the host population from fellow citizen visitors from the more prosperous regions of the country would be spent within the host region. Moreover, domestic tourism can enhance appreciation of one's culture and also enhance national sentiment; people may experience pride in their national heritage by visiting other parts of the same country which are rich in country heritage but may be unknown to them. Thus every citizen becomes an ambassador of the country's tourist industry everywhere he goes.

c) Briefing About the Destination's History

As indicated earlier tourists come to a destination area with a set of expectations, motivations and perceptions of the area. Therefore, informing or educating tourists about a region's natural and cultural history has considerable significance. It may heighten their enjoyment of the trip and increase the chance of their returning if

their expectations are met and it may prompt them to encourage others to visit the place. It can also be an effective management tool for reducing negative impacts of visitors on natural resources. It is plausible to expect that if tourists are told that certain places or items of nature are considered sacred by the local people, the tourists may be less inclined to violate such items. Information and education can further be a prerequisite for catalysing interest and active involvement in conservation activities (Whelan 1991).

Educating visitors about a country and its people prior to arrival or on arrival is important. This can be done either through advertising, marketing strategies and/or tour guiding. Tourists need to be made aware that their attitudes and behaviour may influence how they are treated in a host country. Too often, visitors are unaware of local customs and cultural norms that prohibit certain behaviour. It is important that visitors are given accurate and honest information about their tourist destination.

According to the results from the survey (Chapter 5), trekkers showed that there was insufficient explanation given about the country and the life of local people by the guides. This could be explained by the fact that guides do not have adequate training and therefore lack guiding, communication and interpretation skills. Hence, promotion of tourism awareness is important at all levels of society, including the guides, to ensure better travel arrangement, more extensive interpretation and more tourist enjoyment.

d) Institutional Framework and Capacity

The primary institution charged with tourism development in Lesotho is the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Culture. The Lesotho Tourist Board, a parastatal

organisation, is tasked with promoting tourist products once the Ministry has put them in place. The various pony trekking centres and the products they offer are under private management or run by a variety of government departments. For example, the Basotho Pony Trekking Centre is in the hands of the Department of Livestock Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, Co-operatives and Land Reclamation. This Ministry has its own priorities which do not always correspond with those mapped by the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Culture or the Lesotho Tourist Board. The staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and of the Department of Livestock Services are not under control of the LTB or the Ministry of Tourism. The LTB does not have power and authority to direct how tourist products may be managed. This situation gives rise to a lack of proper marketing strategies, a lack of coordinated efforts of the stakeholders in product marketing, inconsistency of promotional campaigns and a lack of money for the centres to promote their product or even attend promotional campaigns.

7.4 Safeguarding the Environment

The concept of sustainability has gained much support as a means of re-establishing the balance of economic, social and environmental goals. Sustainable tourism is expected to be an ecologically responsible tourism. This is to ensure that the natural environment, which is the basis of tourism, is conserved and protected.

7.4.1 Impact on Natural Vegetation

Pony trekking in Lesotho involves travelling to relatively remote, undisturbed and uncontaminated areas where tourist use is still light. Like most adventure travels, Pony trekking concentrates on isolated rural places where cultures and environments are most

vulnerable to change. Pony trekking involves crossing the steep slopes of Lesotho's mountains by a horse. Therefore trekking off of trails would cause destruction of vegetation over time through trampling by horses. This could also lead to soil compaction, loss of soil structure and eventually soil erosion. This is more likely given the sloping terrain of the trekking areas.

Although there are no constructed pathways for pony trekkers in some places, the observation made was that very serious environmental destruction usually associated with tourism development in most developing, countries has not as yet been witnessed in pony trekking development in Lesotho. This may be explained by the low volume of tourists in the country.

7.4.2 Sanitation

The Lack of sanitary and refuse facilities such as toilets in some villages and along some trekking routes may have adverse effects on the environment as trekkers relieve themselves everywhere. Littering is another problem associated with pony trekking, though at present it is not identified as a major environmental problem caused by trekking. The pony trekking centres should provide waste disposal facilities in all pony trekking stop-over areas to prevent littering.

7.4.3 Exploitation of Natural Resources

Another problem of environmental degradation could be caused by overutilisation of local resources, such as grass, which are raw materials for handicrafts, in the absence of resource management. This type of grass is not found in all places in the country and is used for other purposes including thatching roofs, yet there is no control over the use of

such a valuable resource. The negative environmental effect of uncontrolled use of this resource may not be evident now but it will inevitably be great over time and this would compromise the opportunity of the future host generations to benefit from it. It could be that the solution lies in fixing a market value for such communal resources since they have come to be commercially exploited on an increasing scale.

The government should put in place structures to improve environmental awareness among the communities in general and educate the communities on the implications of excessive use of resources. If is to be economically successful, pony trekking development has to protect and sustain the environment, which is in many instances the major attraction which tourists travel to see.

7.4.4 Socio-cultural Factors and Effects

Ryan (1991) illustrates that the reason why many tourists continue to return to a given destination is that they have established a relationship with the local people and a friendship has developed. The study demonstrates that the majority (73.1%) of the trekkers mentioned the friendliness and warmth of the local people, while a very small percentage (8.6%) described the local people as unfriendly. Thus, the relationship between hosts and trekkers is still harmonious. It has already been indicated earlier that positive behaviour of the locals is crucial to enhancement of visitor satisfaction and constitutes a reason for many tourists to return to destinations.

There are as yet no evident signs of socio-cultural destruction or disruption which might be triggered by pony trekking. For instance, while some items of culture such as handicrafts are produced to meet tourist demands, these items are still manufactured according to local tradition. Overnight accommodation for trekkers is simple and made

from local materials to satisfy a range of tourist requirements, but not built purposely for trekkers.

7.5 Conclusions

The promotion and development of nature tourism, especially pony trekking, by the government to alleviate problems of poverty and unemployment in the rural areas where most people live is likely to be a viable rural development option. As noted in Chapter One, Lesotho is faced with the problem of high levels of unemployment and few employment opportunities. The labour market can barely absorb half the number of new entrants. The ever declining agricultural production, which accounts for a significant share of the national economy, the slow pace of industrialisation and decreasing foreign aid together with the retrenchment and repatriation of many Basotho mine workers from South Africa are exacerbating the problem of unemployment. Thus, to address the problem of unemployment in the country, the government ventured into tourism projects to secure foreign exchange and stimulate employment and income opportunities for rural populations.

Although it has a limited supply of natural resources, Lesotho has the potential to offer a wide range of activities in a diverse range of environments, from visits to archeological sites, to modern museums, adventure sports and hiking.

Pony Trekking which started as an ordinary horse riding activity for leisure by expatriate civil servants in Lesotho in the mid-1960's, has developed into a commercial business operation. Due to Lesotho's terrain which is rough particularly in the mountains, where most of the treasure of the country's tourism is found, adventurous tourists explore and cross the mountains by horse. The study demonstrates that the intrinsic value of

Lesotho's natural surroundings attracts even visitors who did not come to the country for trekking purposes. For this reason, pony trekking has turned out to be one of the most significant and popular components of the country's tourist products and usage of horses has increased in the country. Although the survey results show a marked decline in the number of trekkers at Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, it was discovered, though without substantive statistics that Malealea Pony Trekking Centre is experiencing a tremendous increase in the number of trekkers.

Most of Lesotho's tourist attractions are found in the rural areas, hence it is appropriate that pony trekking projects are constructed there to support rural development by providing employment and income generating opportunities for rural communities.

Compared to casino-based tourism which attracted transnational investment into the country, in the form of luxury hotels with all associated facilities and economic benefits concentrated in the hotel, pony trekking initiatives are a means to promote relatively small-scale, locally owned and community-based tourism facilities. This form of tourism development offers a greater chance that the economic benefits of the exchange will remain in the hands of local communities, with the government getting indirect revenue from taxes and from tourist contributions such as banking charges, transport tariffs and other enterprises which the tourists patronise.

Despite the lack of adequate statistics on which to estimate the economic contribution of pony trekking activity, the study shows that it is of considerable economic significance. Communities along the trek routes and around the trekking centres have the opportunity to benefit substantially from the renting of overnight facilities for trekkers and their horses. Moreover, opportunities exist to develop small scale outlets for local craft products. Pony trekking is one component of tourism that relies on many small, often informal industries

and services offered by the local people , for instance, small guest houses, transport, entertainment, the production and selling of crafts, and tour guiding.

Sustainable tourism development is a new concept to Lesotho's tourism development, hence Lesotho has not yet adopted principles of sustainable tourism development. But the pony trekking activity has the potential to become a sustainable tourism development option in the country. This is due to the fact that, firstly, pony trekking does not require an externally driven service economy or the importation of goods, as it mostly uses the local natural resources. Also pony trekking activities do not require construction of large infrastructure and facilities. Pony trekkers are accommodated in simple Basotho huts which are made from local resources and not purposely constructed for tourists. Moreover, the rondavel shelters which are at places of interest are also made from local materials. The construction of bridle paths or trekking trails do not require large amounts of land and are not expensive to construct, being simply made from local materials such as rocks. It is an important industry of the future, credited with the capacity to generate immediate revenues with few costs.

Secondly, pony trekking activities directly or indirectly involve local people, focus on rural areas and create productive employment and economic growth for the rural populations. Much of the employment generated by pony trekking is in the form of self-employment (informal sector), such as guiding, vending and craft making. Through the creation of jobs, pony trekking has provided an opportunity in a limited way up to now for the local population to increase their income and improve their standard of living.

Furthermore, it does not need the formation of new social arrangements. For instance, trekkers are guided by local guides, the guides having to introduce or to inform the chiefs about the presence of the visitors in the various destination villages.

Finally, the survey indicates that agriculture is still a major source of income for the local community in all the three pony trekking areas under study. It is argued that sustainable tourism is a tourist activity that is consistent with its host environment and arises naturally from activities that are natural to the area, that is, it must serve a purpose of supplementing the major economic activities that exist rather than supplanting them. The boom of tourism in some parts of the developing world as pointed out by Zurick (1992) has drawn people away from the security of their subsistence economies, resulting in potential instability through new economic diversity rather than sustainability. Therefore pony trekking activities or initiatives are a sustainable option in the country since they are consistent with rural and agricultural pursuits.

Although substantial economic benefits are realised by the people from pony trekking, it has been discovered, however, that participation of local populations in this activity is very low and only a small proportion of the population enjoy the economic benefits brought by this industry. The study also reveals that this activity, particularly in respect of the Malealea Pony Trekking Centre, provides advantages for some members of the association and marginalises others. Furthermore, it was noticed that the people do not have control over these initiatives in all the surveyed centres. Despite the government's commitment to the maximization of benefits and the minimization of disadvantages in the formation of pony trekking initiatives, policy options for each centre vary according to the goals of the managers and organisational forms of administration. However, what emerges from this study is that enterprises with a strong business ethic such as Malealea Pony Trekking, thrives. The question remains as to how to maximise community benefits.

This study has shown that while pony trekking is contributing to social upliftment in the country, its full potential to bring substantial benefits for the country is constrained by several factors. The major constraints on the development of this industry include a lack

of policy framework, institutional arrangements and institutional mechanisms for funding and a lack of a strategic framework for development which could act as a guide for pony trekking policies and provide support for tourism at large.

Historically, the tourism industry in Lesotho has been characterised by a lack of broader policy framework. The development of community tourism projects such as pony trekking are mainly in the experimental stage without a policy. Policy sets the scene for the nature and direction of control and may facilitate effective organisation of the projects and of communities involved. Hence the pony trekking industry needs a well defined policy so that development strategies and implementation action plans can be drawn.

As already noted, pony trekking has the potential to bring substantial benefits for the country which can sustain host communities in the future if it is properly planned and managed. Organising new projects and the improvement of the existing pony trekking centres are vital to economic growth and for improving the quality of life for local populations. The existing pony trekking projects also require additional management and administrative support and marketing expertise. The government's direct involvement and intervention is necessary for the provision of basic infrastructure and training programmes for community empowerment.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr Jack O'Donnovan, Director of Microproject Management Unit, Maseru

Mr Tsiu Ntabe, Head of Basotho Pony Marketing Centre, Molimo-Nthuse

Mr Monethi Monethi, Senior Planning Officer, Lesotho Tourist Board, Maseru

Mr Tseliso Ramakhula, Marketing Officer, Lesotho Tourist Board, Maseru

Mr Mike Jones, Owner of Malealea Lodge, Malealea

APPENDIX 1 : QUESTIONNAIRE**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Topic: Adventure Travel and Sustainable Tourism Development in Lesotho:
the Case of Pony Trekking.**

The questionnaire will be used as a part of my research based on three pony trekking centres, namely; Basotho Pony Trekking Centre, Malealea Pony Trekking Centre and Khohlonts'o Pony Trekking Centre. The aim of the study is to investigate whether pony trekking- a nature based tourism activity in Lesotho, promotes sustainable tourism development of the host localities.

The material emerging from the questionnaire will form part of the work towards a Msc dissertation in the Department of Geography, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. It is anticipated that the research will be useful to the Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Culture, host communities and pony trekking centres.

1. a) Questions to Pony Trekking Centres' Managers

Respondent's Designation _____ Centre's Name _____

1. Date of establishment of the centre _____
2. Who owns the centre?
 - A. Private enterprise
 - B. Government
 - C. Community organisation
 - D. Joint ownership
3. Statistics showing annual estimates of the number of visitors since the establishment of the centre.
4. How do visitors travel to the centre?
5. Through whom do visitors have to make bookings?
6. Does the centre require minimum number of visitors per each trek? If yes, how many?
7. How much do visitors pay for each trek?
8. Where do they reside during trekking?
9. How much do visitors pay for accommodation?
10. Where do visitors get food and other essentials?
11. How much do farmers get for their horses per each trek?
12. Where does the centre get financial assistance?
13. Are there facilities along the tracks for waste disposal?
14. Are visitors informed about the protection or preservation of cultural and environmental assets of the destination areas before the treks begin? Yes/ No. Please explain.
15. How many tour guides does the centre have?
16. Are they temporarily or permanently employed?
17. What is the number of tour guides who accompany trekker parties?

Appendix 1a (continued)

18. Is there training of the guides, staff at the centre and communities? Please explain type of training.

If there is, who trains them?

where are they trained?

How long is the training?

How often do they go for training?

19. Number of horses owned by the centre?

Number of horses owned by the communities?

Are the horses enough to satisfy demand for pony trekking? Yes/ No.

If not, what measures does the centre take to ensure enough supply?

20. What marketing strategies is the centre using to promote its product?

21. What problems do you encounter that may inhibit the growth of demand for this product?

22. What are your opinions about the prosperity of this activity?

23. Do you communicate with other pony trekking centres? Please explain.

24. What role does the Ministry of Tourism or Lesotho Tourist Board play in pony trekking as a tourist product?

1. b) Questions to Communities -Members of Pony Trekking Association

1. When was the association established?
2. What are the aims and objectives of the association?
3. What is the total number of members of the association? Men _____ women _____
4. How many of your horses are hired?
5. Each member of the association is expected to hire out how many horses?
6. Approximately how much do you get per month for your horse/horses?
 - A. M100-M300
 - B. M300-M500
 - C. M500-700
 - D. M700-900
 - E. M100 and above
7. Who makes decision of the payments for each horse per each trek?
 - A. Government
 - B. Manager of the pony trekking centre
 - C. Members of the association
 - D. Do not know
8. What are your other means of earning income apart from horse hiring?
 - A. Crop production
 - B. Livestock production
 - C. Remittances from the mines
 - D. Other means (please specify)
 - E. None
9. Are you satisfied with the way the association is run? Yes/ No. Please explain.
10. What problems do you encounter?
11. What do you think should be done to sustain this project?
12. What are your perceptions about the tourists coming into your areas?

**1. b) Questions to communities- Members of Pony Trekking Association
(Translated)**

1. Mokhatlo o thongoe neng?
2. Sepheo sa mokhatlo ke sefeng?
3. Litho li kae ka palo? banna _____ basali _____
4. U herisa pere tse kae tsa hau?
5. Motho ka ngoe o lebeletsoe ho hirisa pere tse kae?
6. Lipere/ pere ea hau e etsa chelete e kae ka khoeli?
 - A. M100-M300
 - B. M300-M500
 - C. M500-M700
 - D. M700- M900
 - E. Ho feta M900
7. Ke mang a etsang liqeto tsa hore na pere e pataloe bokae?
 - A. Muso
 - B. Mookameli oa setsi
 - C. Lihoai ka bo tsona
 - D. Ha ke tsebe
8. Mekhoa e meng eo u kenyang chelete ka eona ke efe?
 - A. Ho lema
 - B. Ho rua liphoofofo
 - C. Chelete e tsoang merafong
 - D. Mekhoa e meng (hlalosa)
 - E. Letho
9. U khotsofetse ke mokhoa oo mokhatlo o tsamaisoang ka teng?
10. Mathata ao le kopanang le ona ke afe?
11. U nahana hore ho ka etsoang hore projeke ee e le tsoalle molemo ho ea ho ile?
12. Maikutlo a hau ke afe ka bahahlaoli ba tlang libakeng tsa lona?

1. c) Questions to Tourist

1. What is your country of residence?
2. What is the purpose of the visit to the country?
 - A. Scenery/ sightseeing
 - B. Pony Trekking
 - C. Visiting friends and relatives
 - D. Business purposes
3. Day trek / Overnight trek?
4. How did you get to know about pony trekking?
5. What motivated you to participate in pony trekking?
6. Have you participated in pony trekking before? Yes / No
7. If you have, what is the reason(s) for coming back?
8. If you haven't, would you like to come back? Yes / No? Please explain why?
- ✓ 9. Are you satisfied with the facilities and services offered? Yes / No
10. If not what improvements can you suggest?
11. What did you like or dislike most about pony trekking?
12. How did you find the behaviour or attitude of communities towards tourists?
 - A. Friendly and Welcoming
 - B. Unfriendly
 - C. Do not Know
 - D. Other (specify)
13. Did you encounter any problems during your stay in the country? Yes / No
If yes what were they?

1. d) Questions to Lesotho Tourist Board

Designation of respondent _____

1. When was the Lesotho Tourist Board established?
2. What were the aims and objectives in the formulation of this body?
3. What are its current responsibilities and objectives?
4. Do you think those objectives have been achieved?
5. What role does it play in the pony trekking activities?
6. What are the major vehicles for promotion of pony trekking?
7. Do you think communities know the importance of tourism in their areas? Yes / No
If not why?
If yes what do they do to sustain it?
8. Does pony trekking pose a threat to environmental integrity?
9. How does environmental impact of pony trekking compare to that of other touristic activities?
10. What is the level of public awareness about conservation of natural and recreational resources?
11. Do you think maximum potential revenue is being tapped from pony trekking?
If not how can maximum benefits be obtained?
12. What problems do you encounter with pony trekking centres and associations?

APPENDIX 2
PONY TREKKING SPECIMEN LEAFLETS



HORSE TREKKING IN LESOTHO

The Basotho Pony Trekking Centre is situated at Molimo Nthuse Pass (2318m above sea level) one hour's drive from Maseru on good roads.

Get away from the pollution and bustle of the city. The sure footed Basotho ponies will take you over breathtaking mountain passes, across crystal clear streams where you can swim in summer in rock pools fed by sparkling waterfalls.

We offer day treks from one to four hours. On the longer day trek you visit majestic Qiloane falls, where there are braai facilities and you can swim in the clean bracing mountain water.

On overnight treks (1 to 6 nights) you stay in Basotho villages and get the opportunity to experience the local way of life at first hand.

These treks are not for the faint hearted, but for those who want something different they provide a unique experience in Southern Africa.

TREKS AVAILABLE AND PRICE LIST

(effective from 1st Dec. 1994)

DAY TREKS

TREK 1: One hour

M 20,00 per person – more than five

M 25,00 per person – less than five

TREK 2: Leboela Falls – 2 hours approximately

M 30,00 per person – more than five

M 35,00 per person – less than five

TREK 3: Qiloane Falls – 4 hours approximately

M 45,00 per person – more than five

M 50,00 per person – less than five

OVERNIGHT RETURN TREKS

TREK 4: 1 nigt, 2 days (choice od two routes) –
M 125,00 per person

TREK 5: 2 nights, 3 days (for parties of not less than 2) –
M 175,00 per person

TREK 6: 4 nights, 5 days (for parties not less than 4) –
M 250,00 per person

TREK 7: Semonkong – 6 nights, 7 days
(for parties not less than 4 – Summer only) –
M 405,00 per person.



SPECIAL TREKS CAN BE ARRANGED OF NOT LONGER THAN 4 DAYS
PRICES INCLUDE: horse, tack, mule & services of our guides

TREK INFORMATION

HOW TO GET THERE

Take the Mafeteng road from Maseru and follow **Pony Trekking** sign posts. Approximately 60 km (1 hour) from Maseru. Road is tarred all the way. For overnight Treks try to arrive by 9:00 a.m.

WHAT TO BRING

Food – TINNED, FRESH in a cooler, cooking equipment – our mules can carry most anything, but please try not to overload!

Clothes – Rainwear and swimming wear in Summer. Also, one sweater – just in case! In Winter, all warm clothes and anorak.

Other equipment – Sleeping bags, tents if you wish, but generally you sleep in rondavels – villagers charge M 10,00 per night per person for rondavels and M 5,00 for pitching a tent (not included in trek fee).

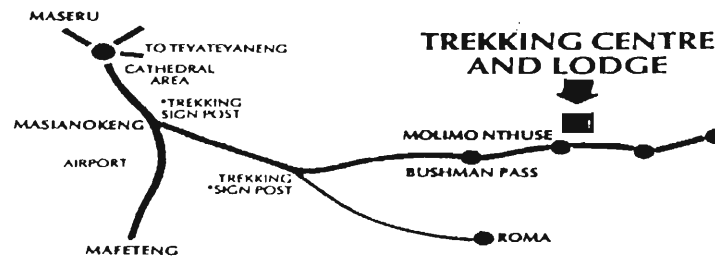
You need a valid passport to get into Lesotho.

ACCOMODATION

You can stay at Molimo Nthuse Lodge, Tel. 370211 on the nights before and after Treks, or at one of the many fine hotels in Maseru.

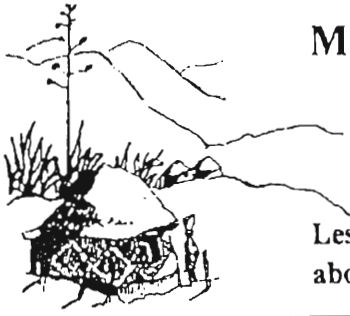
Lesotho Sun
Maseru Sun Hotel
Lancers Inn
Tollgate Caravan Park
Victoria Hotel

Phone 09266 – 313111
Phone 09266 – 312434
Phone 09266 – 312114
Phone 09266 – 370206
Phone 09266 – 312922



BASOTHO PONY TREKKING

P.O. BOX 1027
MASERU 100
KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
TEL: (09266) 314165



MALEALEA LODGE - LESOTHO

PONY TREKS, HIKING & MT BIKE TRAILS

Rustic Conference Facilities & Team Building Outings.

Wonderful Photographic Opportunities

Lesotho is a world without fences. Breathtaking scenery abounds, and every season has unique attractions.

COSMOS at Easter. Snow-capped mountains in Winter, Peach Blossoms in Spring & Flowering Aloes in Summer - Lesotho has it all.

MALEALEA is a self-catering lodge, run by the owners, Mick & Di Jones. They organize Adventure Tours in Lesotho tailor made to your requirements.

With Accommodation in luxury hotels or mountain lodges, you'll enjoy either a self-catering or a fully inclusive tour.

MALEALEA was built from an old Trading Post, established in 1905. Founder, Mervyn Bosworth-Smith, planted the famous Oak Forest, which gives Malealea it's unique character.

Malealea offers rustic, but comfortable accommodation, overlooking the Thaba Putsoa range.

MALEALEA is a base for Pony Trekking, Hiking Trails & 4x4 tracks into remote area of Lesotho. These outings can range from 1 hr to 6 days or as required.

DAY HIKES & PONY TREKS FROM MALEALEA

The Botsoela Waterfall Hike, Pony Trek or Drive.

This hike takes you through steep gorges and valleys to a unique twin waterfall.

A scenic drive traversing a spectacular mountain pass to the waterfall.

HIKE: 2 or 4 hours. PONY TREK: 4 hour round trek. DRIVE: 2 hours leisurely.

The Pitseng Gorge & Rockpool Hike.

This hike takes you through magnificent overhanging rocks and three rockpools in a cascade, where you can spend the day swimming.

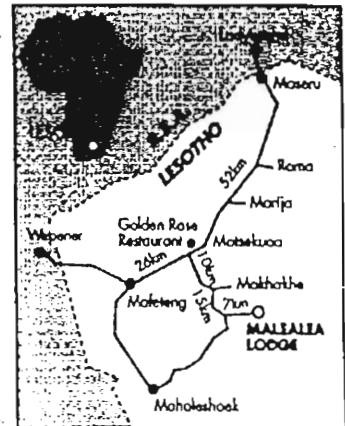
HIKE: 2 hours or 6 hour circular route.

The Bushman Paintings, Echo Cave & Underground Tunnel Hike.

HIKE: 1 hour from vehicle point. 3 hours from Lodge. PONY TREK: 2 hours

The Gates of Paradise Hike.

An all day hike along the ridge of the Matelile range with panoramic views of 360 degrees.



OVERNIGHT PONY TREKS & HIKING TRAILS FROM MALEALEA.

These treks are usually about 7 hours each day. No riding experience is necessary. The huts are very basic and are equipped with mattresses, crockery, pots & pans. Spring water is supplied in a bucket at each hut. On trek you stay in remote Basotho villages experiencing "THE REAL AFRICA" The trails traverse spectacular mountain passes and 3 of Lesotho's highest waterfalls. Hikers take the "donkey work" out of backpacking, by hiring horses to carry your load.

RPT2 The Ribaneng Waterfall Trek - 2 days and 1 night

This trek is half way up the Maluti Mountains and the waterfall is about 100 metres in a beautiful area.

RPT3 The Ribaneng Waterfall Trek - 3 days & 2 nights.

Spend the second day exploring the Ribaneng Falls and valley.

RPT3B The Ribaneng & Sekoting Trek - 3 days & 2 nights.

This is a circular route overnighiting in two different Basotho villages, trekking over two mountain passes.

RPT4 The Ribaneng & Ketane Waterfall Trek. - 4 days & 3 nights.

The Ketane Falls are 122 m high and you trek over the Maluti mountains through remote Basotho villages

RPT6 The Ribaneng, Ketane & Maletsunyane Waterfall Trek. - 6 days & 5 nights.

This trek includes the spectacular Maletsunyane waterfall, 192 metres - the highest single drop in Africa.

RPT5 The Ketane 4 Day Trek and Drive to the Maletsunyane Waterfall.

SPECIAL: A Go Anywhere Trek. Bring your own cooking equipment and explore Lesotho, led by a Basotho guide discovering new routes and remote villages for any number of days.

MALEALEA OFFERS "LESOTHO IN A NUTSHELL"

MALEALEA LODGE - LESOTHO

PONY TREKS & HIKING TRAILS



RSA CONTACT ADDRESS:
 P.O. Box 119 Wepener 9944 RSA.
 Tel & Fax: +27 (051) 447-3200
 Fax: +27 (051) 447-5114
 Cell Tel: 082 5524 215
 E-mail: malealea@pixie.co.za
 Internet: <http://www.pix.za/business/travel/br/zmaleale.html>

LESOTHO ADDRESS: - MALEALEA
 Tel: +266 (09266) 785-727 w 785-264 h
 Fax: +266 (09266) 785-326 Tel: 785-336
 (No telephone at Malealea -
 messages are relayed via Johnny.)

ACCOMMODATION RATES:

- ⊙ 9 Bedrooms, some with bathroom-en suite & private kitchen. - R70.00 - R 75.00 pp
- ⊙ 9 Basotho Roodavels & bedrooms - Communal Bathrooms & Kitchen - R50.00 pp
- ⊙ 8 Backpackers Rooms with 2 showers & toilets - Linen provided - R35.00 pp
- ⊙ Backpackers Rooms - Using Own Sleeping Bag - R30.00 pp
- ⊙ Children sharing parents room - R20.00 pp ⊙ Children - R40.00 pp
- ⊙ CAMPING - R 15.00 pp

CATERING ON REQUEST: Breakfast - R18.00; Lunch - R25.00; Dinner R30.00 - R35.00.

Kitchens are fully equipped. Linen is provided, but BRING OWN TOWELS.

There is a shop on site for basic food supplies & liquor. (Soft Drinks, Longlife Milk, Tinned Foods, Pasta, Sweets)

PONY TREKS - SELF-CATERING

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| | 2 people | 3 & more people |
| ⊙ DAY RIDES | R 70.00 pp per day | R60.00 pp per day |
| ⊙ OVERNIGHT TREKS | R100.00 pp per day | R90.00 pp per day |
| ⊙ BASOTHO VILLAGES - R20.00 pp per night to stay in Basotho Huts or Tents on overnight treks. | | |

WHAT TO BRING: Food, Sleeping Bag, Rainsuit & Warm Clothing, Sunscreen & Hat
 Torch, Gas Light, Water Bottles & Water Purifying Tablets.

Basotho Guides accompany all pony treks and a pack horse is included in the price for overnight treks

A pack-horse carries 50 kg: 12.5 kg per person. Extra pack horses can be hired.

HIKING TRAILS - Pack Horse & Basotho Guide - R125.00 per day for group of about 4 hikers.

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES IN LESOTHO TO COMPLEMENT A SOUTHERN AFRICA TOUR.

The pony treks can be extended to any number of days. On trek, for the catered option, clients cook supplied food.

TOUR 1: 2 DAY PONY TREK:

1 night in a Basotho village & 2 nights at Malealea.

- Day 1 Arrive & overnight at Malealea Lodge.
- Day 2 A 6 - 7 hour pony trek to a Basotho village, where you will overnight in very basic Basotho huts & tents, experiencing the "Real Africa"
- Day 3 An early morning hike to the Ribaneng waterfall, before returning on a circular route to Malealea where you will overnight.
- Day 4 Depart from Malealea

ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES

Backpackers	Basotho Huts	Bathroom -en suite
Accom:	Accom:	or 2 rooms sharing
	Com bathrooms	1 bathroom.
R260.00 pp	R300.00pp	R340.00 pp - Self cater
R485.00pp	R525.00pp	R565.00pp - Catered

TOUR 2: DAY PONY TREKS & HIKES

3 nights at Malealea Lodge.

- Day 1 Arrive & overnight at Malealea Lodge, hot showers, rustic, but comfortable accommodation
- Day 2 A day pony trek to the Botsoela waterfall & Bushman Paintings.
- Day 3 A hike through magnificent overhanging rocks to the Pitseug Gorge & rockpools.
- Day 4 Depart from Malealea.

ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES

Backpackers	Basotho Hut	Bathroom -en suite
Accom:	Accom:	or 2 rooms sharing
	Com bathrooms	1 bathroom.
R165.00 pp	R210.00pp	R270.00pp - Self cater
R390.00pp	R435.00 pp	R495.00pp - Catered