Testing the Efficacy of an Integrative Model for Community Participation

Kam Hung1, Ercan Sirakaya-Turk2, and Linda J. Ingram3

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy of an integrative model for community participation in tourism development. Titled as motivation–opportunity–ability (MOA), the model integrated two streams of research, “means” and “ends” oriented studies, with the intent of providing a holistic view of community participation research. To test the hypothesized relationships, data were collected from a stratified random sample of households in Charleston, South Carolina. The data provided some support for the model; the findings suggest that the extent to which community members participate in the tourism development process depends on motivation, opportunity, and ability to participate. Practical and theoretical implications have been discussed within the general framework of community participation.

Keywords

MOA model, tourism participation, motivation, opportunity, ability, community participation

Community participation is often thought of as simply a tool used to involve locals in community planning and development. In reality, it is a much more complex phenomenon in which individuals voluntarily take action to “confront opportunities and responsibilities of citizenship” (Tosun 2000, p. 615). The challenges involved in attempting to universally apply this definition are readily apparent in the divergent goals of locals, as well as in a broad range of sociocultural, political, and economic conditions that can lead to different levels of participation (Tosun 1999).

Although several useful conceptual and practical community participation models have been developed in the past, factors affecting community members’ participation in tourism development are seldom interpreted concomitantly with different levels of participation. Most research has focused on either the means (process or conditions) or the ends (outcomes or end results) of participation. The integration of these two streams of research is deemed to be important as it can potentially enhance our understanding of different facilitators/inhibitors of participation and their influences on community members’ participatory behavior. Apart from adopting either of these two approaches, most studies (e.g., Li 2006; Tosun 2006; Wang and Wall 2006) have used single-location case studies; others have been qualitative in nature despite filling the literature gap in cross-cultural environments (e.g., Nyaupane, Morais, and Dowler 2006; Cole 2006; Ying and Zhou 2007). This is not to imply that these studies are not valuable to community participation literature; on the contrary, they are akin to the building blocks leading to a more holistic participation model. Taking a quantitative approach, this study first proposes an alternative model for community participation and then tests the efficacy of the model by using community survey data.

Literature Review

The discussion of community participation in tourism planning is often embedded in the portion of sustainable tourism literature that addresses some of a community’s most fundamental concerns, such as the desire to increase current living standards without compromising the quality and quantity of resources today or for future generations while providing visitors with worthwhile experiences (McIntyre 1993).

Recognizing community participation as one of the integral components of sustainable tourism, extensive research has been conducted to promote the role of public participation as a tool in managing community tourism resources (see Aas, Ladkin, & Fletcher 2005; Garrod 2003; Timothy 1999; Jamal and Getz 1995). The majority of scholars have taken either a “means” or an “ends” approach when investigating community participation in the context of tourism. Examples for the means of participation include community members’ personal interests, available time, and affiliations with the local tourism office. Examples for the ends of participation include the success or failure of tourism development in

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the community and the support received from community members. In the current study, means refers to the participation process or conditions enabling community participation to occur while ends refers to their level of participation.

**Participation Process or Conditions—Means-Oriented Studies**

Studies that fall into this category build explanatory models outlining the stages of the participation process. For example, using the base model developed by Drake (1991), Garrod (2003) offered nine stages of local participation in planning and managing ecotourism. These nine stages include determining the role of local participation in a project, choosing a research team, conducting preliminary studies, determining the level of local participation, assessing appropriate participation mechanisms, indicating dialogue and educational efforts, pursuing collective decision making, developing an action plan and implementation scheme, and monitoring and evaluating outcome.

Although the stages of participation are not provided in Jamal and Getz’s (1995) work, they adopted a process-oriented approach and applied the theoretical constructs of collaboration to tourism destinations. They defined collaboration as a process of joint decision making among stakeholders and suggested that input from all related entities is necessary throughout the process in order to solve the problems related to community-based tourism. Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher (2005) also applied this theory to heritage management by evaluating an UNESCO/Norwegian government project in Luang Prabang, Laos, by assessing its success among stakeholders.

These studies offer valuable insights into the power and control of different stakeholders over decision-making processes. The emphasis on power in participation literature is reflected in the definition of “community participation” (Jamal and Getz 1995, p. 188) as “stakeholder collaboration in which joint decision-making occurs among autonomous, key stakeholders of an inter-organizational, community tourism domain to resolve planning problems of the domain and/or to manage issues related to the planning and development of the domain.” Although the term power is not directly applied in the definition, the authors (Jamal and Getz 1995, p. 190) indicated that “legitimacy and power become critical considerations in the selection of stakeholders for an interorganizational collaboration, for they influence every stage of the collaboration process.”

Although the collaboration concept in tourism planning can be considered a breakthrough in community participation research, it does little to integrate individual factors that holistically contribute to variations in participation outcomes. Community members’ participation in the tourism development process depends not only on the social, political, and economic considerations but also on their individual characteristics, such as personal interest, knowledge, confidence, awareness, resources, education, and time (Reid 2003; Cole 2006; Addison 1996), which may collectively play a role in explaining participation decisions. Thus, there is a need for integrating such factors into a participation model that may lend itself to a broader analysis of community participation behavior.

As a response to shortcomings in the relevant literature, Timothy and Tosun (2003) adopted a more integrative approach in developing a Participatory, Incremental, Collaborative/Cooperative (PIC) planning model in which participation in tourism planning, implementation and monitoring of tourism plans, and collaboration among stakeholders are the focus of the discussion. Although their model is also process oriented, the description of each construct of the model and the obstacles to adopting the PIC planning model reflect a broader spectrum of key factors such as inadequate representation, tradition, power, lack of awareness, financial resources, time, and peripherality. The model suggests that community members’ participation in tourism planning depends not only on power relationships but also on personal factors.

**Participation Level—Ends-Oriented Studies**

Community participation is not a dichotomous structure with only two forms of participation, either participation or lack of participation; it is a continuum. The range of different levels of participation is also termed a “typology of participation” in the literature (Arnstein 1969; Pretty 1995; Tosun 1999). A typology containing a range of participation levels can be interpreted as the outcomes or the end products of participation. Arnstein (1969), Pretty (1995), Choguill (1996), Tosun (1999), and Selin (1999) are the pioneers in the development of typologies of community participation. Only Tosun (1999) and Selin’s (1999) typologies of participation are directly related to tourism.

Four decades ago, one of the pioneers of participation research, Arnstein (1969), divided community participation into eight levels and used ladder rungs as a metaphor for these levels: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placement, partnership, delegated power, and citizen control. She further classified manipulation and therapy as nonparticipation because the main purposes of these two rungs are to educate or cure the community members; she classified informing, consultation, and placement as tokenism since the participants only act as advisories rather than decision makers; and she classified partnership, delegated power, and citizen control as citizen power, as participants have a stronger voice in the decision-making process. Citizen power increases as the rungs progress from manipulation to citizen control.

Although Arnstein’s (1969) work led to greater understanding of the relationship between community participation and citizen power, the proposed ladder of community participation was deemed to have a lack of applicability to
underdeveloped countries (Choguill 1996). Aiming at developing a typology of community participation in the context of underdeveloped countries, three decades later, Choguill (1996) proposed an alternative model that includes eight levels of participation: empowerment, partnership, conciliation, dissimulation, diplomacy, informing, conspiracy, and self-management, in which community members have the greatest amount of power and control over decision making at the empowerment level. However, governmental support decreases when the hierarchy progresses from the empowerment to the self-management level. Choguill (1996) concluded that the extent to which a community initiates mutual-help activities is heavily dependent on the government’s attitudes toward the community as well as the support received from nongovernmental organizations.

Pretty (1995) added a wide range of participation levels, including manipulative participation, passive participation, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation, and self-mobilization. The first four levels were, in fact, manipulation rather than participation as community members have no say in the decisions concerning the community’s well-being. The author further warned that participation may be a term that is overused by some officials who intend to manipulate the community development process.

The three categories of community participation typology classified by Tosun (1999) are (1) spontaneous participation, (2) induced participation, and (3) coercive participation. In this typology of participation, spontaneous participation is at the high end of the participation continuum, in which participants are self-motivated and are actively involved in the process. Coercive participation is at the lower end of the participation continuum in which authorities are reluctant to involve the public in decision making, and participation is limited to policy implementation. Applying this typology in the context of the tourism development process, Tosun further renamed the categories as (1) spontaneous community participation in tourism development, (2) passive community participation in tourism development, and (3) pseudo–community participation in tourism development. According to Tosun (2006), the degree of power distribution is the common thread of these three typologies of participation.

Selin (1999) also developed a series of typologies of sustainable tourism partnerships. Using geographic dimension as a comparison baseline, he demonstrated how tourism partnerships vary across legitimacy, locus of control, organizational diversity and size, as well as time-frame dimensions. Case studies were chosen and plotted along each dimension as examples of each typology of tourism partnership. Among these typologies of partnership, the one with the dimension of locus of control is similar to the typologies proposed by Arnstein (1969), with complete agency control at one end and complete stakeholder control at the other end of the scale.

**Motivation–Opportunity–Ability (MOA) Model for Community Participation**

Previous discussion thus far has demonstrated that studies in community participation fall into either means or ends categories of participation research. Identifying the factors that influence community participation and the outcomes of behavior can contribute to a deeper understanding of participation. However, an integration of these two seemingly separate streams of research, that is, how the means of participation can affect the ends of participation, is still lacking. There is a need to integrate these two approaches into one unifying model to gain a holistic understanding of participation behavior. Over the past decade, there has been considerable disagreement among researchers as to what constitutes an optimal form of participation. A few researchers (e.g., Jamal and Getz 1995; Cole 2006; Simmons 1994) advocate a higher-end-participation philosophy, that is, full community participation in tourism planning in which the community wields extensive power and control over the entire tourism development process. Pretty (1995) commented on how full community participation can affect the process:

> It was when people were involved in decision-making during all stages of the project, from design to maintenance that the best results occurred. If they were just involved in information sharing and consultation, then results were much poorer. (p. 4)

Others, such as Taylor (1995), Tosun and Timothy (2003), Yoon, Chen, and Gürsoy (1999), and Tosun (1999), suggest that full participation may not be desirable in every community. The desired form of participation can be very site-specific and is determined by factors relevant to the host community, such as history, stage of tourism development, residents’ perception of tourism impacts, and the sociocultural, political, and economic conditions. It appears there is no universal mode of participation that can be implemented everywhere. Conditions specific to each community and situation must be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis.

Although previous case studies have highlighted the factors that influence community participation, the presentation of these factors has been rather fragmented. Systematic integration of this information is required so the factors that lead to various participation behaviors can be more easily observed, tested, and interpreted. Okazaki (2008) attempted to achieve this goal. However, the main focus of the discussion was on examining the influences of power redistribution, the collaboration process, and social capital on levels of participation. The study proposed a community-based tourism model to integrate these elements and to explain how the levels of participation evolve over time. The current study takes a different perspective by adopting the MOA model as
a framework to integrate two ends of participation, namely, the factors influencing participation (means) and levels of participation (ends). According to the MOA model, motivation, opportunity, and ability to participate are the three antecedents of community participation. These three antecedents are necessary for public participation, and the levels of participation are assumed to change according to each situation because of the variability of the antecedents. Figure 1 shows the application of the MOA model in the context of community participation.

The MOA model was first proposed by consumer behavior researchers within the context of information-processing theory (see MacInnis and Jaworski 1989 for an extended discussion of the theory). According to MacInnis and Jaworski (1989), information processing can be divided into three components: antecedents, processing, and consequences. Antecedents are composed of needs or motivation, opportunity, and the ability to process brand information. The information process often begins with recognition of the discrepancy between the current situation and the desired situation. In accordance with Bettman’s (1979) suggestions, for the purposes of this article, need was integrated into the motivation component as it is an essential element for stimulating motivation to achieve a desired goal. MacInnis, Moorman, and Jaworski (1991) also studied the role of MOA in brand information processing for advertising and found that it plays a mediating role in the relationship between executional cues and communication outcomes.

The MOA approach has been adopted by several scholars on a wide range of topics. For example, two decades ago, Batra and Ray (1986) applied this model in a study of the situational effects of advertising repetition and found that motivation, opportunity, and ability are the antecedent conditions required for advertisements to generate cognitive responses. Rothschild (1999) adopted the MOA model in the context of social marketing, and segmented the public based on these three elements. Based on this segmentation, education, marketing, and law strategies were implemented accordingly. Wiggins (2004) suggested that consumers experience barriers to action because they lack motivation, ability, or opportunity to act, or some combination of the three. In addition, crime literature suggests that there are three antecedents that must be present before a crime can be committed: opportunity, ability, and desire (Davidson and Gentry 2001; McGrew 2005; Kenry 2003; Beirne 1993). A commonality found among these applications of the MOA model is that all participants are engaged in an information-processing or a decision-making process. In addition, specific situational factors and their level of influence can lead to different outcomes related to information processing and decision making.

Similarly, community participation can be regarded as a decision-making process from the standpoint of the participants, and this process is influenced by MOA factors differently depending on local sociocultural, economic, and political as well as personal conditions (Tosun 2000; Tosun and Timothy 2003; Cole 2006). Therefore, community participation factors in the tourism development process are taxonomized here into three categories: motivation, opportunity, and ability through which the factors affecting participation behavior can be easily categorized.

**Motivation.** Motivation is an important internal driving force in the decision-making process as it affects both the direction and intensity of behavior (Bettman 1979). In a community tourism context, motivation has been suggested to be the key determinant influencing the choice to participate and expend effort (Kayat 2002). Milne and Ewing (2004) asserted that “citizens must be motivated if they are to participate” (p. 215). Community members are more likely to participate when tourism becomes relevant on a personal level. In the consumer behavior literature, personal relevance has been identified as an important variable affecting people’s motivation to process information (Petty, Utnava, and Strathman 1991). In the tourism development process, perceived benefits of tourism are factors reinforcing the relevance of tourism to community members and are crucial in motivating them to participate.

Previous research has shown that the host community’s attitudes toward tourism and their level of support of tourism activities in the community are affected by the perceived impacts of tourism (Yoon, Chen, and Gürsoy 1999; Byrd 2003). Jamal and Getz (1995) also suggested that the recognition of individual and/or mutual benefits to be derived from the participation process is required for collaboration to occur. In other words, those who perceive an increase in personal benefits from tourism are more likely to support its development than those who do not perceive benefits (Pretice 1993). Our model posits the following hypothesis to test the role of motivation in community participation:

**Hypothesis 1:** The level of participation in tourism is positively influenced by perceived benefits of tourism because of the variability of the antecedents. Figure 1 shows the application of the MOA model in the context of community participation.

![Figure 1. An integrative model for community participation](image-url)
tourism; the greater the benefits perceived, the higher the level of participation.

**Opportunity.** Opportunity is defined in the brand-processing context as occurring when the “circumstances evidenced during ad exposure are favorable for brand processing” (MacInnis and Jaworski 1989, p. 7). In the context of tourism planning, it can be defined as the circumstances that allow for and/or facilitate public involvement in the participation process. Opportunity occurs when tourism developers adopt a participatory approach and provide a supportive framework for community participation. Participation cannot occur without political opportunities or an open channel of communication between the tourism developers and the community (Bahaire and Elliott-White 1999). According to Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher (2005), “Establishing channels of communication is perceived to be a straightforward and initial step towards stakeholder involvement” (p. 43). Furthermore, Peters (1999) warned that proceeding to tourism development without proper channels of communication between planners and stakeholders can lead to development that is uncontrolled and destructive.

As indicated, the type and amount of participation varies in each situation. The variability of participatory opportunities is typically due to diverse local political structures and the unequal distribution of power within the community. In addition, many low-income countries are still characterized by paternalistic, centralized, top–down bureaucratic political structures that make community participation difficult or impossible (e.g., Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher 2005; Milne and Ewing 2004; Tosun 2000). Political parties in many low-income countries are unlikely to share their power with the public by adopting a participatory approach (Tosun 2001). However, a paradigm shift has occurred in some high-income countries, such as the United Kingdom, where urban policy was developed during the 1980s and 1990s to include a greater number of stakeholders in the policy-making process (Bahaire and Elliott-White 1999). Even though decentralization and fragmentation of responsibilities has led to greater public participation in governmental decision making, the current political structure still places greater emphasis on encouraging citizens to voice their opinions about public services rather than involving them in local development projects (Bahaire and Elliott-White 1999). This demonstrates that both the level and type of community participation is dependent on the degree of openness and decentralization of local governmental policy as well as the extent to which a government is willing to relinquish at least some control to the public.

The following hypothesis has been formulated to test the debate on opportunity:

**Hypothesis 2:** The level of participation is negatively influenced by the centralized political structure. The greater the centralization of political structure, the lower the level of community participation in tourism.

**Ability.** Jamal and Getz (1999) suggested that just because individuals have the right to participate does not mean they have the ability to do so. Ability is a complex phenomenon composed of a combination of factors, such as awareness, experience, knowledge, skills, accessibility to information, and financial resources.

Lack of awareness has been identified as one of the primary factors constraining community participation (Timothy 2002; Tosun and Timothy 2003). Community members, in low-income countries in particular, are usually unprepared for localized tourism development due to their lack of traveling experience and a lack of awareness of the need for and benefits of tourism development (Timothy 2002). As tourism is a relatively new concept for many of these communities, local residents are often uninformed about the tourism industry (Timothy 1999). Timothy (1999, p. 374) further indicated that “educating residents of developing countries is one way of building awareness, so that they will be better qualified to make informed decisions in their own communities.” Simmons (1994) noted that education can both strengthen the public’s confidence and increase their ability to effectively participate. Timothy and Tosun (2003) suggested using public education techniques, including television advertisements, newspapers, brochures, courses, and training. Locals’ ability to access information and learn about tourism development in their community is frequently dependent on the willingness of tourism developers to share information. Often, in an effort to minimize interference, tourism developers are reluctant to share information or include locals in the planning process (Cole 2006).

Kayat (2002) indicates that the ability to take advantage of the economic opportunities that arise via the tourism development process is related to levels of participation. This idea also holds true when looking at individual financial resources; those with greater financial resources are more likely to participate than those with limited resources. Evidence of this can be seen in low-income countries such as Indonesia where the concerns of day-to-day survival outweigh those of long-term planning and conservation (Timothy 1999). Bahaire and Elliott-White (1999) also pointed out that some members of a community have more power than others based on their ability to contribute financially to tourism development; those with greater financial resources appeared to have a stronger voice in the planning process than those of more modest means.

The discussion of ability in community participation can be tested with the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3:** The level of participation is positively related to the public’s ability to participate: the greater the ability, the higher the level of participation.
Method

The study was conducted in the county of Charleston, South Carolina. A questionnaire was designed and pilot-tested on a small sample (n = 10) of graduate students majoring in tourism. The respondents were asked to examine different aspects of the questionnaire such as wording, formatting, clarity and redundancy of questions, and completion time. Changes in the questionnaire were made accordingly, based on the feedback received from the respondents. The final questionnaire was distributed to 2,000 residents randomly chosen from the database of a survey company. To match the demographic profile of Charleston County, 65% (1,300) of the requested sample were Caucasians; 30% (600) were African Americans; and 5% (100) were the remaining ethnic groups.

A modified version of the Total Design survey procedure recommended by Dillman (1978, 2007) was used to collect the data. Three contacts were made with potential respondents: first, a questionnaire packet was sent out to respondents with a cover letter and a post-paid envelope via bulk mail; second, about a week later, a postcard reminder was mailed out to all households in the sample; and third, a replacement questionnaire package was sent to nonrespondents 3 weeks after sending the postcard reminders. Three questionnaires were undeliverable, and 304 questionnaires were returned, among which 296 were useable—representing an overall response rate of approximately 15%. Two types of nonresponse bias check were conducted: one examined whether early respondents were significantly different from late respondents on key demographics; the second check selected a random sample of 31 nonrespondents to conduct a brief telephone interview with respect to demographics and a few select variables from the MOA model. Mean differences tests (chi-square and t-tests) suggest there were no statistically significant differences between the early respondents and late respondents on demographics such as age, gender, and income (Table 1) as well as between respondents and nonrespondents on key variables of the overall study (Table 2). Thus, it is safe to assume that the response can be expected to be representative of the resident population. The reasons for low response may be that all the research conducted over the years has already saturated Charleston residents with tourism studies. Although we have tried to guard the integrity of the study by following the accepted rules of research in dealing with nonrespondents, the results must be interpreted with this limitation in mind.

The measurement scales used in the current study were primarily developed from past studies because of the limited completion time required by the funding agency. Although the reliability and validity of the measurement scales were guarded by rigorous tests introduced in the later paragraphs, it is suggested that in future studies, a more stringent measurement scale development procedure such as the one recommended by Churchill (1979) should be followed to examine if the resultant measurement scales differ from the measures being used in the current study.

For all constructs measured in the study, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used in the questionnaire in which participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. Residents’ motivation to participate in tourism development was measured by perceived benefits of tourism. The scale was adopted from the residents’ attitude toward sustainable tourism (SUS-TAS) scale developed and validated over the past 5 years by Sirakaya-Turk and his colleagues (Choi and Sirakaya 2005; Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci, and Kaya 2008; Sirakaya-Turk 2007). Five statements were included in the survey to measure perceived tourism benefits by local residents: “I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to my community,” “I believe tourism is good for my community’s economy,” “Tourism diversifies the economy in my community,” “I like tourism because it brings new income to communities,” and “Tourism creates new markets for our local products.”

The development of measurement scales to determine participation levels was based on Pretty’s (1995) typology of participation in which the levels of participation are reflected in the degree of involvement of community members in the tourism development process. Six statements were developed to measure different aspects of involvement in tourism decision making: “I contribute to tourism decision-making in my community,” “I share my opinions with officials regarding tourism,” “I provide assistance/resources for tourism development,” “I initiate contacts with tourism officials whenever necessary,” “I meet with officials to discuss tourism issues,” and “I do what is asked by tourism office/officials.”

Residents’ ability to participate in tourism development was measured by their awareness and knowledge of tourism development in the community based on Timothy’s (2002) discussion of residents’ capacity to participate in tourism. Four items were developed to measure awareness: “I am fully aware of the issues related to tourism development in my community,” “I keep up with the news regarding tourism development,” “I am familiar with tourism development,” and “I receive information about tourism development in my community.” Five items were used to measure knowledge of tourism: “I know a lot about tourism in my community,” “I have knowledge about tourists in my community,” “I know about the likely impacts of tourism,” “I know a lot about my community,” and “I know how I can participate in tourism development.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>6.537</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.617</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The opportunities to participate depend on the openness of the political structure in the local community. Four statements included on the questionnaire measured whether the local political structure provided opportunities for community members to participate in the tourism development process. These opportunities are synonymous with channels of communication as stated in Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher’s (2005) study of community participation. The measurement items included in the current study are “Tourism officials host meetings or other forums,” “Tourism officials are interested in hearing my opinions,” “Tourism officials represent my interests in terms of tourism development,” “Tourism officials provide opportunities for me to be represented in decision-making bodies.”

The survey was conducted across different communities in Charleston, South Carolina. After data collection, the data were manually entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) where initial analyses on the demographic information of respondents were conducted. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was then performed in Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) software to test the hypothesized relationships among the constructs and the overall fit of the proposed model. SEM contains two major components of analysis: confirmatory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis (Byrne 2001). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to determine latent constructs based on observed variables, while regression analysis was used to interpret the relationships among the latent constructs. The former is necessary for examining the validity of measurement scales while the latter is important for testing the proposed hypotheses.

Findings

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The final sample was composed of 54.5% (156) males and 45.5% (130) females. The majority of the respondents (95.5%) were not employed in tourism. Among the 13 respondents who are working in the tourism industry, 2 were working part-time while 11 were working full-time. The average age of respondents was 52 years and most respondents (95%) were 30 years or older. More than one-third of respondent households (38.3%) make $40,000 to $79,999, about a quarter of respondents (23.5%) make $100,000 or more, and 10.7% make $30,000 to $39,999 a year before taxes. More than half of the respondents (58.1%) had received a degree from a 4-year college or institution for higher education.

Assessment of Reliability and Validity of Measurement Scale

The reliability of each factor was determined using Cronbach’s alpha. A low alpha coefficient suggests the item has a low contribution to its construct (Churchill 1979). Cronbach’s alpha values of all measurement scales in the

Table 2. Paired Sample Means Difference Test between Respondents and Nonrespondents (n = 31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Response Type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am familiar with tourism development</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know a lot about tourism in my community</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how I can participate in tourism development</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how I can participate in tourism development</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I wanted to, I could easily participate in tourism development</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I wanted to, I could easily participate in tourism development</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I offer ideas to officials about tourism</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I offer ideas to officials about tourism</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would protest against the volume of tourists in my community in</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order to protect our environment</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would sign a petition to limit the number of tourists in my</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community in order to protect my way of life</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel at home in this community</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel at home in this community</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My community is not a good place to do the things I most like to do</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My community's residents should have a fair share of benefits from</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourism</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is acceptable for the government to invest money to improve visitor</td>
<td>Nonrespondents</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences</td>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
current study were larger than .80, indicating satisfactory reliability of the constructs (see Table 3).

Construct validity was assessed by both convergent and discriminant validity. The convergent validity of the measurement scales was examined by using $t$-tests (Bollen 1989), in which a statistically significant contribution of an item to its posited underlying construct indicates adequate convergent validity (Marsh and Grayson 1995). The results of $t$-tests suggested that all measurement scales used in the current study had satisfactory convergent validity. The discriminant validity was examined by monitoring the intercorrelations among variables. The discriminant validity is problematic when the correlation between two variables is greater than .85 (Kline 2005). It was found in the current study that all correlations were lower than .85. Accordingly, the validity of measurement scales has been established.

**Model Fitting and Hypotheses Testing**

Before testing the model fitting and hypotheses, a normality test was first conducted to determine if the data were normally distributed. The results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests (Massey 1951) in SPSS suggested that the data were not normal ($p < .001$). Further investigations in AMOS also indicated mild ($< ±3$) skewness and kurtosis of the data. Therefore, maximum likelihood (ML), recommended to be a robust estimator when fitting the model to moderate nonnormal data (Muthén and Kaplan 1992), was used for testing model fitting and hypothesized relationships in AMOS.

Since chi-square ($\chi^2$) is sensitive to sample size (Byrne 2001), the fit of the proposed model with the data was examined by using the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger and Lind 1980) and the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler 1990). The RMSEA was .058 and CFI was .933 in this study (Table 4), which met the minimum requirement of model fit recommended by Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, and Müller (2003; .05 < RMSEA ≤ .08) and Bentler (1990; CFI > .9), respectively. Therefore, both fit indices suggested that the model had an acceptable fit to the data.

Further effort was invested in testing the hypothesized relationships among the constructs in the MOA model. The

---

**Table 3. Cronbach’s Alphas of Measurement Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement Scales Loading</th>
<th>Coefficient $\alpha$</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived tourism benefits</td>
<td>.860</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to my community</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe tourism is good for my community’s economy</td>
<td>.908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism diversifies the economy in my community</td>
<td>.796</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like tourism because it brings new income to communities</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism creates new markets for our local products</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity</strong></td>
<td>.809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism officials host meetings or other forums</td>
<td>.737</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism officials are interested in hearing my opinions</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism officials represent my interests in terms of tourism development</td>
<td>.811</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism officials provide opportunities for me to be represented in decision-making bodies</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability</strong></td>
<td>.854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fully aware of the issues related to tourism development in my community</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep up with the news regarding tourism development</td>
<td>.869</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am familiar with tourism development</td>
<td>.872</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive information about tourism development in my community</td>
<td>.745</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>.836</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know a lot about tourism in my community</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have knowledge about tourists in my community</td>
<td>.820</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know about the likely impacts of tourism</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know a lot about my community</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how I can participate in tourism development</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation levels</strong></td>
<td>.902</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I contribute to tourism decision making in my community</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my opinions with officials regarding tourism</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I provide assistance/resources for tourism development</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I initiate contacts with tourism officials whenever necessary</td>
<td>.872</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I meet with officials to discuss tourism issues</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do what is asked by tourism office/officials</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participation
Proposed model
Benefits/
Regr
output (sustainable tourism (Simmons 1994; Choi and Sirakaya not only as a fundamental principle of democracy but also to indirect related to their daily life has been widely accepted and participation in tourism development and participation that there would be a positive relationship between the ability to participate in activities that are directly or indirectly related to their daily life has been widely accepted.

Table 4. Estimation of Fit Indices of the Proposed Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$ (df)</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed model</td>
<td>494.5 (247)</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index.

Table 5. Hypotheses Testing Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regression Paths</th>
<th>Standard Path Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Critical Ratio ($t$)</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation → Participation</td>
<td>-.251</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>-4.379</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity → Participation</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>5.803</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability → Participation</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>6.520</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

test results are illustrated in Table 4. Hypothesis 1 examined the relationship between perceived benefits of tourism and participation in tourism development. It was hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between these two constructs. Although the AMOS output suggested there was a statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($p < .001$; Table 5), the direction of the relationship was negative rather than positive. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was rejected by the data. One possible explanation for this result is that despite some perceived benefits of tourism, the costs of tourism may have outweighed the benefits and thus caused some community members to be unwilling to participate in tourism development.

Hypothesis 2 tested the positive relationship between the opportunity to participate in tourism development and participation levels. This hypothesis was supported by the test result ($p < .001$). The results of Hypothesis 3 suggest that there would be a positive relationship between the ability to participate in tourism development and participation levels. This hypothesis was also supported by the AMOS output ($p < .001$).

Discussion

Historically, public participation has typically been discussed in political science and sustainable land use literatures (Buchy and Hoverman 2000). However, recognition of the public’s right to participate in activities that are directly or indirectly related to their daily life has been widely accepted not only as a fundamental principle of democracy but also to sustainable tourism (Simmons 1994; Choi and Sirakaya 2005). The tendency to utilize public participation in agencies’ decision making is evident in diverse areas, including forest planning (e.g., Buchy and Hoverman 2000), landscape planning (e.g., Dearden 1981), park management (e.g., Speller and Ravenscroft 2005), water resource management (e.g., Smith 2002), and community tourism planning (e.g., Jamal and Getz 1995). It is the intention of this study to integrate the means of participation with the ends of participation in one theoretical framework to enhance understanding of community participation in the tourism context.

The integration was enabled by using the MOA framework. Using this model as a basis of the analysis, motivation, opportunity, and the ability to participate were theorized as the three antecedents of participation. A mail survey was subsequently conducted in South Carolina to test the model, and the MOA model was found to have an acceptable fit to the data. This suggests that the extent to which community members participate in the tourism development process depends on motivation, opportunity, and the ability to participate. However, careful interpretation of the results is needed owing to the negative relationship between the perceived benefits of tourism and the level of participation. Despite the various benefits of tourism noted in past studies, such as generating income and creating job opportunities (Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams 1997; Ritchie 1988), the failure to support Hypothesis 1 in the current study suggests that community members may not always participate in tourism even though they think tourism benefits the community. Several reasons might have contributed to this negative relationship. First, although a perceived benefit is one of the major factors behind residents’ support of tourism development (Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal 2002), it is not the only factor influencing their attitudes. Perceived costs of tourism should also be taken into consideration as a motivator to participate. This notion is supported by exchange theory, which has been applied to residents’ attitudes studies to explain community reactions toward tourism development (Ap 1990; Gursoy, Uysal, and Williams 1997; Lindberg and Johnson 1997; Teye, Sirakaya, and Sonmez 2002). This theory suggests that residents are more likely to support community tourism development when the perceived benefits outweigh the perceived costs. Various costs of tourism have been recorded in past studies, including overdevelopment of tourism, increasing crime rates, and creating negative environmental impacts (Sirakaya, Jamal, and Choi 2001; Mathieson and Wall 1982). Therefore, it is likely in this study that despite the number of benefits perceived by community members, the perceived costs of tourism might have outweighed the benefits and, thus, led to a lack of participation by community members. Future studies should include perceived costs of tourism in their investigations to examine if this is the case.

Second, although residents may realize some benefits from tourism activity in their community, these benefits accrue to...
the whole community rather than to individuals. In other words, residents are not the direct beneficiaries of tourism development. In accordance with consumer behavior literature (Petty, Ummava, and Strathman 1991), it is suggested that the perceived benefits of tourism should be personally relevant to community members in order to motivate them to participate in tourism development. Therefore, in future studies, the measurement scale of the perceived benefits of tourism may need to be personalized rather than generalized to the whole community.

Another possible reason for the negative relationship between perceived tourism benefits and participation levels could be due to community members’ lack of interest in participating in tourism (Goodson 2003). Despite the benefits they are receiving from tourism, community members may think tourism officials will take care of local tourism, and it is not necessary for them to become involved in the decision-making process. Future research could examine this possibility.

Hypothesis 2 tested the relationship between the political structure and the level of community participation in tourism. The support of this hypothesis suggests that the level of participation is influenced by the openness of the local political structure in supporting the general public’s involvement in tourism decision making. This result provides some evidence to Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher’s (2005) notion that the channel of communication is both an initial step and a basic criterion of community participation. The lack of opportunity to participate in tourism development as a result of a top-down governing structure may act as an obstacle to interested parties. Although it has been noted in the literature that the evolution of governing has shifted toward a more participatory approach in the Western world (Timothy 1999), this change may not be equally applicable to developing countries. For instance, Tosun (2001) identified six major constraints to community participation in Turkey, including a one-party political system. Therefore, despite the important role communication plays in community participation, community members are unlikely to take part in tourism development unless there is a shift in the local political paradigm.

Hypothesis 3 tested the relationship between community members’ ability to participate in tourism and their level of participation. The results of this study indicate that the level of awareness and knowledge of tourism development have a positive influence on community members’ participation. Therefore, even though the local political system is open to public participation, community members may not participate due to a low level of awareness and knowledge of tourism. This finding is in accordance with Jamal and Getz’s (1999) notion that both the right and the ability to participate should be present for community participation to occur. Education via various means such as television broadcasting, newspapers, and pamphlets may be effective mechanisms in increasing the public’s awareness and knowledge of tourism development locally (Simmons 1994; Timothy and Tosun 2003). Since the current study examined only two aspects of the public’s ability to participate in tourism, namely their awareness and knowledge of tourism, future studies may examine the influences other aspects of ability, such as financial resources, travel experience, and accessibility to information have on the level of participation.

Conclusions

Two points must be made at this juncture. First, the philosophy of community participation has stimulated a vast amount of research. Most researchers have adopted this new concept of tourism and are applying it to a variety of destinations. The proliferation of case studies in this area has provided the basis to integrate these fragmented pieces together and combine two streams of research (means and ends approaches) into one model. Second, traditional community participation research has focused on the ways in which public participation improves tourism planning and decision making and how the process can be facilitated through various participation techniques. The model proposed in the current study and its associated hypotheses views participation from the standpoint of participants and addresses the factors that determine whether residents would participate and, if they participate, how their participation behavior would be influenced.

The purpose of this study was to propose and test the efficacy of an alternative theoretical framework for participation in community tourism development. Motivation, opportunity, and ability have been proposed to be critical factors in determining participation decisions. It is argued that these three elements are the three antecedents of participation and that different intensities of each antecedent can lead to different levels of participation. This argument was supported by the data, with the exception of a negative relationship found between perceived tourism benefits and the level of community participation. The acceptable fit of model to the data further suggests that the MOA model can be a succinct framework to analyze factors influencing a decision to participate in community tourism development.

The MOA model of community participation contributes to current literature in two ways. From a theoretical perspective, the MOA model synthesizes participation research by emphasizing commonalities found in studies from several fields, including advertising, consumer behavior, tourism, and public participation. Moreover, initial tests provide evidence that favors the efficacy of the model. In a practical sense, the model can be applied to tourism destinations with the purpose of enabling or facilitating community participation. Then tourism developers can identify specific reasons for a lack of participation. Predictions of community participation levels can be made based on the analysis of the presence/absence and the various levels of motivation,
opportunity, and ability. Based on the predictions, strategies for inhibiting/facilitating community participation can be developed and implemented. The MOA model can be manipulated based on tourism developers’ needs and purposes. For instance, if a lack of opportunity is identified as a major factor leading to nonparticipation, the planning agency may consider holding public meetings, or introducing a mechanism that promotes public participation. In some cases, the public may not be aware of opportunities to participate. It is important to communicate these opportunities to the public through various media sources such as television, leaflets, and public communiqués.

The MOA model should be further tested in different contexts. The measurement of the constructs should be further refined given the reasons provided in the previous section. The analysis of the stated hypotheses across different communities will provide a broader view as to how different characteristics of communities could lead to a variety of participation levels. Alterations to the conditions under which participation decisions are made can be observed and their influences should be analyzed. Longitudinal research both within one community and across different communities could also prove to be beneficial.

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