

**POSSIBILITIES AND CONSTRAINTS TO DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL-SCALE
ENTREPRENEURS THAT CATER FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN
NGAMILAND DISTRICT OF NORTHERN
BOTSWANA**



Kabo Modimootsile

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Department of Sociology and Human Geography
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ABSTRACT

The objective of my study is to examine possibilities and constraints that small entrepreneurs in handicrafts enterprises in Ngamiland District face in terms of establishment, growth and development of their activities and to discuss measures that could be taken to overcome the constraints that they face. A network-oriented approach is applied and the methodology is quantitative.

The study notes that the problems surrounding small handicraft enterprises are linked to poor access to finance and lack of education and training. This has negative consequences for marketing skills and entrepreneurship. Other constraints are competition from cheaper products from neighbouring countries and lack of raw materials.

The attitude of the small handicrafts entrepreneurs towards the intervention by the government in the production and marketing of crafts is a negative one. They hold that, government has over the past years failed to provide the necessary assistance and support. At the same time the link between government and NGOs has been noted to be weak and characterized by poor information flow.

This study suggests that tourism strategies should effectively address the problems of those activities it seeks to embrace. Therefore, new strategies and policies are needed that will contribute to the ability of the small handicrafts entrepreneurs to increase the control they have over their activities as well as their relation with each other. Networks as a form of social capital are regarded as important in order to afford services that are beyond their reach as individuals, such as marketing and transporting of raw materials. In addition, cultural tourism may help the small entrepreneurs to obtain a better footing in the market.

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This study is dedicated to my niece Katlego Modimootsile.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Private-sector development as a suitable alternative for promoting sustainable and balanced development in Africa has attracted considerable attention. Many governments and development organizations have focused on the promotion of small-scale enterprises as a way of encouraging broader participation in the private sector. The small-scale sector has a strategic role in Botswana's national economy on account of its potential for generating income and employment as well as promoting equity in income distribution. The definition of small-scale enterprises in Botswana is derived from the University of Botswana study by Rempel et al. (in Lisenda 1997:2) that 'a small-scale enterprise covers unincorporated enterprises that are not regulated, which produce goods or services, and engage a maximum of 10 employees, and are accommodated in permanent or semi-permanent structures'. The central policy thrust for Botswana's development plans have been diversification away from dependence on diamonds and agriculture. The governor of the Bank of Botswana is cited as follows; 'the need to diversify the economy is justified for several reasons. Amongst the most important is the need to avoid the high risk associated with prices and demand for that commodity or part of a broader economic cycles; to increase employment, since, being highly capital intensive, mining has not made significant contribution to employment' (Country report 2003:58). The unbalanced nature of the economy that is heavily dependent on mining makes the government eager to diversify the economy.

There is an increasing interest in micro businesses and small entrepreneurs operating in the tourism industry in developing countries. 'To adequately respond to the need for more sustainable developments on the one hand and changing consumer taste in the tourism-generating areas on the other hand, new forms of tourist industry are required that consist of small-scale, dispersed, low density tourism developments located in and organized by communities where it is hoped they will foster more meaningful interaction between tourists and local residents' (Brohman in Dahles & Bras 1999:2).

1.1 Statement of purpose

The objective of my study is to examine opportunities and constraints that small entrepreneurs in the handicrafts enterprises face in terms of establishment, growth and development of their activities and to discuss measures that could be taken to overcome the constraints that they face.

The focus is on small entrepreneurs in the Ngamiland District that cater for the tourist industry. Small-scale handicraft¹ enterprises covers in this case local artisans either working individually, sell their own products as well as buy from others and resell to local villagers, but in most cases to visitors coming to their village. At the same time it incorporates cooperatives producing, marketing, and selling on their own via their locally based craft shops. Development of an economic activity is understood as ways by which proprietors strive to upgrade their small businesses. Upgrading here will be in terms of improvement in design, quality, and marketing strategies.

Opportunities and constraints will be discussed in light of entrepreneurial and managerial skills as well as access to credit, training and competition from imports of handicrafts from neighbouring countries. Entrepreneurial skills has to do with ones ability to build and manage an enterprise for the pursuit of profit in the course of which he/she innovates and takes risks, as the outcome of an innovation is usually not certain. While managerial skills incorporates more defined human resource skills including: planning and goal setting, financial management, and the ability to ‘manage’ enterprises effectively (Morrison et al. 1999)

The role of government policies in order to promote handicrafts activities within the tourism industry in its efforts towards economic diversification will be examined because this affects the opportunities of the small-scale handicrafts entrepreneurs. The same applies to involvement of NGOs that seek to promote handicrafts activities. According to Bras and Dahles (1999) networks are considered the fundamental survival route of small firms because of the benefit they may offer in terms of cost advantages, marketing, information access, and flexibility. A network-oriented production is considered appropriate to a production in which the transfer of knowledge and innovation

¹ Handicraft-refers to any functional or non-functional product of artistic or ethnographic value, made by hand with the use of simple tools and equipment, and having the potential for sale (Terry 2000)

diffusion is essential. Within this frame my study assesses the extent to which small handicrafts entrepreneurs are locally embedded and relate to other local enterprises in exchange of products and services. My study uses a qualitative research method, which is defined as a method that allows the acquisition of 'insider knowledge' through interaction, observation, and informal in-depth interviews (Limb and Dwyer 2001).

The government of Botswana sees tourism as a major area for economic diversification. Product diversification is crucial for long-term tourism development in the country, which by far owes its success to the unique wildlife that remains the outstanding tourist attraction for the international and regional markets. According to Bentinck (2002) the necessity for product diversification opens up possibilities to increase the participation of citizens in the productive ownership and management of tourism enterprises, which is also set as an objective in the National Policy on Economic Opportunities. Because these enterprises in their majority will be of small and medium scale, business opportunities will be provided for a relatively large number of Botswana. A report on craft market surveys conducted by the Department of Industrial Affairs (2003) reveals that locally produced crafts are increasingly on demand by tourists, therefore, such conditions presents great potential for the handicraft entrepreneurs in Botswana.

An attempt to further broaden the tourism offer is already underway, taking such heading as '*ecotourism*'. The International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people. In Botswana ecotourism refers to the country's cultural, as well as natural heritage, and that great importance is placed on the active involvement (as opposed to mere participation) of host communities and other Botswana in all aspects of the industry's management and development' (Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy 2002:5). Efforts are being made by the government to sensitize the community about the importance of tourism and how it can be of benefit to them. The study therefore, review strategies aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and facilitating access to credit by small entrepreneurs.

Shaw & Williams (in Bra & Dahles 1999) indicate that most of the literature on the economic potential of tourism has paid little attention to the role of entrepreneurial

activity and in particular, to the entrepreneurial culture that emerges in different economies. They further indicate that apart from the general discussions of the impact of transnational organizations, the literature does not offer much with particular respect to the role and position of small and medium-sized business in the tourism industry. A further review illustrates how scholars have repeatedly pleaded for more research on a small-scale entrepreneurship in tourism. Such forms of tourist industry depend on ownership patterns that are in favor of local, in most cases family-owned, relatively small businesses rather than foreign-owned transnational and other outside capital. Putting more emphasis on smaller scale, local ownership means that tourism may increase multiplier effects and spread effects within the host community thereby preventing problems of excessive foreign exchange leakages. An assumption is made that small-scale tourism developments and active resident involvement in the ownership and operation of facilities are 'much likely to enhance local tolerance to tourism activities, and can respond more effectively to changes in the market place' (Echtner in Dahles & Bras 1999:2).

In many developing countries national governments promote tourism as a vehicle of development, although the role that these governments attribute to the participation of small and micro entrepreneurs in this development is highly limited. Government policies towards the local tourism sector vary widely. Tourism development is often directed towards large-scale investments in cooperation with transnational enterprises and project developers, while enterprises at the micro level are in most cases neglected. There is often limited attention directed towards small-scale enterprises. Ngahu (1992) is of the view that there is need to address the overall policy framework to ensure that the policy instruments are consistent with key objectives. In some cases, there appears to be an obvious contradiction between policy and implementation. In his view policy implementation in most developing countries does not always improve those lives or activities it seeks to improve. In light of empirical data, my study assesses the extent to which some of the business viability objectives and proposed actions set under the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) have been successfully addressed over the past years.

1.2 The study area

This study was carried out in the Ngamiland District in the northwest of Botswana, covering the village of Maun, Gumare, Etsha 6, and Shorobe that share a similar landscape as well as traditional beliefs and cultural practices. Ngamiland District covers an area approximately 109,500 square kilometers with a total population of 124,712 (CSO, 2002). Within the Ngamiland lies the Okavango River Delta, Botswana's pride and joy. The natural formations of the delta have influenced the location of different ethnic groups in the region. According to Balfour and Daryl (1998), the Okavango river can be traced back from the uplands of Angola where it embarks on a 1 600- kilometers journey south-eastwards, flowing across Namibia's Caprivi region and into Botswana, where it spreads out into several channels, lagoons, and swampy islands commonly referred to as the Okavango Delta. The rapid growth of tourism in the Okavango Delta provides opportunity for small handicrafts related businesses within the above-mentioned communities. Maun, the administrative headquarters of Ngamiland (pronounced 'Maoong ') meaning 'the place of the reeds' is the main tourist destination and a transit to the Okavango swamplands and the Moremi game reserve to the north, and towards the great sandveld wildernesses of the south. Several safari firms can be found in Maun together with a collection of ancillary services. It is within this locality that one can organize an Okavango lodge holiday or a mobile safari, game viewing, mokoro excursions, birding, fishing or hunting expeditions, hire a Land-Rover or Powerboat, as well as charter an aircraft. Maun has a number of outlets that sell curios to tourists together with other related items needed for a completely exciting wilderness holiday.

The villages of Gumare, Etsha 6 and Shorobe form peripherals where a number of skilled artisans are found, either working individually or together in a group. These artisans are largely involved in basketry. The Botswana Christian Council in Etsha 6 serves as a collecting and marketing agency for hand made crafts produced by the community. While in Gumare you can find 'Ngwao Boswa', a cooperative run mostly by the Bayei women. However, there was not any organized group in the village of Shorobe at the time of research, but only individual home based artisans. Shorobe Baskets, which serves as a marketing outlet for the local artisans was apparently closed due to managerial reasons.

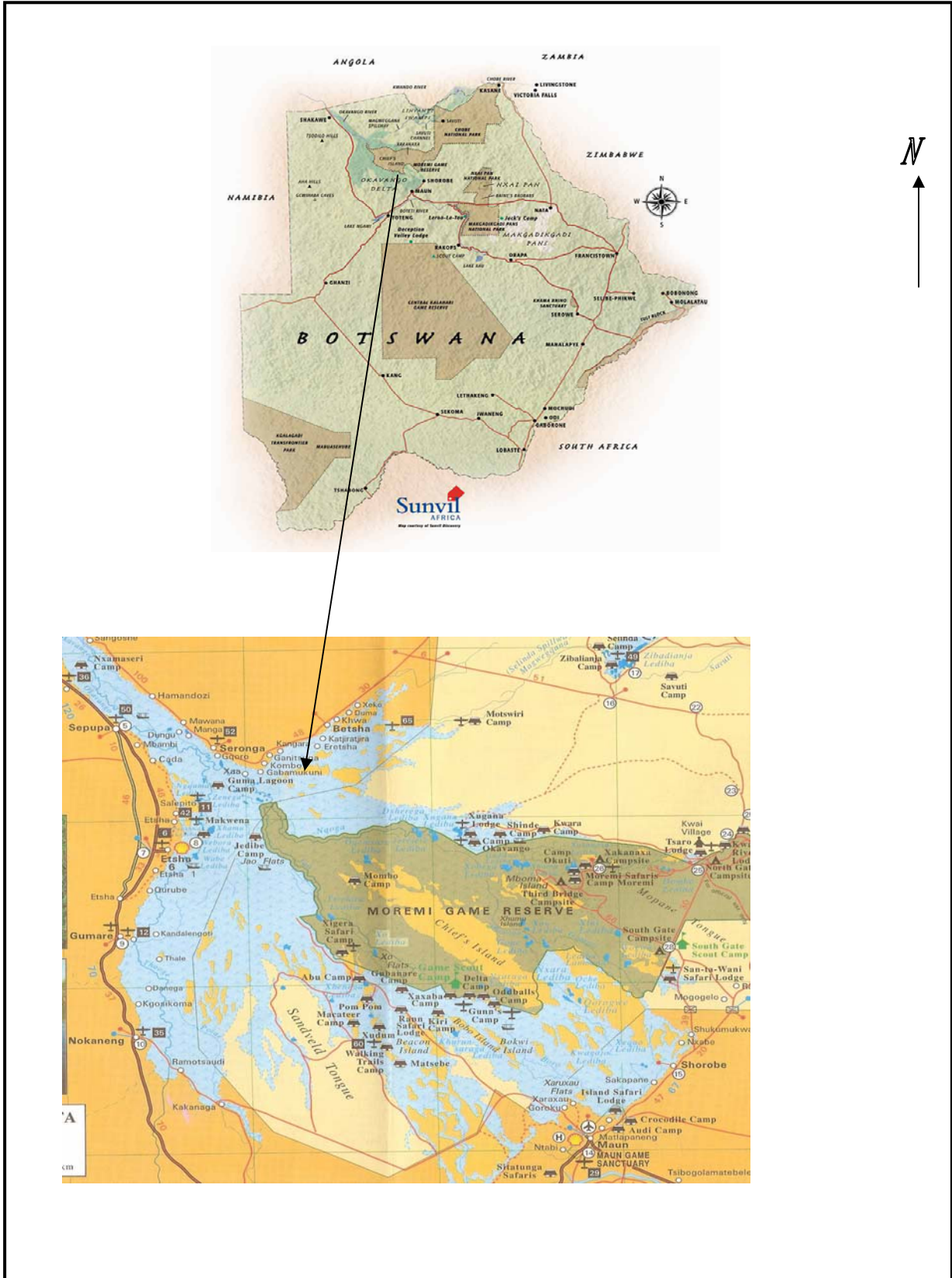


Figure 1. Map showing the location of Ngamiland District around the Okavango Delta

The Ngamiland District as a study area was mainly selected on the basis that most of the literature on crafts put more emphasis on the commercialization of baskets in the region only. Little is mentioned with regards to other crafts produced and the difficulties encountered in production, marketing and other related issues that may impede growth within the craft industry. According to Mbaiwa (2003), the Ngamiland District plan 5:1997-2003 highlight handicrafts as an important economic activity for households in the Ngamiland, more especially in the Gumare-Etsha area. The Bayei and Bambukushu are identified within the plan as the main producers of baskets. However, Mbaiwa (2003) noted that the same plan mentions little of other handicrafts such as beadworks, leather crafts, and woodcarving produced by the Basarwa and Herero in the Xaiaxi-Dobe-Qangwa area.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 deals with the introduction of the study. It covers background of the study, problem statement, research questions, and a brief description of the study area. Chapter 2 outlines the development of crafts in Botswana, with particular reference to Ngamiland District. It also gives a global perspective on the commercialization of craft. Chapter 3 discusses the analytical framework, highlighting the aspect of network-relations and embeddedness. Chapter 4 outlines methods of data collection as well as validity and reliability of the study. Chapters 5 covers tourism policies, past and present financial schemes, and strategies towards tourism business development, local empowerment, entrepreneurship, work relations and industrial collaboration. It addresses the role played by the Government and NGO sectors in promoting small handicrafts businesses in Botswana. The data are presented in chapter 6 with emphasis on those factors that promote and impede the development of handicrafts entrepreneurs. In chapter 7 they are discussed in light of the National Ecotourism Strategy and network aspect. Chapter 8 offers the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT OF THE HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY IN BOTSWANA

2.1 Cultural Tourism in Botswana

According to Mbaiwa (2002) cultural tourism in the Okavango Delta and Botswana in general is still at an infant stage of development. This is attributed to the fact that wildlife resources and the wilderness experience in the Okavango and Chobe areas contribute a major part towards Botswana's tourism industry. He identified several resources such as museums, national monuments, historical sites and, ruins, rock paintings, cultural events, sports and recreational activities which has not been documented as far as their potential contribution to the tourism sector is concerned. A further observation is made to the extent that in addition to the inadequate worker-employee relationship, there is limited interaction between operators and locals in the areas around the Okavango Delta, also between tourists and the host communities. In a number of cases tourists are flown directly to their various luxurious camps within the Delta, and such tourists hardly crash at any of the local lodges or hotels in the village. Mbaiwa (2002) states that such arrangements reduce the interaction with the local people and further limit chances of tourists spending money in the village. This also risks creating an impression that the Okavango Delta and the Chobe regions are completely wilderness areas without human beings.

In marketing the Okavango Delta as a tourist destination in developed countries, Mbaiwa (2002) identified that a lot of emphasis is placed on the nature of wilderness without drawing attention to the socio-cultural and economic structure of the inhabitants in the region and Botswana as a whole. Such a strategy to some extent can be blamed for the poorly developed cultural tourism in the Okavango area. However efforts are being made to promote cultural tourism through the recently introduced Community-Based Organizations. Such organizations appeal to tourists through traditional villages. Various activities amongst which include 'mekoro' excursions are being used for the benefit of the community within the Delta. 'Mokoro' is a traditional canoe made out of wood, and it is used as a mode of transportation mostly by the operators in the upper Okavango River and tourists camps along the Boro and Santadibe Channels. 'Mekoro' safaris attract a

considerable number of international tourists and it is on this basis that quite a number of safari companies in the Okavango Delta and community trusts such as the Okavango Poler's emerged. Such traditional mode of transportation is directed towards cultural tourism development. Cooper et al. (in Mbaiwa 2002:73) indicated, 'tourism can stimulate interests in, and conserves aspects of, the host's cultural heritage. If tourists appreciate the cultural heritage of a destination, that appreciation can stimulate the host's pride in their heritage and foster local crafts, traditions and customs'. Mbaiwa (2002) further identified the Okavango as one of the areas in Botswana that is rich in culture due to its culturally diversified society and cultural sites such as the Tsodilo Hills commonly known for its rock paintings and the Drosky or Xwihaba caves. In his article entitled *Prospects of Basket Production in Promoting Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in the Okavango Delta*, Mbaiwa (2004) suggests that a comprehensive and integrated approach should be developed that would recognize the role of cultural tourism and further make it part of the growing tourism industry in the Okavango Delta.

2.2 Crafts- a global perspective

According to the South African Craft Industry Report (1998), the history behind the development of 'craft' is closely linked to the evolution of European society. Therefore, it is criticized primarily as a western construct. Handcrafted goods from Africa or Eastern countries were historically referred to as 'primitive' art. This is symbolic of the widespread cultural bias found throughout accounts of modern history. The report further states that the definition of craft can be viewed as a political act closely linked to issues of class and culture. It holds that the commercialization of crafts is dominated by the First World. More than half of all artisan products imported by developed countries can be traced back to other developed countries. The dominance of the international craft sector by First World countries is attributed to the existence of well-resourced producers, a consumer base with large disposable income, and developed institutional arrangements. In the United States, the craft industry is supported by the Home Industries Association (HIA), the Association of Crafts and Creative Industries (ACCI), the Southwest and Hobby Association (SWCHA) as well as 70 craft societies overseeing the sector nationally. This includes bodies such as Aid to Artisans (ATA) that operate

internationally. Many of the art societies address the needs and interest of artisans and crafters. The report revealed that craft sectors in developing countries tend to have poor resource bases, limited institutional support structures, and strongly rely on aid to build the craft sector as well as market their crafts.

2.3 Craft Industry in Botswana

According to Terry (2000) craft industry can be traced back to 1968 when Botswana Producers Association (BPA) was established. The BPA comprises various organizers of craft producing centers around Botswana. In their attempt to formulate a co-operative, BPA met with failure. However, Botswanacraft Development Trust (BDT) was set up instead. The objective of the Trust was to receive and administer funds that include an initial share capital of R10,000² received from one donor agency to the government of Botswana. The arrangement was short-lived as the relationship between the two became sour. This was attributed to the fact that producers felt that there was mismanagement of funds by the BDT, while at the same time the producers were seen as ineffective. Ultimately the new Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) was given the responsibility to ensure effective use of funds. In 1970 through combined efforts, BPA saw their dream being realized when Botswanacraft Marketing Company was officially created. Terry (2000) further notes that a number of technical advisors came in place from 1972 throughout 1977.

The advisors, amongst which include marketing as well as management experts and product development advisors, were financed through the International Trade Centre. One of the advisors was supposed to organize all the craft workshops dealing specifically with production of contemporary crafts such as ceramics and weaving. The workshops were also aimed at increasing the market of traditional handicrafts produced in remote areas. Various products produced were sent to Botswanacraft. Some individuals, worked part time for Botswanacraft as middlemen between the producers and Botswanacraft. 'Kgotla' meetings were held from time to time in respective villages to address problems, design changes, and dates of next purchasing. Efforts to further assist producers with design and development of new products by Botswanacraft further continued through the

² 1 ZAR= 0.165 USD

assistance of Michael Yoffe, a handicraft development and marketing expert. He succeeded in upgrading the quality of baskets as well as naming of particular basket designs. In addition, the basket buying system based on quality and size using a specially made tape measure was developed. Attempts to broaden the market exports of crafts were met with success when Diana Jolin who used to work for Botswanacraft set up a show at the San Diego Museum of Man in California. After this, exports to the United States followed through the help of wholesale agents who came to Botswana twice per year to purchase crafts (Terry 2000). Botswanacraft, which has been under private sector ownership for the past seven has gained a lot of recognition. Other organizations also came into the picture during the 1980s to help promote craft production more especially in the rural areas. This includes: Gantsicraft, Kuru Development Trust, Zutswa Crafts, Kung San Works, Chobe Crafts, and Serowe Woodcarvers (Terry 2000).

2.4 Types of Crafts

There are different types of crafts produced in Botswana. According to Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) handicraft production in Botswana comprises the following: basketry, beadwork, skin work, leatherwork, carving, weaving, textiles, pottery, and jewellery. Groth et al. (1992) note that most of the above mentioned crafts are produced from local raw material that can be secured from the surrounding environment. Such impressive knowledge of craftwork has been discovered among different ethnic groups. Traditionally crafts were used for household as well as communal benefits. Clothes and shoes were made from leather skins; weavers produced baskets for winnowing, carrying and storage of grain. Further more blacksmiths specialized in the production of hoes, axes, knives and other tools. There were also products made from wood such as carved handles, and furniture. In order to preserve such knowledge and continue to serve local interests, the elders passed such skill from one generation to another. However, as time progresses various communities saw the benefits underlying commercialization of their products (Groth et al. 1992). A study on Rural Industries and Energy Development in Botswana carried out by Groth et al. (1992) revealed several crafts produced and places where they can be found. Pottery, which is dominant in the Southern District, is amongst the crafts identified. Such products include: traditional pots, ash trays, flower pots, and candle

holders. Artisans involved in this type of craftwork were found in large numbers mainly in areas with adequate clay supply. The woman in the village, who were dominant within such activities, kept the methods used for production as traditional as possible. Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) notes that not many potters exist in Botswana; about 40 potters are predicted to be still actively producing pottery in the Southern and North East districts. Another category of crafts produced from by-products such as ostrich eggshells and animal skins are jewellery and leather products. Due to the nature of raw material used such crafts were mainly concentrated in areas with easy access to wildlife and other natural resources. Groth et al. (1992) discovered the producers to be of Basarwa origin occupying the Kgalagadi District and leaving in smaller settlements that provide the needed raw material. Females did jewellery making while the male produced leather handicrafts. White (in Groth et al. 1992:26) states, 'In economic terms, skin (leather and fur) work is by far the most important craft activity in Kgalagadi District'. This argument (Groth et al. 1992) might to some extent be relevant for both Ghanzi Districts and Western Ngwaketse (western parts of Southern Districts). Some of the leather products include: fur mats, bags, belts, and hats, while jewellery products comprise necklaces, belts, bracelets and decorations.

Groth et al. (1992) revealed that several problems emerged that limit production of the above-mentioned. An increase in wildlife control regulations lowered production, more especially in remote areas. Another contributing factor was drought, which seriously disturbed game in their hunting areas. At the same time product range and quality played a role. Due to insufficient raw material, quality and range of designs declined. As a result, a lot of products did not reach the market that was also very poor. Woodcarving was found in the Southern region, though not highly regarded. Much of it was identified in the North East region, and partly in the North West. Mortars and pestles were amongst the wood products found in the Southern Districts. North Eastern region offered better quality products. This is attributed to the fact that timber in the area is of better quality coupled with advanced carving skills. Products include: mortars and pestles, ashtrays, candleholders, spoons, sugar basins, and walking sticks. Basket making found in the Ngamiland was also amongst the craft identified. Women around Letlhakane in the Southern Region also produced baskets at a very small-scale. Groth et al. (1992)

further note that baskets made out of synthetic material such as plastic orange bags were found in the North East region. Though the materials used for production were different, the skills reflect that found in Ngamiland. In the earlier days producers in the North East region could easily get 'mokolwane' (raw material used for baskets) since they traded with Basarwa in exchange for grain and clothing. Unfortunately, the introduction of game and livestock control fences has since broken down the trading relations resulting in limited material for basket making. Groth et al. (1992) suggest that since producers in these regions are willing to use alternative sources to 'mokolwane', such efforts should be explored.

2.5 Craft Development and Marketing activities in the Ngamiland District

Potten (in Terry 2000) traced the development of crafts and commercialization of baskets in the Ngamiland District back to the late 1960s or early 1970s. It was at the time when Botswana craft came in place due to an influx of Bambukushu refugees from Angola to Etsha 6. Terry (2000) noted that being refugees, the Mbukushu were prohibited from seeking formal employment under Botswana law. However, the World Council of Churches (WCC) refugee resettlements officer at the time identified the skills held by the Mbukushu in basketry and woodwork. Based on his discovery, he then made recommendation for the people to supplement their agricultural activities with craftwork that had the potential to generate income. Thomas (in Terry 2000:9) is cited as follows 'A fair cross-section of the items produced by the people at Etsha 6 were collected together and taken to Botswana Game Industry (BGI) in Francistown, for evaluation regarding their marketability and wholesale. It was found that there was a small market for the goods, and after discussion, prices for each individual item were agreed upon'. Following such evaluation, a number of baskets and other craft were gathered for sale in Francistown. Terry (2000) mentioned that in realizing the marketing potential of basket making, Bayei women from neighboring villages joined the Bambukushu thereby bringing their baskets to Etsha 6 to be purchased by the World Council of Churches officer. According to Mbaiwa (2003) the income generating potential for basket making attracted other ethnic groups as well. He further emphasized that this commercialization of basket making in Ngamiland resulted in weavers shifting their basket production from

agricultural and household utilization. Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) notes that about 98% of the weavers produced baskets with the motive to sell and earn money in the villages of Etsha, Gumare and Tubu.

Terry (2000) further indicated that Botswana Game Industry (BGI) initially help market crafts from Etsha 6 purchasing approximately R150 worth of handicrafts monthly. The cost for an average size open basket was about 50 cents. However, in the late 1970 when BGI set up a fishing camp near Shakawe, crafts were then purchased from the Mbukushu women in larger quantities and at lower prices than in Etsha 6. As a result, it was therefore important for the resettlement officer to secure other outlets to help market products from Etsha 6. Thomas (in Mbaiwa 2003) notes that amongst the outlets found include Lekgaba Centre in Francistown, which was an organization that manufactured and retailed crafts and the other one was the Botswanacraft. Due to financial constraints faced by both outlets, Lekgaba Centre was short-lived as it closed down by 1973. Therefore, marketing of crafts from Etsha was done through Botswanacraft. According to Mbaiwa (2003), the literature available shows that Botswanacraft became the main marketing organization of basket products from the 1970s. Large quantities of baskets produced at Etsha 6 as well as the newly established relation with Botswanacraft led to the establishment of a co-operative by the producers in the village managed by the World Council of Churches officer. The arrangement made was that the co-operative financed purchasing and was reimbursed by Botswanacraft as soon as the items arrived in Gaborone (Terry 2000).

Since the officer paid producers in cash, the money was re-directed to the cooperative store that sold groceries, clothes and farming inputs. Producers shopping at the cooperative store earned dividends at the end of each financial year calculated on the value of their purchases throughout the year. According to Mbaiwa (2003), the co-operative stores at Shakawe still function today and in addition producers have opened a petrol station. Crafts from other villages were purchased through Botswanacraft's agents based in Maun. Terry (2000) further mentioned that approximately once every two months all the craft producing villages were reached including Nokaneng, Danega, Habu, Gumare, Tubu, Ikoga, Qangwa, Dobe, and NxaiNxai. Mbaiwa (2003) is of the view that such coverage is a clear indication of how the commercialization of crafts spread from

one village (Etsha 6) to the rest of Ngamiland, more especially those west of the Okavango River and Delta.

Terry (2000) notes that in the early 1980s efforts were made to upgrade the quality and variety of the crafts in Ngamiland and other places in Botswana. A two-week consultancy was sponsored by USAID, in which a craft product development designer recruited few producers in Etsha 6 and Gumare to assist in designing new products. The motive behind was to minimize the use of *Hyphaene petersiana* (mokola) palm. Amongst the crafts produced included square containers, hot mat and coaster sets with a special design that used less palm fibre. The hot mats were made out from *Cocculus Hirsutus* (motsweketsane), while mobiles were made out of palm fibre birds. In 1982 following the completion of Mills' consultancy, Terry signed a four-year contract under the International Volunteer Service (IVS) to work for Botswanacraft as a handicraft Development Advisor (HDA) in Etsha 6 and Gumare village. The HDA was to accomplish the following a) upgrade the basket makers' weaving and designing skills, b) suggest solutions to the increasing raw material problem, c) to promote the development and production of new marketable products, and d) to encourage and improve the organization of the handicraft industry at the village level. The advisor undertook two qualitative surveys, aimed at gathering information on the nature and extent of handicrafts production, the origins and transmission of crafts skills, the current availability and utilization of craft raw materials, craft marketing system, problems and needs of the craft producers, and also to trace available human resources for craft development assistants and craft teachers. Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, volunteers, together with Botswanacraft employees, continue offering assistance to the producers in Etsha 6 and Gumare. This ultimately led to the formation of Ngwao Boswa, an organization in Gumare run by the Bayei women. Terry (2000) further stated that efforts to develop craftwork in Ngamiland came to a stand still after Botswana Development Corporation decided to sell Botswanacraft to a private sector company. However, Botswanacraft has been in operation in the last few years. The Botswanacraft has been actively involved in purchasing large quantities of Etsha 6 baskets. It also runs a group of 12 master weavers who are paid a monthly salary and a percentage of the sale value of the baskets (Terry 2000). According to Mbaiwa (2003:17) 'The payments made

to master weavers are an indication of the monopoly that private companies such as Botswanacraft would want to enjoy in the Ngamiland District’.

2.6 Problems of Handicrafts in Ngamiland District

According to Mbaiwa (2003) cultural tourism in Botswana is poorly developed. The potential of crafts to further boost the tourism industry is not adequately realized. In Maun almost all the crafts sold in curio shops/outlets in hotels, shopping centers, and along main highways (e.g. Maun-Shorobe road) are secured from places such as Zimbabwe, South Africa and Europe. In his view such businesses, some of which are illegal (vendors), clearly show how tourism development has by far not been able to promote the craft industry in Botswana, especially in the Ngamiland District. Mbaiwa (2003) further note that the poorly developed nature of the craft industry to some extent is attributed to the fact that development officials and researchers are not fully aware of the skills possessed by the local people. He argued that, in their efforts to facilitate craftwork as well as find its role in the growing ecotourism, all concerned parties should first acknowledge such traditional skills. A study conducted in Ngamiland by Terry (2000) confirmed that the market for craft production is not really a problem. However, a number of obstacles were revealed. The supply of Botswanacraft was found to be less today than ten years ago, in terms of quantity, quality and variation of products. The other thing has to do with pricing of products, which is normally high. Furthermore, it was discovered that the exports from Botswana, particularly in the Ngamiland District is unorganized and underdeveloped. This was due to the absence of an overall national promotion scheme.

Terry (2000) also noted that in terms of basket making, the weaving skill is slowly dying out, as most of those currently involved are now very old. Master weavers have developed poor eyesight that negatively impact craft production. This then poses a threat for the craft industry since the younger generation is not fully geared towards craft production. According to Mbaiwa (2003) craft development, marketing, and other related activities in Ngamiland District, such as art exhibitions have since put more emphasis on basketry at the same time neglecting other craftwork especially wood products and crafts produced by Basarwa (Bushman) or other artisans.

Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) observed that of the traditional basket designs made in the 1970s, only few remain. Such designs include; urine trail of the bull, night and day, tears of the giraffe, and back of the python. According to Mbaiwa (2003:18) 'the commercialization of basket production in Ngamiland contributes to the cultural disappearance of some basket design in pursuit of that sell in the tourism market'. Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) mentioned that various numbers of products, which were developed and promoted around 1980s and early 1990s, were no longer available in Etsha 6 and Gumare as well as in curio outlets in Maun and Gaborone. Products include contemporary basket products such as round and oval trays, French bread baskets, hot pad mats, tablemats, waste paper baskets, gas cylinder covers, necklaces made with palm woven beads and wooden beads, and table mats. It was also stated that in the Western side of the Okavango Delta there is only one dominant type of basket stitch and this negatively affect cultural recognition between the Bayei and Bambukushu weavers. Cunningham and Milton (Mbaiwa 2003) further indicate that ever since the commercialization of basket in the Ngamiland, natural resources have been over-utilized. As a result some weavers are forced to travel long distances to secure raw materials. Mbaiwa (2003) highlights the fact that although literature shows scarcity of raw material used to make baskets in Ngamiland, little is mentioned on how communities are encouraged to practice sustainable harvesting methods. He states that not much is revealed on how possible it is for local communities to plant the required material for baskets in gardens or farms. Such efforts will further contribute towards a more sustainable handicraft industry in Ngamiland.

Summary

The chapter highlights the extent to which cultural tourism in the Ngamiland District is poorly developed. This has been attributed to the fact that in marketing the Okavango Delta in developing countries as a tourist destination, a lot of emphasis is placed on the nature of wilderness without drawing attention to the socio-cultural aspect of the region. Apart from the limited interaction between operators and the host communities, a number of problems surrounding the production and marketing of crafts in the Ngamiland District has been identified. It was indicated that most of the crafts sold in the region could be

traced to places outside the country. Furthermore, the supply of Botswana-craft was found to be less today than ten years ago in terms of quality, quantity, and variation of products. At the same time, it was observed that since the commercialization of baskets only few of the traditional basket designs remain. Due to the absence of an overall national promotion scheme, the exports of crafts from the Ngamiland District is said to be unorganized and underdeveloped. It was further noted that activities by the government geared towards craft development and marketing such as craft exhibitions has since put more emphasis on basketry at the same time neglecting other crafts in the region especially craftwork. Lastly, it was mentioned that ever since the commercialization of baskets in the Ngamiland, natural resources have been over-utilized.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Network relations and embeddedness

The theory of network relations and embeddedness shall form an analytical framework of this study. The idea of embeddedness is a theoretical construct that has caught the attention of scholars from several disciplines over the past decade. It refers to ‘the fact that economic action and outcomes, like all social action and outcomes, are affected by actor’s dyadic relations and by the structure of the overall network of relations’ (Granovetter in Sandberg 2003:3). Relational features of networks focus on the relation between the exchange partners. ‘Within the embeddedness framework cooperating partners must find one another in a world of incomplete information, and this process of search is largely influenced by their primary relations with other firms as well as by the relations of other firms to one another’ (Grabher 1993:15). Grabher further outline the concept of social process in the embeddedness approach as an ongoing process that is continuously constructed and reconstructed during interaction.

Taylor (1994:102) defines an enterprise in a network as ‘one point in a social economic constellation of points comprising other enterprises and agents’. Networks according to Grabher (1993) open access to various sources of information and thus offer a considerably broader learning interface. Such relational features of networks enhance the ability to transmit and learn new knowledge that cannot easily be traded in markets. The concept of embeddedness in this study focus mainly on how the small handicrafts enterprises in the Ngamiland district are linked or positioned within the tourism environment in which they operate. Underlying the business system is a variety of economic, political, and socio-cultural institutions³ that influence the way such small firms operate.

³ Institution- ‘a set of constraints that governs the behavioural relations among individuals and groups’ (Nabli and Nugent in Pedersen & McCormick 1999:111).

3.2 Network Oriented Production

Shaw (in Williams et al 2004) indicates that small-scale tourism activities normally operate within specific tourism destinations, and in most cases they tend to dominate the industrial structures of such areas. Collective operation of small firms is understudied in tourism destinations. However, Shaw (in Williams 2004:130) has looked into this. He holds that ‘the degree of ‘institutional thickness’, representing the quality and quantity of support organizations, has become a key factor in many destination areas through local community groups and, more especially government agencies charged with supporting small firms’. In his view, within these business networks, informal and formal flows of information and support can be identified, and such interaction is seen as a cause and an effect of accelerated collaboration. He holds that research on small firms has placed emphasis on entrepreneurial networks, derived from the personal contacts of entrepreneurs. My research attempts to find out how important personal contacts are, especially in the start-up stage of small businesses. The networks may be with friends or family members who provide some form of ‘collective’ experience or social capital. Hence with regard to firm growth, these informal networks can be constraining. Shaw (in Williams 2004) further stated that within tourism research little is known about how such entrepreneurial networks evolve, or the extent to which they vary across sub-sectors of the industry.

The institutional environment provides a broader framework within which small-scale tourism activities take place. Amongst the important elements in this institutional environment are those highlighted by Pedersen and McCormick (1999) and that includes the following; a) financial institutions, both formal and informal, which determine who gets access to credit and capital, and how as well as to whom enterprise management becomes financially accountable, b) social structures, process of socialization and educational systems, which ultimately bring about differences in management practices, trust relations, and social responsibilities, hierarchies and delegation in the enterprises and labour market organization, c) market structures, infrastructures and services, and the legal system and its enforcement, which influence contract and trust relations, collaboration and interaction among enterprises, and possibilities for externalization and internalization of activities in the individual enterprise, d) technological capabilities and

innovation system, both within individual enterprises and in their environment, which lead to differences in the way management reacts to changes in the environment. The creation of complex networking relations amongst entrepreneurs appears to be the central strategy in the development and operation of small-scale industries. Bras and Dahles (1999) further stated that networks are used to develop not only business contacts but also to raise social standing and enhance political influence, which in turn contribute to economic success. In their view networks as a source of 'social capital' are essential not only for successful business dealings and the enhancement of prestige, but also as insurance against uncertain future. By establishing cooperative networks and banding together, small industries could afford the consultancy services that are beyond their reach as individuals, they could also market their products jointly. The oldest of the network theories that of industrial districts by Alfred Marshall in 1891 demonstrated the extent to which network based production can be more flexible and able to respond more quickly to external factors.

Marshall (1919) utilized the term 'industrial districts' to describe certain areas of industrial activity in England composed of only small artisan firms linked together in a production network through socio-economic ties. The production in this network comprise of a division of labor within a cluster of specialized firms that collectively work to produce a specific final good. This type of production is most akin to decentralized market oriented production except that the transactions between two actors in a production process are not determined perfectly by market forces. The logic is that instead of having only the price and quality of a good or service as a determinant of whether and how a transaction is made, it is suggested that personal and socio-cultural factors also play a role in such a decision. The underlying values emphasized within such socio-cultural factors are trust, reciprocity, collaboration and communality. Such a view of industrial interaction is taken to be much more realistic than mechanistic, purely market determined exchange. Marshall further singled out the benefits deriving from the embeddedness of networks such as the easy exchange of ideas, information, and goods, accumulation of skills and innovative capability, as well as the development of cultural homogeneity which further facilitate cooperation, trust, and consensus amongst employers, amongst workers, and between both groups. Johanson and Håkansson (in

Grabher 1993) made an important distinction between social networks and industrial networks. In their view underlying social networks are actors and their social exchange relations. Such activities in which they are involved and the resources used are basically seen as secondary attributes of the actors. However, the situation is different in the case of industrial networks.

In the real-world setting the activities are regarded complex and binding in nature and further conditioned by relatively fixed and heavy resources structures. According to Johanson and Håkansson (in Grabher 1993) ultimately both the activities and resources in themselves are significant factors, determining the behaviour in terms of ‘constraints’ and ‘opportunities’. Every actor is in control of certain activities and resources directly. However, since the dependencies to some extent mean control, the actor has an indirect control over the counterparts’ activities and resources. The industrial network therefore comprises an activity/resource dimension and an actor dimension that are related to each other. Furthermore, in an industrial network each activity is dependent on the performance of other activities. That is, every activity forms a link in a chain of activities. Johanson and Håkansson (in Grabher 1993) stated that different kinds of industrial activities could be distinguished. Of these activities, some are technical while others are social. Also some are related mainly to production, and others to exchange. Within the industrial network a significant number of actors are involved.

According to Johanson and Håkansson (in Grabher 1993) the concerned actor(s) in this case can either be an individual, a department in a company, a business unit in a company, a whole company, even a group of companies. An assumption is made to the effect that all industrial actors share basic properties. Firstly, they are in control of specific resources/activities. Second, they strive to be purposeful in their action, and such an act is directed more towards economic gain in general. Thirdly, they have bounded knowledge of which they are clearly aware. Their action and interaction it meant to enhance easy and fast access to knowledge.

3.3 Political Embeddedness

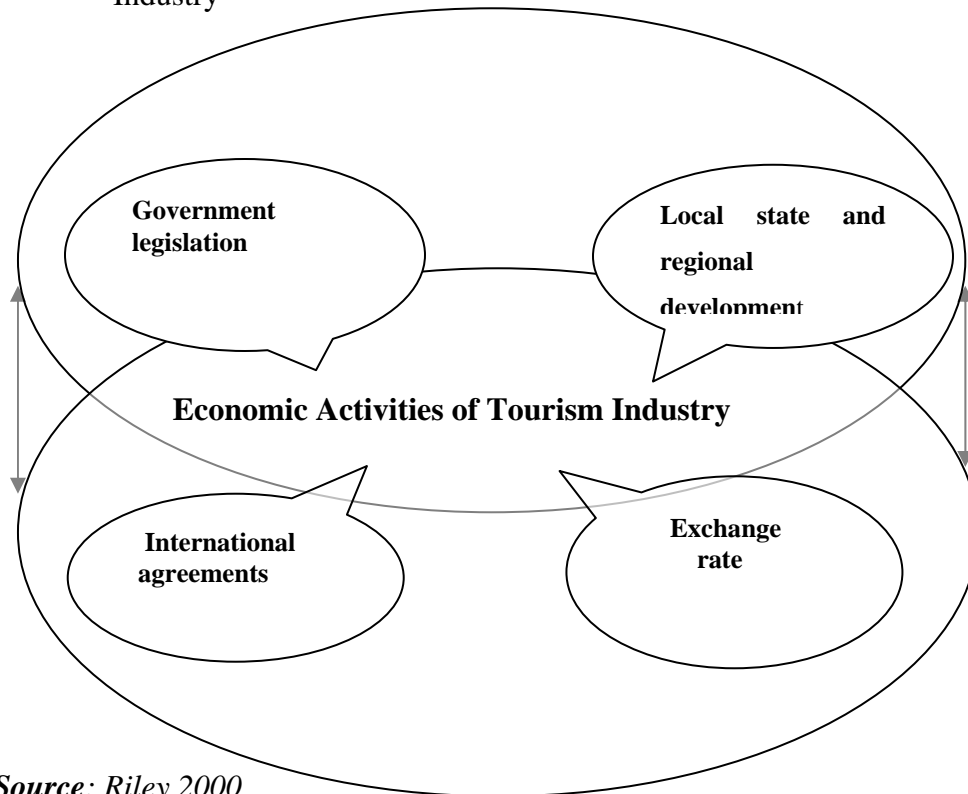
Political embeddedness refers to ‘the manner in which economic institutions and decisions are shaped by a struggle for power that involves economic actors and non-

market institutions, particularly the state and social classes' (DiMaggio and Zukin 1990:20). An example of political embeddedness is that given by Knutsen (2003) when an entrepreneur is able to secure credit as a result of a government programme aimed at stimulating economic initiatives amongst the population.

According to Williams and Montanari (in Riley 2000) the economic activities of the tourism industry are embedded within a political regulatory framework. **Figure 2** below illustrates this. This model is very important since it enables us to understand the regulatory framework within which tourism activities take place. The idea is that various economic activities of tourism, of which small handicrafts enterprises are one of them, operate within a broader political framework. On the one hand there are international agreements and exchange rate, while on the other hand are decisions taken by the local state and regional development agencies. All these forces play a major role in their contribution towards sustainable tourism economic activities. My research assesses the extent to which small handicrafts enterprises are catered for within the current tourism policies and strategies in Botswana and in what ways the indigenous people⁴ benefit from such policies. According Hall and Jenkins (in Williams et al. 2004) politics and public policy are extremely important aspects of tourism matters, whether local, regional, national, or global in regulating the tourism industry and tourist activity. They further mention that continuous shift in economic globalization have substantial implications for tourism policy. Therefore, the nature of the policy-making process in any nation-state varies over space and time, and also varies amongst policy sectors or policy communities. The policy framework that the tourism industry and small-scale handicrafts enterprises are subject to forms an important part of my study.

⁴ Indigenous people - 'communities, peoples, and nations that have historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies' (Hinch in Williams et al 2004:246)

Figure 2. Political Regulatory Framework of Economic Activities in the Tourism Industry



Source: Riley 2000

As illustrated above the political regulatory framework of economic activities greatly influences development of activities across different economic sectors. The way in which small firms that cater for the tourism industry are politically embedded within such a framework plays a major role towards their development.

3.4 Social Embeddedness

Isaksen (in Knutsen 2003) refers to social embeddedness as the nature of interpersonal relations, while social networks are seen as personal contacts between managers, and between each and every actors who are important to the performance of the economic activity. According to Hamilton (in Riley 2000) a series of empirical studies have surfaced over the past years indicating the extent to which business transactions are influenced by subjective judgments, trust, reciprocity, bargaining and mutual adjustment. In his study Granovetter (1985) indicated that economic action is embedded in the structure of social relations between actors, including kinship links, causing business to contain elements of sociability, approval, status and power in addition to economic goals.

In his view the embeddedness argument stresses the role of concrete personal relations and structures (or networks) of such relations in developing trust and discouraging unlawful acts. Networks of social relations are viewed not only important within firms but also between them. Social processes are identified as playing a major role toward an accelerated profit.

Support for economic activity from central and local government, according to Grabber (in Riley 2000), may range across economic sectors, that is, where firms are embedded within the political system; there is often deviation from the planned economy model as networks come in place to overcome shortages of resources. Granovetter's (1985) structural embeddedness highlight the extent to which such shortages within the economy operated by central planners may ultimately force people to rely on social networking through friends, relations, and other contacts, more especially those in administrative positions and political power to obtain the necessary support. My study attempts to establish the extent to which the small craft entrepreneurs in the Ngamiland region socially relate to each other and other enterprises in their attempts to maximize profit.

3.5 Cultural Embeddedness

Riley (2000) indicates that although the role of political influences is currently being addressed, the novelty of the embeddedness approach is that economic activities are seen to operate not only within a political atmosphere but also a socio-cultural and cognitive framework. Cultural embeddedness according to Zukin and DiMaggio (1990:17) refers to how 'collective understanding shapes economic strategies and goals, and sets limits to economic rationality. Cultural networks on the other hand comprise relations between the enterprises and the wider community in which their economic activities are carried out'. In locations where the economic activities take place, common culture and values are considered an important source of trust, and also a basis for personal contacts and favourable political relations. Grabber (in Riley 2000) among others has analyzed the extent to which firms are embedded to include relationships determined by culture, generating shared understandings on issues such as contract rules, technical language and business routines. Riley (2000) further reveals how the nature of social contacts, partly

influenced by cultural phenomena, may determine the characteristics of central and local legislation. Also the manner in which the legislation is presented may be influenced by both social and cultural criteria.

Granovetter (1985:482) stated that 'to regard economic behaviour as independent is a grievous misunderstanding. The underlying notion is that culture influences the nature of all interaction between people both on the supply and demand sides within the socio-economic and political systems. According to Knutsen (2003), culture may set limits to economic rationality, and at the same time common culture and understanding of common value within the environment where the economic activities take place are significant sources of trust that ultimately can be necessary in obtaining economic success. My research intends to determine the nature of cooperation, collaboration and trust between the crafts entrepreneurs and how such factors promote or impede the development small handicrafts enterprises. As stated above, culture can play a very crucial role in the way entrepreneurs relate to each other. In my study the aspect of cultural embeddedness is treated as part of social embeddedness. I do not discuss culture explicitly other than business culture.

3.6 Entrepreneurship

According to Brettis and Hitts (in Rasmussen and Nielsen 2003) development in the last decades has increasingly directed attention towards entrepreneurship and networking as significant key aspects of the new competitive market. In their view currently changing and unstable market conditions make it rather difficult for a firm with few products to ensure survival. Rasmussen and Nielsen (2003) argued that groupings of small enterprises have played complementary functions and collaborate by pooling services, dissemination of technologies and exporting promotion among themselves. It is within these clusters and through formal and informal networks, that such enterprises can benefit from the available resources and take initiatives to improve their competitive opportunities. They also mentioned that the main problem of small enterprises is not their size, but their isolation from new markets, knowledge and opportunities for financial support. The definition of entrepreneurship adopted for the research is that by Timmons (in Morrison et al. 1999:10) defines entrepreneurship as:

Creating and building something of value from practically nothing. It is the process of creating or seizing an opportunity, and pursuing it regardless of the resources currently personally controlled. This involves the definition, creation and distribution of value and benefits to individuals, groups, organizations and society at large. Traditionally, it has been associated with the solo entrepreneur intensely, directly, creatively involved in the process. Such individuals face challenges of uncertainty, calculated risk-taking, and risk minimization. Typically they retain almost total control and remain at the center of the decision-making web. A high premium is attached to nurturing strong but informal cultures. Employee integration tends to be on the basis of personal allegiance to proprietors.

According to Shaw (in Williams et al. 2004) entrepreneurs have traditionally been viewed as “innovators” in terms of the Schumpeterian perspective (Schumpeter 1934). Such views indicate the nature of entrepreneurs as business pioneers driven by strong profit-making motives. However, Shaw (in Williams et al. 2004) observed that a limited number of small-scale businesses within tourism share these characteristics, and at best, they may be described as “reproducers” of standard formats rather than business innovators. On the other hand, he revealed how more socially led perspectives have modified these views and emphasized that it is possible to recognize a range of entrepreneurial types. Such entrepreneurs include: “classical entrepreneur”, “artisan entrepreneur”, mainly interested in employment satisfaction and independence, and also the “managerial” type, who promote the recognition of managerial skills. He mentions that within tourism increasing attention has been directed towards the artisan type. In analyzing the limitation on growth by the small handicrafts enterprises, my research considers Churchill and Lewis’s (in Morrison et al. 1999) five stages of development through which firms can pass from existence, survival, success, take-off, and resource maturity respectively. Emphasis is placed on the initial three stages. Firms with informal management systems and a strong reliance on start-up capital represent the ‘existence’ stage. Such capital is often informally sourced, mainly from family or personal savings. According to Morrison et al. (1999) studies in tourism has indicated that a significant number of tourism related businesses seldom progress beyond the initial existence stage, where the entrepreneur individually carry out all important tasks.

The second stage, that of ‘survival’, is characterized by viable businesses, though management systems are still very low, such that the owner/entrepreneur is still battling with the business. The argument is that if it happens that an entrepreneur makes it to the

survival stage, key problems centres around revenues and expenses. Furthermore, the third stage, 'success' is the most critical. This stage requires thorough decisions to be made whether to take advantage of the company's success and expand, or rather keep the business as a stable base for alternative owner activities. This is a critical time when the management challenges are very difficult, in most cases requiring a change of ownership or management, delegation, and substantial cash flow. In their study Shaw and Williams (in Williams et al. 2004) stated that many of the small-scale operators become 'constrained entrepreneurs' at this stage as formal capital is hard to secure, or management expertise is inadequate. However, if growth become an option and proves possible, the model indicates that the business enters the take-off stage before reaching resource maturity in which a form of sustainability and growth characterizes both stages.

Morrison et al. (1999) recognized that many entrepreneurs are simply not aware of the managerial and operational skill requirements of a business. They often try to run business without acquiring the necessary skills. Problems that are mainly experienced by entrepreneurs according to Morrison et al. (1999) are associated with management-related issues, such as inappropriate organizational structure, reluctance to delegate, absence of operational control, and predominance of informal decision-making. In their view, for businesses to progress beyond survival stage, requires not only possession of managerial skills, but also a change in management skills and leadership to include more defined human resource skills, planning and goal setting, financial management, and the ability to 'manage' people effectively.

Summary

This chapter has looked at the concept of embeddedness and network relations in which networks are considered fundamental to the growth of entrepreneurs. Collective operation in the form of industrial networks is said to be important to the growth of enterprises as it facilitates new knowledge that cannot easily be traded in markets. The idea is that by joining together small industries can afford the services that are beyond their reach as individuals. It was noted that underlying the industrial network is a variety of economic, political, and socio-cultural institutions that influence the way firms operate.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

4.1 Qualitative research

This study was conducted using qualitative research method. Limb and Dwyer (2001) define qualitative research as a method that allows the acquisition of ‘insider knowledge’ through interaction, observation, and informal in-depth interviews. They further argue that in most cases as geographers our research purpose are triggered by a need to get behind the ‘facts’ as they appear before us in everyday life and seek to understand the processes and practices underlying the evidence of change or conflict that we might experience. Therefore, qualitative research offers methodologies that enable researchers to engage in-depth with the lives and experiences of others. From the above logic, we can easily distinguish qualitative research from other strategies like quantitative research, experiments, archival analysis and history. Qualitative methodologies, as Limb and Dwyer (2001) mention, do not start with the assumption that there is a pre-existing world that can be known, or measured, but instead see the social world as something that is dynamic and changing, always being constructed through the intersection of cultural, economic and political processes. Thus, they seek understanding of social reality rather than statistical description of generalized predictions. ‘It applies a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as real world setting, where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomena of interest’ (Pratton in Golafshani 2003:600)

A review of the methods of data collection is presented below. My research begun with a preliminary investigation during the first three days around Gaborone in the southern part of Botswana. This was necessary in order to secure the necessary information prior to my departure to the field area. It involved a visit to a lecture in tourism at the University of Botswana where a thorough introduction of the research problem was provided thereby enabling me to secure the necessary contacts of various people to consult throughout the data collection process. In this way I was in a better position to devise a strategic plan as to how to go about collecting the necessary information.

The study strategy was chosen based on the research objective, which requires a deeper in-sight with regard to handicrafts activities. Data collection was mostly carried out in the Ngamiland District in the northwest of Botswana. The choice of this area is due to its importance as a tourist site and source of revenue for the government. It is within this area that small handicrafts enterprises are set-up in their effort to benefit from various tourist activities offered. Upon reaching my field area, it was rather convenient for me to visit the Department of Tourism to secure a visitor guide since I was not familiar with the study area. Tourist maps together with other articles were provided to help locate various places. After an introduction of the research followed by a brief interview with one of the tourists' officers, I was directed to the Integrated Field Service (IFS) Department that is responsible for small handicrafts activities in the region. Three techniques of data collection were used for the research. These are in-depth interviews, observation and documentary information.

4.2 Primary Data

4.2.1 In-depth interviews

In collecting data, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted. A prepared set of interview guides and a semi-structured questionnaire were used during the data collection process. The semi-structured questionnaire was not given to the interviewee but only served as a form of guideline to myself. This made it possible for me to focus on the necessary information thereby meeting the objective of my study. Most questions were open-ended thereby enabling respondents to give as much information as possible. Three sets of questions were prepared for the whole interviewing process, firstly those directed towards locally based small-scale handicrafts businesses, and second directed towards the curio shops and outlets while the other set of questions were addressed through elite-interviewing. The following table shows a list of the identified small-scale handicrafts businesses within the Ngamiland District identified for my study.

Table 1. Interviews in small-scale handicrafts enterprises

Enterprise	Village
Quality Baskets	Maun
Mosophane's craft vendor	Maun
Esha 6 craft shop	Esha 6
Gumare craft shop	Gumare
Shorobe Baskets	Shorobe

In identifying the above-mentioned enterprises, I had to rely on limited information provided by one of the tourist officers together with the help of a map to locate the interviewee. The information gathered from these small handicrafts businesses was necessary since it contribute a major part of my research. Interviews with curio shops that form medium scale enterprises to which the small local business sell their craft to were all found in Maun village and these are listed in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Interviews in curio shops

Curio Shops	Position of Interviewee
African Art and Images	Manager
African Affairs Collectables	Shop Assistant
General Trading Company	Manager
Quadrum Shop	Safari Operation Manager
Jazellas # 2	Sales Lady
Ethnic Designs	Shop Assistant

The interviews with the curio shops provided a deeper understanding of the nature of relationship that exist between the producers and buyers where the handicrafts entrepreneurs are concerned. It further gave me a better picture of the various products that exist within the region, that is where they come from and who supply them. It will be important to mention that most of the above-mentioned curio shops are run by foreigners.

After two weeks following the above interviews in my study area, I traveled to Gaborone where a number of tourism related organizations could be found. These are either dealing directly or indirectly with small-scale tourism activities. Elites interviews were then carried out.

Marshall et al. (1999) define an elite interview as ‘a specialized case of interviewing that focus on a particular type of interviewee. Elite individuals are those considered to be influential, prominent, and well-informed people in an organization or community; they are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research. In this respect such ‘*elites*’ were derived from both the government and NGOs. Table 3 shows the list of individuals interviewed for my study.

Table 3. Elite Interviews

Organization	Position of Interviewee
Department of Tourism (DoT)	Tourism Officer
	Education Officer
	Eco-tourism officer
	Public relations
	Research & Statistics
	Marketing
Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA)	Public relations officer
World Conservation Union (IUCN)	Project Coordinator
Integrated Field Services (IFS)	Coordinator
Integrated Field Services	Employee
Mhabe Museum	Employee
Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS)	Employee
Botswana National Museum	Employee

In conducting all the interviews, I had to adopt a snowball approach in which one interview lead to another. Appointments were arranged in advance with the concerned interviewees and almost all the interviews took place during working hours. As a result,

most of the interviews were allocated minimal time or either done in a rush. Each interview took a maximum of one hour. All the elite individuals were helpful in providing the necessary information thereby enabling me to acquire a deeper in-sight of the problem at hand. In addition to the interviews a substantial amount of time was spent during observation.

4.2.2 Observation

Structured observation⁵ was administered as a supplementary technique during the data collection process. This entails systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for the study. The observational record is frequently referred to as ‘field notes’- detailed, nonjudgmental, concrete descriptions of what has been observed. An observation schedule derived from the research objective was used to enable me to focus on those aspects of the setting that needs to be observed and hence recorded. In this case a thorough observation of how proprietors operate their business was made, that includes; business conducts (e.g. customer relations) as well as type, design, quality and pricing of products. According to Bryman (2004) behaviour of entrepreneurs can be recorded in terms of incidents. This means waiting for something to happen and then recording what follows from it. Apart from the time spent on interviews, I made an effort to spend time with the small handicrafts entrepreneurs, a maximum of two hours. In this way, I was in a better position to thoroughly observe their selling skills when the tourists come to buy crafts. At the same time the strategy enabled me to identify the problems they encounter. I paid close attention to how proprietors advertise, display or strategically sell their products thereby attracting a market. In the process, I was also able to observe the nature of relation and cooperation within the craft industry. ‘Observational evidence is often useful in providing additional information about the topic being studied’ (Yin 2003:93).

⁵ Structured observation. ‘A technique in which the researcher employs explicitly formulated rules for the observation and recording of behaviour’ (Bryman 2004:167)

4.3 Secondary Data

In order to further substantiate my primary sources, various documents produced in relation to the research at hand were also gathered. History and context surrounding a specific setting come in part from reviewing documents. The following organizations were major sources of secondary data mainly in the form of publications, reports, minutes, written speeches, brochures: Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC), Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (HOORC), World Conservation Union (IUCN), Department of Tourism (DoT) and Botswana National Museum.

4.4 Validity and Reliability

The data collection process suffered a number of setbacks. One of the main problems has to do with the limited time used for the whole data collection period. Data collection was carried out within two months. A study of this sort would have benefited from more time in the field. Due to time constraint some of the organizations that could have provided more information could not be consulted. This includes Botswana Community Based Organizations Network (BOCOBONET), Hotel and Tourism Association of Botswana (HATAB), and Conservation International (CI). Prior to some of the interviews, an appointment had to be set up and this could take days before it was secured. The difficulties in accessing data are attributed to some officials who were unwilling to be interviewed, while others were afraid to release information which was deemed classified. Organizations such as Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) required a written letter before any interviews. It was also difficult to secure an appointment with some of the curio shop managers thereby getting a deeper in-sight of the nature of relationship they have with the local handicrafts entrepreneurs. Furthermore, a substantial amount of time was spent trying to locate locally owned handicrafts small enterprises in and around Maun.

However notwithstanding these set backs, I strived to obtain valid and reliable data. A study is valid if it's actually measures what it intends to measure (Oliver 1997). Construct validity requires correct operational measures for the concepts that are studied (Yin 2003). In order to ensure this, I discussed the concepts with people at the

departments. Internal validity comes in play from reviewing those factors that has a causal relationship. According to Yin (2003:36), ‘an investigator is trying to determine whether event x led to y ’. In order for my study to ensure internal validity, a set of interview guides and a semi-structured questionnaire derived from my research objective (i.e. the issues raised in chapter 1.1), and the analytical framework were used to provide focus and direction during interviews.

Reliability is understood as a measure that has a high degree of accuracy. The data-collection techniques that were applied in the field were intended to enhance the reliability of the data. In order to improve consistency or reliability, my study adopted a triangulation technique in which the same methodology was used in collecting several sets of data. The evidence was derived from secondary documents, interviews, physical artifacts, and direct observation. This approach enabled me to crosscheck whether the information provided was consistent. The reliability of data is not much in doubt since in most cases the respondents gave the same answers. Another factor that improved the reliability of the data collected was the fact that, being a citizen of the country, I could easily communicate in the local language. Therefore respondents could easily trust me and feel free to express themselves. To further verify the responses, I used direct observation and where necessary I took photographs because I believed it would help me convey important characteristics of this study to my readers. The interviews together with the observation and secondary documents helped to check the data collected thereby enhancing their reliability. Secondary sources of data have been carefully limited to reports from established credible institutions by both NGOs and the government of Botswana. The documents enabled me to confirm and strengthen evidence from other sources.

Summary

The chapter discussed the methodological approach adopted for this study. It is indicated that qualitative research offers methodologies that enable researchers to engage in-depth with the lives and experiences of others. It was also mentioned that the study strategy was chosen based on the research objective, which requires a deeper in-sight with regards to handicrafts activities in the Ngamiland District. The sources of data collection include;

interviews, documents and observation. It is noted that the interviews were divided into three parts; 1) interviews in small-scale handicrafts enterprises, 2) interviews in curio shops, and 3) elite interviews. A prepared set of interview guides and a semi-structured questionnaire were used during the data collection process. Documentary information was used to confirm and strengthen evidence from other sources. At the same time observational evidence has been noted to provide additional information.

CHAPTER 5

BOTSWANA NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 Overall policy review

This chapter provides an overview of policy on tourism in Botswana, highlighting the most crucial policies and strategies directed towards small-scale tourism development. By analyzing existing policies my research attempts to establish the level at which such policies operate, that is, whether skewed towards the national or local level. Botswana Tourism Master Plan (2000) indicates that tourism policies offer the basis for planning, developing and managing tourism. The position on tourism by the government of Botswana can be derived from the Tourism Policy, Government paper No.2 of 1990. In addition, the Tourism Act (1992) further regulates the tourism industry with emphasis on promoting its development and well-being.

Increased utilization of Botswana's unique wildlife and wilderness gave birth to the tourism policy. The need for sustainable tourism meant that important policy changes were required in order to control tourists coming into the country. Such policy was to prevent substantial fall of the fragile economy upon which the wildlife resource and the potential of tourism depend. 'The general objective of the tourism policy is designed to ensure that tourism activity is carried out on an ecologically sustainable basis; it also intends to provide local communities with direct and indirect benefits from tourism activities. The main objective is to encourage communities to appreciate the value of wildlife and its conservation and the growing opportunities in rural areas for participation in wildlife-based industries' (Government paper No.2 1990:4). Furthermore, the Tourism Master Plan (2000) indicates how this policy objective on tourism is to be pursued in conjunction with other Government policies. Amongst such policies includes the Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986, which ensures preservation of National Parks and Game Reserves of which account for about 17% of the total land area of the country. The policy also puts emphasis on conservation, meaning 'utilization on a sustained yield basis' in Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). In addition, the National Policy on Economic Opportunities further seeks to ensure that economic activities like tourism contribute

towards increased participation of Batswana in the ownership and management of tourism enterprises.

As stated in the Tourism Master Plan (2000) some laws and regulations relate directly to tourism while others indirectly affect tourism development. However, all the concerned regulations are important in drawing a legal framework for tourism. It further mentions that the purpose of the regulatory legislation for the industry is to: a) provide an environment in which business may be carried out with the framework of law; b) provide mechanisms for mediation in terms of disagreement; c) provide consumer protection; d) ensure health and safety; and e) facilitate revenue collection.

The Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) outlined the extent to which the government in partnership with the European Union commissioned the Botswana Tourism Development Programme (BTDP) in their effort to provide a framework for the continued development and diversification of tourism. The overall objective of the BTDP was to diversify the economy of Botswana as well as improve the quality of life of the indigenous population. It aimed at developing tourism as an important and sustainable economic sector through employment generation and local income distribution. Various studies conducted by BTDP identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that influences decisions currently made towards tourism development in Botswana.

Table 4. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting the prospects for future tourism development in Botswana.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wildlife and wilderness - Political and economic stability -Safety and security -Good physical infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Infancy” state tourism development -Limited tourism awareness -Bureaucratic procedures - Weak tourism organization

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Product diversification -Involvement of rural communities - Increase of industry standards - Development of domestic tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unbalanced (regional) development - Negative socio-cultural impacts - Negative environmental impact - Regional political instability

Source: Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002).

The above strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats provide the basis for an ecotourism strategy that intend on developing an exclusively low volume, high value tourism thereby adequately addressing each of these factors. According to Mbaiwa (2002) product diversification is necessary for long-term tourism development in Botswana. In his view the potential of handicrafts as one of the product that can be used to diversify Botswana’s industry from being largely wildlife and scenic based to include the cultural aspect has not been fully explored. Also the role of handicrafts in promoting direct economic benefits to the local communities has not been fully explored. He further indicated that, the recent growth of tourism in the Okavango Delta, which is the focus of my study, provides handicrafts the opportunity to become one of the cultural tourism products in Ngamiland District.

Furthermore, Bentinck (2002) also stated that product diversification is necessary as it increases the participation of citizens in the productive ownership and management of tourism enterprises in Botswana. In his view, because these enterprises in their

majority will be of small and medium scale, business opportunities will be provided for a relatively large number of Batswana. By assessing the role played by the Department of Tourism (DoT) and that by the Integrated Field Services (IFS), it is important that my study examines whether the government bodies responsible for handicraft development throughout the country are empowered with the necessary equipment and government support to carry out their mandate. The study will also establish the attitudes and perceptions of the small handicraft entrepreneurs towards the role played by the government in handicraft business development.

5.2 National Ecotourism Strategy

The definition of ecotourism is derived from the International Ecotourism Society (TIES), which define ecotourism as ‘responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people’ (Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy 2002:5). It is further stated that in Botswana’s context ecotourism refers to the country’s cultural, as well as the natural heritage, and great importance is placed on the active involvement (as opposed to mere participation) of host communities and other Batswana in all aspects of the industry’s management and development. Furthermore, the National Ecotourism Strategy that surfaced as an attempt to complement, rather than replace the Botswana Tourism Master Plan, place emphasis on specific as opposed general issues.

However, moving from broader objectives, my study shall concentrate on specific ecotourism business objectives as outlined under the National Ecotourism Strategy (2002), highlighting the key issues identified as well as proposed actions. While Botswana offers the natural as well as cultural resources to further develop its ecotourism industry, there are other related factors influencing success, especially where indigenous tourism is concerned. Since the concept of ecotourism place emphasis on local empowerment, it therefore becomes an important strategy in promoting small handicrafts business that caters to the tourism industry. ‘If the potential of ecotourism as a tool for conservation and rural economic development is to be realized, skilled and dedicated entrepreneurs with a sound understanding of business management practices are required to transform ecotourism opportunities into viable business enterprises’ (Botswana

National Ecotourism Strategy 2002:23). It is on this basis that the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) initiated certain business viability objectives and further proposed actions to address them. The first one was aimed at addressing the problem of high costs associated 'green' management practice. As indicated in the National Ecotourism Strategy, the high environmental management standards expected from ecotourism enterprises (minimal impact practices, purchasing of 'green' products, constructing environmentally responsible facilities) in most cases calls for extra costs, which negatively affect operators' profit margins. Tourism operators who choose to ignore such ecotourism 'best practices', as they are called, may ultimately benefit more than their counterparts. Therefore, actions are proposed as follows to reverse this advantage wherever possible. Firstly, encouraging co-operation/collaboration between ecotourism operators in order to reduce economic problems associated with small sized businesses (e.g. grouping suppliers together to buy in bulk and also market their products jointly). Second, support the establishment of an ecotourism accreditation⁶ scheme and consider introducing tax incentives for accredited tourism operations. And thirdly, monitor improvements in new technologies that enable reduced costs for the industry, and further distribute relevant information to all stakeholders.

The second objective is to facilitate improved access to finance for prospective ecotourism operators with viable business plans. One of the key obstacles to the development of new ecotourism enterprises is associated with difficulties and delays in accessing finance. As mentioned in the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) about 75% of small/medium sized enterprises owned by Botswana and financed through the past Financial Assistant Policy (FAP) met with failure. Therefore, it was realized that facilitating access to finance for prospective ecotourism entrepreneurs should also be consistent with capacity building and support initiatives thereby developing the necessary skills required for economically sustainable tourism enterprises. Efforts were made to promote citizen enterprise development through the newly established Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA). According to the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002:26) 'it is intended that the agency assume the management of

⁶ Accreditation- the grant to an ecotourism operation by an accrediting body, of status indicating valuation of its credits as in accord with the standards set by the accrediting body

financial assistance previously provided by the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP)' Guided by this objective, actions were proposed as follows: Bring together prospective investors and entrepreneurs by compiling, summarizing and distributing information in relation to sources of funding, for ecotourism development and projects seeking funding. Also, examine ways in which tourism development extension services can be harmonized at all levels of the government. And lastly, consider allocating loans from CEDA and other sources of funding based on prior conduct of feasibility studies and skills assessment.

The third objective has to do with developing the requisite business management and technical expertise among existing and prospective ecotourism operations. This objective came about as a response to lack of business management, technical, operational and personal skills within tourism related businesses. The Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) states that research on small businesses shows that most of them are vulnerable between 12 and 30 months after being set up. Primary causes of failure are listed as follows: a) financial management and liquidity problems, b) management inexperience and incompetence, c) problems coping with inflation and economic conditions external to the firm, d) insufficient books and records, e) problems related to sales and marketing, f) personnel, g) failure to consult expert advice. Amongst the actions proposed includes; encouraging greater collaboration between training institutions and the commercial ecotourism sector, to ensure that training programmes are designed to meet the practical needs of the industry. Encourage participation in activities that raise awareness among existing and prospective tourism operators about the need for, and benefit of, developing business management skills. And lastly investigate the feasibility of providing easily accessible, free or subsidized ecotourism business training.

The other objective of interest is concerned with assisting Botswana identify viable business opportunities in the tourism support industries. It is mentioned that though opportunities and capacity exists locally, certain communities can have difficulties identifying opportunities since they are not familiar with the tourism industry. The National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) indicates that communities and individuals involved within tourism business can do much to facilitate communication and cooperation. Actions proposed are as follows; Facilitate contacts between existing and prospective

tourism operators to enable the former to guide the latter towards product development options that will compliment existing activities at all levels. At the same time participate in initiatives that educate local residents about the goods and services needed for ecotourism operators in Botswana. Also establish a database of tourism-related goods and services available within Botswana.

The last objective deals with supporting ecotourism product diversification and cost efficiency through collaborative marketing. The Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) went on to further reveal the extent to which high cost associated with effective market research and marketing particularly in prime international target markets act as an obstacle to the geographical diversification of the tourism industry. This is also applicable to the economic viability of existing and prospective, small-scale ecotourism enterprises that are unable to exploit economies of scale. It therefore proposed that ecotourism businesses overcome such problems by joining forces to market their activities. The National Ecotourism Strategy outlined a range of opportunities for mutually beneficial collaborative marketing of ecotourism activities, goods and services. These are as follows: ecotourism enterprises in 'new' tourism areas that are currently struggling to attract tourists can join forces to create and market themselves as a package of attractions/activities. Furthermore, ecotourism enterprises with a similar focus can link up to provide national networks of single-interest activities. It is mentioned that major benefits of such an approach (pioneered by the South African-based Open Africa Network) go beyond cost efficiency, such that, small-scale projects can be presented as a single, high profile tourism attraction (an example include, a national network of community-based tourism activities) having the potential to be marketed internationally. Lastly, tour operators can collaborate with local suppliers of ecotourism-related goods and services.

The findings of my study shall be discussed in light of the above stated business viability objectives and proposed actions derived from the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy as summed up in Table 5 below. This will help answer the main objective of my study that is examining opportunities and constraints that small handicrafts businesses face in terms of establishment, growth, and development. Issues relating to access to

finance, especially start-up capital, entrepreneurship, support mechanism, and marketing strategies, shall be discussed in detail.

Table 5. Business viability objectives and proposed actions by the National Ecotourism Strategy

Objective	Proposed action
1. Management practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cooperation/collaboration -Accreditation scheme and incentives -Monitoring new technologies -Distribution of relevant information
2. Improved access to finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Bringing together prospective investors and entrepreneurs -Allocating loans from CEDA based on feasibility and skills assessment
3. Developing business management and technical expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collaboration (by institutions and commercial sectors) -Participation in tourism awareness activities -Increased accessibility to business training
4. Support of product diversification and cost efficiency through collaborative marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Join marketing of attractions/activities -National network of single interest activities -Collaboration by local suppliers and tour operators in exchanging of goods and services

5.3 The Government and NGOs

An article on Arts and Crafts in Botswana (2000) reveal how the government of Botswana, through the Department of Tourism and Industrial Affairs support, various efforts made to promote craft production in Botswana. Such an attempt to preserve all forms of its cultural and natural heritage are said to be supported through the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, which has provided the necessary infrastructure to further facilitate the national collection of arts and crafts as exemplified by extensive collection at the National Museum, Monuments and Art Gallery and other collections at the community base museums. It is further stated that a strategy, derived intends to fulfill the

'long term vision for Botswana towards prosperity for all' popularly known as Vision 2016. This strategy promises to address all the imbalances that currently exist in the cultural industry and also offer a sense of direction for the nation in relation to the shape of its destiny. The director of Botswana National Museum is cited as follows 'The traditional art forms of Botswana are as rich and varied as the land and its people, however, because little has been written specifically on the African experience, there have been contrasting views on what is art and what is craft' (Arts and Crafts Botswana 2000:7).

The Art division of the National Museum helps to promote crafts through the organization of exhibitions, workshops, and seminars. Various crafts usually on display from variety of crafts producers all over Botswana include baskets, traditional and contemporary ceramics and pottery, woodcarvings, beadwork, tapestry work. The yearly exhibitions sponsored by Debswana Diamond Company are taken as a demonstration of the commitment towards promotion of arts and crafts especially at the grass-roots level. The field officers both within the National Museum (and other museums across the country), Department of Industrial Affairs and the Department of Tourism help to bring together craft producers scattered all over the country. Some artisans, have been taken through educational programmes and upon completion of these, given assistance to acquire the necessary equipment to start their small businesses. In addition to these exhibitions, the Department of Tourism produced a craft information brochure to further facilitate access to information on crafts in Botswana (Craft exhibition Opening Speech 2003)

Terry (in Mbaiwa 2003) is of the view that government support and commitment towards craft production and marketing is very low. She notes that during the National Development Plan (NDP) 6 (1985-1991) the government made efforts to support the craft industry. Recommendations aimed at assisting the handicraft sector included the following; establishment of a National Handicraft Development Association which will address problem related to supply of raw material, production methods, product quality and quantity, availability and coordination of field extension workers, and coordination of marketing and promotional efforts. Due to inadequate coordinating structure, the recommendations were never implemented. Also the association was never established

due to lack of commitment and financial support by the government. According to Mbaiwa (2003), support for handicraft industry does not exist at the national level, and therefore the future of the craft industry in Botswana is still in question. Mbaiwa (2002) further states that local artisans lack the necessary entrepreneurship and management skills to partake as equals in the tourism business. He recommends that strategies should be developed by the government to emphasize further local participation and enhance the use of local knowledge, materials in order for indigenous people to obtain meaningful benefits from the tourism business. NDP 6 is noted to be the first and last attempts by the government to provide assistance to the craft industry. NGOs are involved in the implementation of the government plan. The following are amongst those highlighted under the Tourism Master Plan (2000):

Botswana Society

The objective of Botswana society is to encourage interest in research on subjects in the fields of the natural sciences, humanities and arts. The society strives to cater for a wide area of interest including History, Archeology, Conservation of Wildlife, Anthropology, Geology and Biology. Over the past years, the society has organized workshops as well as published a number of papers on a wide range of subjects. In 1990, the Society held a conference on 'Tourism in Botswana', highlighting on a number of issues affecting tourism within the country as well as outside. The conference was important as it contributed to the understanding of certain tourism issues and its socio- economic impact (Tourism Master Plan 2000).

Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS)

The Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) is also one of the NGOs that promote all issues that relate to conservation of Botswana's environment. Corporate and individual members as well as international and national donor organizations fund it. The aims of KCS are to promote knowledge of Botswana's rich wildlife and its environment through education and publicity, to encourage and in some cases finance research into issues affecting these support policies of conservation towards wildlife and its habitat. It also

offers Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) related service to communities.

Conservation International

As stated in the Botswana Tourism Master Plan (2000), Conservation International (CI) is an NGO based in Washington whose main objective is to conserve the earth's living natural heritage, the global biodiversity, and to further show that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature. The organization, is mainly active in Okavango Delta, Botswana's 'Pride and Joy', involved with a number of projects in its main field of education on environment, science and research and enterprise development for local communities, that is making sure that communities benefit from using natural resources without destroying the ecosystem.

Botswana Community-based Organization Network (BOCOBONET)

This NGO, as indicated in the Master Plan, aims to promote institutions involved in Community-Based Natural Resource Management by playing a mediating role between communities and those who provide services (e.g. Government, private sector, NGOs and training institutions). It facilitate information and communication network between members involved in capacity building.

An opening speech given at the National Basket and Craft Exhibition (2002), held at Botswana National Museum, main gallery, insisted that strategies by NGOs should be complimentary and should undertake training to improve local design capacity, support research and market trends in the tourism sector to create databases of producers and images. It also suggested that such NGOs should foster development of market links and further facilitate greater market awareness on the part of producers and exporters. Emphasis was placed on provision of incentives and encouraging shift in focus towards upcoming artists. My study assesses the role played by NGOs such as Kalahari Conservation Society in their effort to encourage sustainable harvesting of natural resources used by the locals.

Summary

The chapter gave an overview of the tourism policies in Botswana. It also outlines specific business viability objectives and proposed action under the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy. The objectives includes the following; a) management practices, a) improved access to finance, b) developing management and technical expertise, c) support of product diversification and cost efficiency through collaborative marketing. A further institutional framework concentrate on those government bodies that support various efforts made to promote craft production in Botswana. It also highlights that NGOs are involved in the implementation of the policy.

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION OF FIELD DATA

The following chapter presents the field data. The first part covers information from interviews in small handicrafts enterprises. While the second part covers interviews in curio shops, which in this case are medium scale handicrafts enterprises. The last part presents elites interviews, which entail interviews with prominent, well-informed members of the government and those from NGOs.

6.1 Small-scale handicraft enterprises

6.1.1 'Quality Baskets'

Quality Baskets is amongst the locally owned small-scale handicrafts businesses in the Ngamiland region, run by a female artisan. Situated 6 km on the outskirts of Maun village, the enterprise operates at a domestic level. The crafts shop, which mostly sells basketry, is located within her compound. Previously she worked with the Botswana Christian Council as an assistant manager for Etsha 6 craft shop. After gaining a lot of experience by joining Conservation International (CI) Botswana in 1995, where her activities have been totally dedicated to basket weaving development in the Okavango River and Delta areas, she then decided to take advantage of the Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) at the time set up by the government, which have since collapsed. FAP provided direct financial assistance to private sector firms. The grants were aimed at promoting the creation of self-sustainable enterprises. Complementary objectives of the financial scheme included economic diversification and development of local entrepreneurial skills. The policy intended to facilitate women's access to economic opportunities and to the political process. It entails ending years of gender inequalities rooted in cultural practices and laws. Historical statistics on women indicate that until recently women in Botswana have been severely disadvantaged as participants in the development process. Through FAP she was able to secure start-up capital for her shop. Initial selling was done on the street until she decided to use one of the houses to market her crafts. In her view, though craft skill is very crucial, start-capital and location are equally important. She further mentioned that since the collapse of FAP in year 2000, due to abuse and fraud, many

locals find it difficult to secure the initial capital. And those that do manage from their personal savings or loans through friends and family usually struggle to keep their businesses running and ultimately collapse. Though her business makes sales between P3000-4000⁷ monthly which is considered good. Approximately 80% of her sales come from tourists while the rest from locals and curio shops. Part of the profit is sometimes diverted to family expenses since the business is the only source of income for her family.

The entrepreneur is one of the few local artisans, who have received on-going training that includes a 6 months certificate in Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) from Maun Business Training Center. Other training includes 2 weeks in Namibia studying the management of palm plantations, and training for community development and participation from 1997-1999 in the Gaborone International Trade Fair. In her view, the business culture is lacking among the artisans involved in the production of crafts. 'Basic business skills and management is a major problem', she says. Meaning that the majority of the local artisans are reluctant to take risk thereby investing profit made back into their businesses. Some of the artisans, according to her, are involved with craft production for subsistence only, and not to make profit. Her strategy, she says, is based on the fact that, not only does she produce baskets and sell but also buy from other producers then resell. In terms of purchasing basket, she uses the Botswanacraft grading system using a four-tiered system to define quality: substandard, standard or good, premium or very good, and super premium or excellent. The criteria by which the baskets are graded is based on neatness in weaving, uniqueness in terms of pattern and style, and attractive colour combination as well as size. She usually purchases premium or super premium because such baskets are usually stylish, very clean, and of good quality. As she considered herself an expert in the field of basket production, most artisans do not produce quality baskets that match her standard. From her perspective 'the challenge is identifying each weaver's unique style and helping them to find better ways to improve their stitch'. It is on such basis that she constantly meets with other weavers to exchange ideas and learn different designs from each other.

⁷ *Note- 1BWP=0.221 USD

However, apart from basketry, there are other crafts displayed in her shop. In order to attract more tourists, it is important that her business also promote crafts of different designs since she mainly specializes in basket weaving. Such efforts are also intended to develop cultural tourism within the Ngamiland District. Amongst the crafts found in her shop includes wooden crafts (e.g. animals, bowls, bows and arrows, cups, spoons, and tables), traditional mats, wall hangings, and traditional jewellery and ceramics. However, basketry is the major craft sold. While some of the ostrich eggshell products are purchased as far as the Kgalagadi District southwest of the country.



Figure 3 Some of the craftwork sold at Botswana Quality Baskets.

The amount of sales is attributed to the fact that her products are highly marketable due to their uniqueness in style and good quality. Initially, emphasis was placed on basket weaving only until a need to promote other crafts surfaced. Though selling mostly to locals, her buyers include some of the local safaris (e.g. Okavango wilderness Safari and Kwando Safari). However, she noted that there is very limited cooperation between the small handicrafts entrepreneurs and the curio shops, which in her view impedes rather than promote small handicrafts businesses within the Ngamiland region. Curio shops, according to her, could be important sources of information in relation to the type of crafts mostly preferred by tourists. However, she indicated that such enterprises are out of reach to the small handicrafts enterprises due to the poorly developed relationship. Her

market extends as far as Washington DC and Georgia through some friends based in those respective places. Apart from long-term contact with the Department of Integrated Field Services (IFS) and Nhabe Museum in Maun, through workshops and exhibitions, she indicated that the amount of her sales is further facilitated by her marketing strategies, which include simple brochures, and occasionally through the radio station. Though her business is making a bit of profit, the owner mentioned that there are other factors that stifle growth.

The major concern has to do with the issue of place and location, which she says is a common problem amongst the small handicrafts entrepreneurs. Since her business is located on the outskirts of Maun and within her compound, it is difficult for potential buyers to locate her shop. In her opinion the location of such culturally related activities matters to a large extent. Based on her experience, tourists in most cases prefer buying crafts from curio shops that can easily be found all over the shopping complexes around Maun. She holds that, in order to attract a market for your products, intense marketing strategies has to be put in place that includes simple board showing direction to your outlet. The Department of IFS and Mhabe Museum usually help market her crafts through exhibitions. The small entrepreneur also acknowledges the importance of developing contacts in the form of personal relations. This according to her is important to small handicrafts enterprises as it creates a conducive environment that allows for easy exchange of services. Her dream is to get a bigger place, which is not isolated from other services. However, she mentioned that since her business is still at the *survival stage*, that dream could only go a long way. She indicated that such dreams could only be realized if the government was strongly committed to the development of small handicraft businesses. She holds that, government should go beyond facilitating access to credit to cover issues relating to business skills and management. She also calls upon NGOs to play a catalytic or seeding role by encouraging alliances and networks that will promote small business development

6.1.2 ‘Mosophane’s craft vendor’

Opposite the Engen petrol station and the newly built shopping center in Maun, one cannot help noticing Mosophane’s beautifully displayed crafts attracting a lot of tourists. The small handicraft vendor which sells from the street is run by a local ‘tswana’ man with the help of his wife, sells mostly wooden crafts hand-made by the owner himself. Amongst such crafts include animal crafts (e.g. lions, cheater, rhinos, buffalos, and giraffes), wooden bowls, chairs, as well as traditional jewellery. Initially he used to sell vegetables in the street until he decided to set up a street craft vendor from his savings in year 2004. Though start-up capital proved to be difficult to secure, the owner mention that his determination, willingness, and love for craftwork gave him more of a reason to go on. In his view, it is during the initial stage of the business that such problems relating to start-up capital discourages most artisans from venturing into craft related activities. ‘Since the collapse of FAP, there has not been any scheme set up to address the financial needs of entrepreneurs at the grassroots level. Therefore, starting and maintaining a business at that level has proved difficult for most locals. Those that try usually give up along the way or divert to another line of business’, he says. He feels that not much effort is made by the government to financially encourage the production and development of crafts in the region. In his view, the newly established financial scheme, Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency, is not easily accessible as compared to the previous FAP.

The current scheme, he says, demand a detailed viable business plan before one can get finances to start a business. According to him, due to lack of education, it is difficult for people at his level of business to draw up the required business plan. ‘Even if you do manage to come up with the business plan, there is no guarantee it will go through’, he says. He further stated that some of his friends have tried applying for finances to start up craft businesses, but their application did not meet with success. Located nearer and along the Shorobe–Maun road that leads to Moremi Game Reserve, his street vendor sells mostly to tourists who normally pass on a daily basis. Though his products are not common in Maun, the owner complain of the fact that demand for his crafts by the curio shops located in such hotels as ‘Sedia’ and ‘Rileys’ is very low. He stated that such places are not keen to encourage small enterprises. The entrepreneur

further mentioned that foreigners run most of the curio shops in Maun, and as a result a lot of crafts are derived from such place as South Africa, Zimbabwe and as far as Indonesia. Though he admitted selling crafts from some of these places, especially those from Zimbabwe, the motive, he says is to provide a wide range of choice for tourists.

In terms of sales, Mosophane's selling strategy has more to do with the number of products and advertising. Since his craft vendor is beside the road, it is important that he set up a display that will capture the tourist's eye. Advertising according to him should be well thought of. 'It is one of the factors that have contributed to the collapse of most local handicrafts businesses', he says. He strongly recommends that the government should constantly organize workshops to further promote entrepreneurship, which according to him is lacking amongst the local craft entrepreneurs in the region. Entrepreneurship in his view has to do with having an innovative capability as far as production, management, selling, and marketing is concerned. This according to him includes the ability to attract as well as reaching a compromise with your customer. In order to maintain your business, he says, 'you must take some of the challenges as opportunities'. A situation arises when he has to bargain for prices with the tourists, sometimes being led to sell crafts at an even lower price. Prices range from P5-200, determined by size, design, style, and quality. Of the animal crafts, the big five (e.g. lion, cheater, rhino, elephant, and buffalo) are sold at P200 each. However, during desperate situations, the price for one of the big five's can go as low as P100.

Making a monthly profit of P2000, the owner mentioned that his business is more or less in a *survival stage*. There are not enough surpluses made to further develop the business. He also indicated lack of a proper selling place as the greatest barrier to gaining profit since he is forced to display crafts in the sun and as a result products tend to lose value. Transport to secure wood for his products is yet another obstacle. Means of transporting wood over a distance of 20km include donkey carts, wheelbarrow, and bicycle. He mentioned that, delays in securing material sometimes affect production in terms of quantity.



Figure 4 Tourists admiring and bargaining for crafts on display.

In order for local entrepreneurs like him with inadequate capital to further develop their handicraft businesses, the craft owner suggested that the government should make efforts to build a market place for local artisans to sell their crafts. Such places, according to him, will reduce the problem that most artisans encounter of securing a place to start-up a business. Also it is within such a craft market that they can come together as artisans and develop an exchange relation that will facilitate access to information. In his view, by bringing together artisans under one roof, it will make it easier for the government to develop a handicraft association within the Ngamiland District in their efforts to encourage local participation in tourism activities. He further stated that there should be accelerated effort in protecting the craft market in the district since a lot of Zimbabweans are taking up the market by selling crafts on the streets without licenses, contrary to the government law, which does not allow for such kind of business to take place in the country. Accelerated efforts he says, are needed to promote craft in the region. NGOs in his view are non-existent. He indicated that such organizations should work in collaboration with government and small entrepreneurs to form a craft association in the region. ‘There is need for a Botswana National Directory that will make people aware of the available local businesses’, he says.

6.1.3 'Etsha 6 craft shop'

About 250 km west of Maun lies the village of Etsha 6 and home to the Botswana Church of Council (BCC), a cooperative that support Etsha basketry project in the region. The village is important for the study as it is amongst the first villages where crafts were commercialized before it spread to other parts of the Ngamiland District, more especially to villages west of the Okavango Delta. The Manager to the Etsha 6 craft shop affiliated to the now Botswana Church of Council, indicated that commercialization of crafts in the region can be traced back to the late 1960s or early 1970s. 'This was at a time when there was an influx of 'Bambukushu' refugees from Angola' she says.



Figure 5 craft shop at Etsha 6

To her knowledge, initially basketry and woodwork was produced mainly for agricultural or household uses within the villages of Etsha, until the then World Council of Churches encouraged locals to supplement their agricultural produce with income derived from selling crafts. Currently, Etsha 6 craft shop, a small-scale handicraft enterprise serves as a collecting and marketing agency for hand-made crafts produced by the local community in Etsha 6 and peripheral villages. The craft shop run by the villagers with eight employees operate as a marketing outlet for producers in the region. The manager mentioned that, the community shop financed through BCC in Etsha 6 operates in such a way that it purchases crafts from artisans, mainly baskets using the basket grading system

mentioned earlier to define quality. In this case all types of baskets produced are purchased from the locals irrespective of quality, unlike Quality Baskets that mostly purchase the best ones. 'The main objective is to encourage local artisans as well as promote cultural tourism within the Okavango region', she says. The artisans are allowed to bring their crafts four times in a month (once every week). As an artisan herself, she indicated that such an arrangement is preferred by most artisans in the region, unlike having to sell to the curio shops in Maun and waiting for 60 days before payment is made. She also placed emphasis on the nature of cooperation that exists, such that as artisans they are always assured a fair deal as compared to when they sell to individual buyers. She mentions that curio shop owners are into the habit of cheating them since they lack basic business skills. The terms of trade are in most cases not in favour of the locals. 'Payment for crafts sold can be delayed up to 3 months' she says. In that way, as artisans they are then discouraged from selling crafts to the curio shops by themselves. Products sold at Etsha 6 craft shop include baskets, animal crafts, bracelets and necklaces with the lowest price going for P11. The crafts purchased from artisans are then resold to tourists while some of them are sold to Botswanacraft in Gaborone.

Though she manages the shop and produces crafts at the same time, she identifies herself more with other artisans, as they all share the same problems in terms of producing baskets. Working closely with other artisans, the idea is to help sell and market crafts in the region. Therefore, BCC usually organizes workshops once a year aimed at improving the quality of crafts. It is during such workshops, she says, that as artisans they are given expert advice on good quality and style as well as basic business ideas on how they can start up their on businesses.

Some of the artisans are hired by Botswanacraft, which also run a selling outlet in Etsha 6. Botswanacraft, a private agency, she says, has in the past years emerged as the biggest buyer of crafts in the Ngamiland District. It operates as a marketing company for crafts workshops and individual craftspeople. It also deals largely with exports, and actively encourages the continued production of traditional crafts and the development of new items. It currently runs a group of 12 master weavers in Etsha 6 who are paid a monthly salary of approximately P300. According to the artisan, and the manager of Etsha 6 craft shop, the master weavers are also paid a percentage of the sale value of all

the baskets they produce. Such arrangements, according to her, are set up in order to attract the artisans to produce only for Botswanacraft. The top quality baskets produced by the weavers are in turn sold to other regions of the country and outside, with prices ranging between US \$100-350. She indicated that each basket takes a maximum of three weeks to make depending on size. ‘This is a clear indication of the monopoly system enjoyed by such private companies at the expense of artisans’ she insisted. She stated that, the main problem they face in Etsha 6 has to do with the scarcity of raw material especially for making baskets. The palm tree (*hyphaene petersian*) or ‘mokola’ plant mainly found in the islands of the Okavango river and delta is one of the plant species that support the livelihoods of some ethnic groups that are found in the Ngamiland District.



Figure 6 Palm tree ‘*Hyphaene petersian*’ or ‘*Mokola*’ plant

The fibre from the leaf blades of the juvenile palm tree is an important raw material used for the production of baskets. The dye or colouring for ‘mokola’ leaves is mainly obtained from roots of trees such as ‘motlhakola’ (*Euclea divinorum*) and ‘motsentsila’ (*Berchemia discolor*). In her view, these are the most preferred species for dye as they add quality to the baskets. The scarcity of these raw materials in the region of Etsha 6, she says, has resulted in artisans traveling a distance of 10 km to collect materials. Shortage of transport is noted as a problem for locals within the village. She further

started that, efforts initiated by BCC to grow ‘mokola’ palm in Etsha 6 met with failure. This failure, she says, can be attributed to the bureaucratic process within the government in terms of securing a plot to grow the palm tree. However, BCC has in the past years succeeded in growing ‘motsentsila’ seedlings in their nursery. The seedlings according to her are then given to the weavers to plant in their own yards or fields. When asked about her perception of the government as well as NGOs on the role they play in promoting crafts in the region, she mentioned that both party should work jointly to help improve local handicrafts businesses. Their contribution over the past years, according to her, has not been fully recognized. She further indicated that the only time they get to meet officials from the Department of Tourism, Nhabe Museum, and IFS in Maun, is when such departments are desperately in need of their baskets to exhibit during the local or national shows held once or twice a year.

6.1.4 ‘Gumare craft shop’

The village of Gumare is situated 30 km south of Etsha 6 and along the Okavango Delta. Home to the ‘Bayei’, Gumare is amongst the places in Ngamiland where craftwork contributes a major part of the woman’s sources of livelihoods. The commercialization of crafts influenced by the ‘Bambukushu’ tribe from Etsha 6 can be traced back to the early 1980s when Botswanacraft was the only marketing organization for crafts in the Ngamiland District. The village is important for the study as it consists of a cooperative ‘Ngwao Boswa’ formed by Bayei women in the village. This is taken as an example of how collectiveness is important for development of handicrafts in the Ngamiland District. An interview with one of the artisans, and member of the committee for the cooperative, reveal that since as artisans they are unable to make it on their own, they find it rather beneficial to come together and jointly sell their products. As a result a small handicraft enterprise was opened through the initiatives of Botswanacraft, serving as a collecting and marketing outlet for hand made crafts produced by the local community.

According to the artisan, the cooperative serves as a form of employment for the majority of women in the region. The income made from selling their baskets via the craft outlet can then be used to support their families. An artisan can make up to P1000

monthly depending on the number of basket produced. She notes that a committee runs the cooperative and as weavers, they meet regularly to discuss ways by which they can improve the standard of their weaving, design changes and also share ideas on how they can develop more market for their products.



Figure 7 Local artisans sharing ideas on how to improve the quality of their products

However, she mentioned that a lot of conflict characterized their cooperation, especially amongst the committee members where some artisans always want their ideas to prevail at the detriment of others. Such tendency, she notes, is always triggered by the need for other artisans to benefit more. From her experience, in most cases artisans produce up to 3 baskets a month depending on the size of the basket. One major thing that affect production, she says, has to do with the fact that weaving is carried out at a domestic level and it usually collides with household activities. She mentioned that it would be very helpful if the cooperative have its own transport to help artisans in transporting raw material (palm leaves). In that way the artisans would not have to travel long distances to fetch the raw material.

In terms of sales, she says, the market is very limited. Their craft shop, which is at the moment *struggling to survive*, relies on tourists that pass along the main road. She indicated that the curio shops in Maun situated approximately 220 km away, do not

purchase many crafts. 'They usually buy once every 3 months' she says. The artisan mentioned that NGOs such as Conservation International (CI) should help market their crafts locally, nationally, and internationally. In her view, in order for 'Ngwao Boswa' to achieve its goal, there is need for a joint cooperation between the locals and other enterprises within the Ngamiland District. The goal, she says, is to provide income-generating opportunities for women in Gumare who are unemployed and economically disadvantaged. This according to her has been partly achieved now that baskets are preferably produced and almost replacing agricultural activities. Therefore, women in the region are now better off than before. However, effort, she says, should be directed toward promoting individual enterprises through financial assistance. In that way artisans can benefit more than when in a group. Committee members, she says, should be given intense training more especially in relation to business management and marketing strategies.

6.1.5 'Shorobe Baskets'

On your way to Moremi game reserve approximately 43 km north of Maun lies the village of Shorobe. Closer to the headquarter of Ngamiland District (Maun), Shorobe village stand to benefit from various tourism activities in the region. Basketry is the main handicraft activity in the area. An interview with one of the elders, and artisan involved in basket production, reveal that Shorobe Baskets, a small-scale handicraft community shop that used to sell crafts on behalf of the local artisans, has closed down due to poor management. According to the artisan, initially there was a joint cooperative, Bokamoso Basketry, affiliated to the craft shop and since the shop closed down most of the artisans now produce individually in their homes.



Figure 8 Shorobe Baskets shop closed down due to poor management.

The village of Shorobe comes as an important place for consideration for this study in relation to the consequences that comes about due to poor management and lack of cohesion by locals involved in craft production. Though closer to Maun as compared to Gumare, the artisans has not been able to re-group and form a cooperative. The artisan, who did not have much information as to why the shop was closed down, mentioned that the only thing that comes to her mind is the fact that most of the artisans in the village are elderly women, therefore, the younger artisans who were in charge of the shop has since moved to Maun to look for jobs. Since the shop that was the only source of their household income closed down, it has been tough to survive over the past days. The sales made from selling baskets, she says, could go as high as P500, and that could take care of their basic needs.



Figure 9 One of the baskets in Shorobe now used for household purpose

The old lady who is still weaving baskets mentioned that currently they do not have a place where they can sell their baskets. She was happy to show me one of the basket which according to her cost up to P1000. ‘As you can see for yourself,’ she says, ‘it has been laying in that corner for more than 3 months’. She mentions that it will be better if the government can encourage the locals to form a craft society that will bring them together as artisans and help market their crafts.

6.2 Curio Shops

The curio shops identified for this study, mostly situated in Maun village, form those medium-scale enterprises to which small handicrafts entrepreneurs sell their crafts. Though operating at a lower scale, the distinction is made to differentiate the two. The motive was to get information from curio shops in relation to craft production, marketing, and development in the Ngamiland District as well as their perception on the role-played by government towards local craft development in the region. It was also to determine the nature of exchange relation that exists between curio shops, local artisans and other enterprises within the district. An interview carried out with the manager of General Trading Company revealed that the owners are South African by nationality. This is clearly indicated by the type of crafts sold that make up 85% of their products mainly from South Africa and other countries.



Figure 10 Craft from South Africa sold at General Trading Company.

She further mentions that though they prefer local crafts, not much is produced locally to compete with the diverse choice in South Africa. Only 5% of the local crafts, most of which is basketry, she says, is bought from the local community in places such as Gumare and Etsha 6. In her view their location that is, easily accessible and within reach to the tourists, offers them a chance to acquire ample information in relation to what the tourists normally prefer. Therefore, an attempt is sometimes made to pass the necessary information to the small handicrafts entrepreneurs in order for them to improve their products and make them attractive and stylish for the tourists. According to the shop manager the local entrepreneurs who always prefer to keep their crafts as traditional as possible do not always put such tips into practice. ‘We don’t have a choice, she says, ‘if the tourists want the crafts nice and shining with a modern touch to them, then we are only forced to get them from places such as Zimbabwe and South Africa’. Great emphasis, she says, is placed on good quality, quantity, and design as well as what is regarded fashionable in the market. Though the shop occasionally buys crafts from ‘Ngwao Boswa’ in Gumare, she further mentions that the quantity of baskets is usually low between 50-100. The required payment terms, according to her, is approximately 60 days. Therefore such enterprises are in most cases not willing to wait that long. She stated that the other reason why they don’t purchase crafts locally is because some crafts especially baskets from Etsha 6, are extremely expensive. A basket going for P100 from

South Africa can be bought at almost double the price in Etsha 6, she says. The operation manager for Quadrum, another curio shop in Maun, indicated that they prefer to buy local craft since some of the tourists like them. However, most of their wooden crafts come from Zimbabwe, which according to her are nicely made. 'The local craft entrepreneurs never consult us to get information on what the tourists prefer'. In most cases, she says, producers often come up with the wrong ideas, designing what they like themselves and not what the tourists prefer.

The manager for African Art and Images situated at Maun Airport stated 'the main problem has to do with lack of organization as well as basic business management skills on the side of the small handicraft businesses. Marketing is not sufficiently carried out, artisans must go to where the tourists and curio outlets are located and not remain in the villages, the ability and capability to explore and search for new market for their products is lacking'. In his view, it's difficult to find where some of them are based because marketing is insufficiently carried out. Amongst the competitive strength for such type of businesses, he mentioned venue (location), advertising, and the right contacts. He emphasized that the handicrafts entrepreneurs should make effort to develop contacts within and outside the country that will enable them to sell more of their products. There are so many problems surrounding small handicraft entrepreneurs, he says, and the main obstacles have to do with lack of proper education and financial constraints. It is only by working together that such small entrepreneurs can get information on new and existing customers as well as better skills for their enterprises 'It will be better that the government can identify all these problems and develop strategies specifically directed towards crafts development in the Ngamiland District', he says. He indicated that as curio shops managers, though they have ample information that can be of benefit to the small handicrafts enterprises, there is little that they can do unless a craft association is put in place that will incorporate all the concerned parties. It is through an association, he says, that problems relating to quality, quantity, production, competition, and marketing can be addressed.

6.3 Commitment and support towards handicrafts development

Following the above interviews in small handicrafts enterprises and curio shops my study further went on to consult those well-informed members within the government and NGOs. The motive was to gather information in relation to the activities that has been carried out over the past years in relation to handicrafts and community development.

6.3.1 The Government

The Department of Integrated Field Services (IFS), National Museum, and Tourism are the main government bodies responsible for the development of craft in Botswana. Situated in Gaborone, the capital of the country, both departments are represented by their officials across the country. In the Ngamiland District, the department of Integrated Field Services responsible for handicraft activities in the region can be found in Maun village. An interview with the officer in charge reveals that efforts are currently being made to promote crafts within the region. Such efforts, she says are manifested in the form of exhibitions at district, national, and international level. Their department is working in collaboration with other government officials in the region from places such as Nhaba Museum to bring together artisans for exhibitions. The Art division of the National Museum based in Gaborone also helps to promote crafts through the organization of exhibitions, workshops, and seminars.

Through the Southern African Development Community (SADC), a regional programme for the promotion of all forms of artistic expression has been initiated. Over the past years a number of workshops has been carried out nationally in an effort to choose the best that can represent Botswana's art and crafts. Various crafts usually on display from variety of crafts producers all over Botswana include baskets, traditional and contemporary ceramics and pottery, woodcarvings, beadwork, tapestry work. 'The yearly exhibitions sponsored by Debswana Diamond Company are taken as a clear demonstration of the commitment towards promotion of arts and crafts especially at the grassroots level' she commented. She further mentioned that some handicraft entrepreneurs feel that these kinds of exhibitions promote the same people every year. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that workshops and exhibitions are more

inclusive, covering a large number of handicrafts entrepreneurs especially those in remote places.



Figure 11 Nhabe Museum Basket Exhibition 2004

An employee of Nhabe Museum in Maun indicated that craft entrepreneurs are usually approached in January to start producing their products for the exhibition, held every year between June and July. The exhibitions, she says, are meant to encourage them to produce good quality work. Therefore, prices are allocated based on quality and style. Most of the crafts, she added, are baskets from such places as Shorobe, Gumare, and Etsha 6. According to the IFS officer, the main problem they have is that most of the artisans in the Ngamiland region produce crafts at a family level for domestic consumption. Artisans, she commented ‘are not motivated to produce in large quantities thereby setting up small handicrafts businesses’. They complain of start-up capital and a place to sell their products. However, she mentioned that in order to address such problems, plans are underway to build a big market place in Maun village, bringing together artisans under one roof and individually market their crafts directly to tourists without having to sell through cooperatives. ‘It is only through joint efforts that cultural tourism can be further developed in Ngamiland District’, she says. In her view, over the past years a lot of emphasis has been placed on finished products while such problems

relating to transport for raw material has not been adequately addressed. She further suggested that in order to solve the problem of transport, it would be best that the government collect material and sell at a low price to the artisans. This, she says, will equally ensure that resources are not harvested in an unsustainable manner.

Another major problem that affects the growth of craft related businesses in the region has to do with lack of basic education amongst the local handicrafts entrepreneurs. Therefore, more training, she says, is needed to address this issue. According to the education and training officer from the Tourism Head Office in Gaborone, efforts are being made to sensitize the public about the importance of tourism and encourage them to venture into tourism related businesses. This, he says, is done through public awareness campaigns, distribution of posters and brochures, and also showing videos covering different themes on tourism. Such campaigns extend to public schools as well. He further mentioned that the rigidity and bureaucracy of the government often makes it difficult to accomplish their mission. 'It usually takes time for projects to take effect', he says. The IFS officer in Maun further stated that since the collapse of the FAP, most of the handicrafts businesses have collapsed. Therefore, the government is looking at plans to set up a new financial scheme, Local Entrepreneurial Authority (LEA) that will directly address the financial needs of the local community. The scheme is meant to be easily accessible and more specific to the needs of small local entrepreneurs.

6.3.2 NGOs

Over the past years, efforts have been made by various NGOs and private sector organizations to build the required capacity at community level in leadership skills and strategic planning, marketing, and financial management. Such organizations have emerged as Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) project facilitators across Botswana. The CBNRM⁸ approach is based on the assumption that rural people who live (and bear the cost of living) with natural resources must be given the responsibility and the right to manage and benefit from these resources, in order to value and use them in a sustainable manner. Approximately 8 NGOs in Botswana offer

⁸ CBNRM- Is understood development approach that fosters the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources and promotes rural development through community participation and creation of economic incentives

CBNRM-related services to communities. The services range from providing technical advice on natural resources management to organizational development. Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) whose activities extend as far as the Ngamiland is one of the NGOs interviewed for the study. In an interview, one of the officials indicated that in most cases their NGO help the Community Based Organizations to prepare and implement a CBNRM project. As part of their mandate, KCS and other related sectors have helped promote natural resource conservation by local communities, while at the same time ensuring economic benefits in the form of employment and revenue. She also indicated that over the past years attention has been directed towards conservation of natural resources while less focus has been placed on community development. The availability or scarcity of natural resources used for basketry in Ngamiland District, she says, has been a major issue of concern. Therefore, various workshops have been carried out in order to teach artisans methods of harvesting resources in a more sustainable manner. Amongst such methods includes using a knife to cut leaves of the palm tree instead of using an axe or a hoe, which usually cut the whole plant. Furthermore, artisans are reminded to cover the hole after cutting and also cut roots from one side of the tree and leave the other. Artisans are also encouraged to plant the palm tree in their home gardens or farms.

In her view, the attitude towards resource conservation by the local handicraft entrepreneurs is generally positive. However, she mentioned that the entrepreneurs usually complain of transport in securing raw material for their products and it is because of such obstacles that they constantly harvest palm leaves in the same area. Mosophane, one of the handicrafts entrepreneurs has been noted to say the same thing. The challenges they face she says, 'is to prove to the government that their services are of quality standard, effective, and cheaper than the government can provide them'. Most of the CBNRM projects in the Ngamiland region are constrained by factors such as lack of entrepreneurship and managerial skills in the tourism business, that is, the lack of training and capacity building. This according to her is one of the areas where further development is needed. Accelerated training on small-scale tourism entrepreneurship, she says, should be carried out by NGOs in collaboration with other tourism related sectors.

Summary

This chapter reveals constraints faced by the small handicraft entrepreneurs. It indicates that, at the *start-up* stage, problems are linked to poor access to finance, lack of education and training, and poor location. While those factors that affect *development* are attributed to poor designs and quality of products, lack of marketing skills, lack of information and lack of entrepreneurship. Other constraints to development are competition from cheaper products from neighbouring countries and limited support services. Lack of raw material and transportation problems has been noted to affect growth in terms of the quantity of products. This chapter further highlights the attitudes and views of the handicrafts entrepreneurs towards the intervention by the government in the production and marketing of crafts. The entrepreneurs stated that the government has in the past years failed to provide them with the necessary support and assistance. It also highlights the extent to which NGOs are working to support activities by the local community. It was observed that activities by NGOs through CBNRM programmes put more emphasis on conservation of natural resources while less focus is placed on such issues as entrepreneurship and business management. This findings shall be discussed in detail in chapter 7 following.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

The following chapter discusses the main findings of the study as identified in the previous chapter.

7.1 Financial Services and Schemes

Insufficient cash and credit facilities, especially start-up capital have been identified as a major constraint faced by small local handicrafts businesses in the Ngamiland District. According to Pedersen & McCormick (1999), securing finances to establish a small enterprise has always been a major problem in developing countries, especially in Africa. Borrowing money from the bank is not easy since small enterprises often do not have collateral security, in the form of title deeds to their land. In my study small handicrafts entrepreneurs also complain of lack of financial assistance, especially start-up capital. They feel that the current Citizen Entrepreneurial Developmental Agency is inappropriate for their needs. The major concern focuses on inadequate information in accessing the financial scheme to further develop their businesses. It was identified that due to lack of education, entrepreneurs are unable to come up with the required business plan. Craft businesses have seasonal revenue but require a steady flow of capital. Because they struggle to raise a sufficient level of capital they are often unable to provide the market with large quantities of products.

My study establishes that the small handicrafts enterprises interviewed fall in the survival stage. The findings confirm Churchill and Lewis (in Morrison et al. 1999) stages of small business development that a significant number of tourism related businesses seldom progress beyond the initial existence stage due to financial related problems. In my study, firms with informal management systems and a strong reliance on start-up capital, characterize small local craft businesses in the region. Such capital is in most cases informally sourced, mainly from family or personal savings. When an entrepreneur makes it to the survival stage, such as the case of Quality Baskets, the key problem is revenues and expenses. The expenses encountered by small handicrafts entrepreneurs include transport, and expansion costs. Furthermore inability to wait long periods for

payment, as is the situation with artisans from Etsha 6, makes it rather difficult to enter into supply agreements with major retailers such as General Trading Company in Maun who require between 30 and 90 days to pay. By grouping together, the small entrepreneurs can overcome such financial constraints, especially start-up capital. They may jointly organize their transport of raw material and further increase the quantity of products. By developing personal relations and forming financial groups, handicrafts entrepreneurs can devise ways and means by which they can raise the initial capital for their businesses, which might be difficult to secure when on their own.

7.2 Marketing

Marketing is essential for the success of small handicraft enterprises. However, my study indicates that the entrepreneurs carry out insufficient marketing. This is mainly attributed to lack of finance as well as strategies on how to adequately market their products. In her study, Terry (2000) stated that better road signs are required for craft shops in Etsha 6 and Gumare. An effort has been made by such enterprises as Quality Baskets in my study to put up a board showing where the small business is located. However, such signs have been noted to be unappealing and invisible. Therefore, it is important that the signs are attractive and easily noticeable in order for tourists to be tempted to visit their craft shops. It was also noted in my study that efforts by Botswanacraft, which operates as a marketing company and encourages the continued production of traditional craft and the development of new items, has reduced its sales in the past years. As some of the artisans mentioned that government support to promote such marketing agencies is very minimal.

Terry (2000) in her study revealed that there is no consistency in judging the different quality levels of baskets, or development of a pricing structure just around the delta, which makes it difficult for the producers to attain the right prices. In his view the pricing system, based on size and quality by Botswanacraft (above) that can be traced to the mid-1970s, is not consistent. The craft entrepreneurs and private agencies have since adjusted it to suit their own needs. This is driven by the need to make profit by both parties who have to resell the crafts to the tourists. According to Mbaiwa (2003) the problem has to do with the fact that these organizations and individuals work independently, that is, they do not have any collaboration or association to improve their

activities. Respondents from my study indicated that such efforts to develop local activities through Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programmes in the Ngamiland region have not been successfully carried out. In their view a lot of emphasis is placed on conservation of natural resources while issues relating to how they can effectively market their products are not adequately covered. Therefore, it is important for such NGOs like Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) to work closely with the government and further extend their work beyond conservation of resources to cover local entrepreneurship.

Johansson and Håkansson (in Grabher 1993) reveal that no actors' activities are performed in isolation. To some degree, each actor's activities are embedded in a wider framework of industrial activities. Therefore, activities of one actor are always dependent on a number of activities performed by other actors. It is through learning that the activities of one actor are eventually modified and adapted to activities of other actors, so their joint productivity is maximized. My study revealed that being easily accessible and within reach to the tourists, the curio shops in Maun village are in a better position to acquire information in relation to what the tourists prefer. However, the operation manager for Quadrum curio shop held that local craft producers hardly consult them to get such crucial market information. The link between the two has been noted to be very poor. Having isolated themselves, due to their inability to explore and search for new markets, craft entrepreneurs fail to tackle issues such as buying prices, resource availability/scarcity and resource conservation. Marshall (1919) holds that, instead of having only the price and quality of a good or service as a determinant of whether and how a transaction is made, it is suggested that socio-cultural factors play a catalytic role in such a decision. The underlying values are trust, reciprocity, collaboration and communality. Contrary to this fact, my study identified that the level of cooperation and trust that exist between the enterprises involved in crafts activities is very low. Due to the manipulative nature of some curio shops as well as private agencies, local entrepreneurs are very skeptical when dealing with such outlets. As the manager of Etsha 6 craft shop has already stated, the terms of trade in most cases are not in their favour. She holds that, in most cases, curio shops do not keep their promises. At the same time the curio shops are into the habit of cheating them since they lack basic marketing strategies.

Furthermore Bras and Dahles (1999) mentioned that by establishing cooperative networks and banding together small industries could afford the consultancy services that are beyond their research as individuals, they could also market their products jointly. My study reveals that the small handicrafts entrepreneurs operate in isolation and do not cooperate amongst themselves. Brettis (Rasmussen and Nielsen 2003) also emphasized the fact that currently changing market conditions coupled with unstable market conditions makes it rather difficult for a firm with few products to ensure survival. As individuals are constrained by scarce finance, demand and market information, local small handicraft entrepreneurs can establish a network association that will help market their products. Therefore, grouping of small enterprises according to Rasmussen and Nielsen (2003) have played complementary functions and collaborate by pooling services, dissemination of technologies and exporting promotion amongst themselves. It was noted in my study that none of the local craft entrepreneurs was willing to take the initiatives. However, this is attributed to the fact that most of the locals do not have any idea on how to go about it.

In addition, poor marketing of craft products within the Ngamiland region is associated with the location of some of these enterprises that are excluded from the significant flow of tourists. Quality Baskets on the outskirts of Maun village is one of those small handicrafts businesses affected by this. Rasmussen and Nielsen (2003) indicate that the main problem of small enterprises is not their size, but their isolation from new markets, knowledge and opportunities for financial support. In terms of selling, my study identified that the craft entrepreneurs' bargaining power is often low while that of tourists is very high owing to a wide range of alternative curio shop to which the tourist can turn if dissatisfied. Since the entrepreneurs are in such a competitive situation, they always strive to keep prices, and hence costs, down.

7.3 Lack of Information

Graber (1993) indicated that within the embeddedness framework cooperating partners must find one another in a world of incomplete information. The process of search, he says, is largely influenced by their primary relations with other firms as well as by the relations of other firms to others. Relational features of networks enhance the ability to

transmit and learn new knowledge. My study reveals that small handicraft entrepreneurs lack information in three key areas. Firstly, finance information relating to how they can get more finance for their businesses, second, demand information on new and existing customers, and thirdly, information on how to get more or better skills for their businesses. It has been identified in my study that such cooperatives in Gumare (Ngwao Boswa), run by Bayei women, do not have enough access to information, relating to how they can effectively and efficiently sell their products. Though the women meet regularly to discuss ways of improving the standard of weaving and ways in which they can better market their products, such discussions are characterized by conflicts in which some members want their ideas to dominate and ultimately nothing is resolved.

The main question to be raised in this regard is how information poverty affects these small entrepreneurs. According to Duncombe and Heeks (2001) this means that entrepreneurs fail to make decisions, or make the wrong decisions. It means that entrepreneurs fail to learn or learn the wrong things, and that has a direct effect meaning they waste money, waste time, lose out on income and often go out of business, as is the case with Shorobe baskets. Information poverty in his view makes entrepreneurs isolated, uncertain and risk-averse. Therefore, it is important that the government help the small entrepreneurs to access better quality information that is more relevant, more timely, and appropriate. Information relating to finance, business organization, planning, and marketing strategies should be made available to local handicrafts entrepreneurs in order to enable them to take advantage of the available opportunities. In that way such enterprises stand a chance to *develop* and *grow*. This can be facilitated by encouraging networks between the concerned partners, in the form of a National Handicraft Association (NHA). Marshall (1919) singled out the benefits derived from the embeddedness of networks such as the easy exchange of ideas, information, and goods, accumulation of skills and innovative capability, as well as the development of cultural homogeneity. That he says, further facilitate cooperation, trust, and consensus between both groups. However, such a network in Ngamiland District is poorly developed and therefore needs to be promoted by both government and NGOs as a form of social capital for small handicraft entrepreneurs.

7.4 Availability of Raw Material

The production of craft in the Ngamiland District is under threat by increasing levels of environmental degradation resulting from over-harvesting of materials by producers and the absence of sufficient measure by the government to ensure the replenishment of materials. Cunningham and Milton (in Mbaiwa 2003) reveal that ever since the commercialization of basket production in the Ngamiland, natural resources have been over-utilized. It is due to such problems that artisans in Etsha 6 and other places are forced to travel long distances to secure raw materials. Mbaiwa (2003) mentioned that though literature shows scarcity of raw material in Ngamiland, not much is done to encourage communities to practice sustainable harvesting methods. In his view such problems will further affect the development of handicraft businesses in the region.

Hardin (in Mbaiwa 2004) indicates that over-harvesting and utilization of the raw materials used for basket making has the potential of resulting into a ‘tragedy of the commons’ scenario. That is, harvesting of these materials in the same area with no control and monitoring may ultimately affect basket production. ‘It also has the potential to affect prospects of a sustainable cultural tourism industry in the Okavango Delta’ (Mbaiwa 2004:232). It was identified in my study that the bureaucracy by the government relating to securing a plot to grow the palm tree, as is the case in Etsha 6, further stifle effort by the locals to engage in conservation measures. More support is needed to ensure that communities manage resources in a way that will not affect future utilization. Local communities should be provided with land to grow those natural resources that are important to their lives.

7.5 Entrepreneurial Culture

My study further reveals that there is poor understanding amongst the local entrepreneurs of what is involved in running a business. This is due to lack of basic business skill pertaining to management strategies, marketing, management of finance, and other entrepreneurial skills needed for a successful business, such as critical and creative thinking, goal setting, human relations and communication, and problem solving. In their article entitled *A Guide to starting a Tourism Enterprise in Botswana*, Hancock and Potts (2002) mentioned that it is normally easier for individuals to develop entrepreneurial

skills than for a community. Being a diverse group of individuals, a community has its strength and weakness. It is possible that some members may have entrepreneurial skills, while others who do not may prevent the group from setting the required goals and taking the calculated risks to attain them, as is the case in Gumare (Ngwao Boswa) where the cooperative is characterized by conflict of ideas on how the women can effectively develop their market. Hancock and Potts (2002) further highlighted some characteristics of a successful entrepreneur, that is, along with skills and experience; an entrepreneur should possess a tremendous amount of energy, drive, vision, determination, adaptability, honesty, persuasiveness, and perseverance. However, it was identified in my study that such qualities are lacking amongst small handicrafts entrepreneurs. There is no culture of entrepreneurship. The owner of Quality Baskets differentiates herself from other local entrepreneurs in the region due to her ability to take risk thereby investing profit made back into the business. *However, this small handicraft enterprise along with the rest interviewed, are still at the survival stage.* There is still more that has to be done by the government to further encourage some of these craft entrepreneurs who have acquired a bit of knowledge on how to run a business and what it takes to survive in a competitive business environment. The reason for going into business by some locals is for subsistence only and not to make profit. That is, the attitude towards business in general is poor such that entrepreneurs operate from hand to mouth without any intentions of saving and further developing their business.

According to Mbaiwa (2004) the lack of entrepreneurship and management skills in tourism can be attributed to the narrow Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme that has since promoted conservation of natural resources while less attention has been directed towards social empowerment and economic development. Mbaiwa (2003) further stated that while on the one hand producers have acquired basket-weaving skills, on the other hand entrepreneurship and managerial skills to run successful basket production and marketing units for tourism purposes have not been achieved. He noted that accelerated efforts are needed to equip the entrepreneurs with the necessary skills. This acquisition, he says, will better enable them to run their own small-scale enterprises on a sustainable basis. Training programmes should provide a clear understanding of the markets for which they are

producing the craft. This will enable the entrepreneurs to adapt accordingly when the market demand change. Such measures will avoid a situation where artisans produce crafts that they like but not necessarily preferred by tourists. According to Morrison et al. (1999), to be successful, the entrepreneur must consciously or intuitively have a sense of the market and what is required. If the market is ignored, a major risk is being run such that customer response may not be sufficiently positive to bring about success. It has been noted in my study that not enough effort is made by the small handicrafts entrepreneurs to explore their market and come up with strategies that can best ensure their success in a very competitive environment. Their ability to respond to unexpected demands in terms of price war, and increased demands of products is lacking. According to Mbaiwa (2004), in order for cultural tourism to succeed, empowerment through entrepreneurship and managerial skills in the tourism businesses should be given priority.

7.6 Education and Training

The school education system in Botswana has been criticized for being biased against self-employment. Small-business training is left on the hands of Integrated Field Services (IFS) and parastatal institutions alone. The quality of such training has been noted to be poor, and only few courses have been available. The GEMINI study (cited in SMME Report 1998) indicated that 93% of micro and small enterprises owners had not received any business training, mainly in relation to basic skills needed to start-up a business. According to the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises Task Force Report (1998), small business development in Botswana has in the past years been constrained by lack of relevant educational, vocational and training opportunities. Responsibility for providing these services has always been left on the hands of government institutions, which have lacked appropriate staff to meet the challenge. The report further calls for appropriate measures that will ensure that entrepreneurial education and training is significantly improved.

My study reveals that not much effort is done by the government to educate locals about the importance of maintaining quality and quantity of their products when running a business. The manager of General Trading Company complains about the poor quality of

baskets as compared to some of those they get from South Africa. At the same time, the quantity of baskets produced, especially from Etsha 6 and Gumare was noted to be very low. My study held that the development of the craft industry within the Ngamiland District is further stifled by lack of product diversification. Lack of product diversification in this region can be attributed to the continued promotion of only one type of craft (basketry) through exhibitions by responsible government departments. Most of the crafts sold are basketry, while wood products and pottery are not common. Therefore, this inadequacy alters the economic returns of crafters and their ability to survive in the long term. It is imperative or rather essential that funding for the development of craft be made available and channeled into education and training. Funding should focus on product development and design. The Department of Integrated Field Services (IFS) and Tourism are important structures for this training, along with tourism related NGOs.

In addition to product development my study found that a lot of training and education is needed in the area of marketing. Small handicrafts entrepreneurs need to be equipped with the necessary marketing skills as well as improve the quality of their products to enable them to highly compete with products from South Africa and Zimbabwe. Such training should consider the level at which entrepreneurs operate and highlight various marketing strategies to be adopted. A lot of focus should be placed on customer service as well as efficient ways by which entrepreneurs can relate to others within the same field.

7.7 Support Services

My study reveals that activities related to crafts such as exhibitions in the Ngamiland and Botswana in general have in the past years placed more emphasis on basketry while other craftwork including wood products have been neglected. Mbaiwa (2003) further indicated that such tendency clearly shows lack of diversification of craft production in efforts directed towards developing cultural tourism in the district. He also noted in his study entitled *The Socio-Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism Development in the Okavango Delta* (2002), that the poorly developed nature of cultural tourism in the

Ngamiland District is attributed to the fact that in marketing the Okavango Delta in developed countries as a tourist destination, a lot of emphasis is placed on the nature of wilderness without drawing attention to the socio-cultural and economic structure of the inhabitants in the region. In his view development officials and researchers need to be fully aware of the skills possessed by the local people, that is, in their effort to facilitate craftwork as well as find its role in the growing ecotourism. All concerned parties should first acknowledge such traditional skills. The South African Craft Report (1998) shows that countries such as India, Mexico, and Morocco have actively developed the economic potential of the craft sector. It holds that the success of the strategies employed to develop the craft sector is dependent on sustained support and intervention from the government as well as financial assistance. My study notes that it is not sufficient to teach marketing skills. At the same time government should help create a market. According to Mbaiwa (2002) poor monitoring of tourism activities and implementation of policies make the tourism industry to expand in a haphazard manner. 'The support mechanisms are not sufficient to buttress individual talent investment in activity. Those who seek to try their hand in any form of craft production are intimidated. All too often their intimidation stems from not knowing how to proceed to grow a production of a few pieces to a more stabilized regularity of a production line' (Craft Exhibition speech 2002). Emphasis is placed on intervention to support individual entrepreneurship, not to stifle it.

Plans to promote tourism through public campaigns and mobile exhibitions should also market crafts along side. However, some officials share the same views as small handicrafts entrepreneurs in terms of the rigidity and bureaucracy of the government, which often makes it rather difficult for them to achieve their goals. The South African Craft Report (1998:83) emphasis added:

Although Botswana has adequate finance, and extensive Institutional Framework and the requisite policies, it has not been entirely successful in fostering citizen entrepreneurship; especially in manufacturing ...the openness of the economy allows foreign competition against local enterprise, further undermining the development of local entrepreneurship. However, it is highly unlikely that the Botswana government will become more interventionist to protect local enterprise. Indeed, further economic liberalization, in view of the requirements of the World Trade Organization and the opening of South Africa to the international economy, will lead to increased competition and pressure on local enterprise. The prospects for citizen enterprise development are bleak. Reservation policies are not likely to work in the new order. Wage and labour controls are unpopular and may lead to loss of support for the regime. Direct financial supports are also unsustainable, given the fall in revenue from diamonds and the lack of other sources of economic growth. *The promotion of partnership between the public sector and the private sector may hold the hope for maintaining some form of citizen control over the national economy diversification of the mineral dominated economy.*

My study indicates that institutional arrangement and support services are insufficient to stimulate and build small handicraft enterprises in the Ngamiland District. Therefore, the main question that needs to be addressed is what alternative strategies and policies are needed to ensure the success of small handicraft enterprises. This is an important question that needs to be considered when it comes to developing policies aimed at stimulating the small business sector. In order to bring about progressive change, my study held that there is need for good research that will help make informed choices about alternative ways of doing things, thereby enabling a choice to be made between more and less effective strategies to attain certain goals. This is addressed below.

7.8 Policy Environment, Strategies, and Development

My views, based on the findings, indicate that the business viability objectives and actions proposed under the Botswana National Ecotourism Strategy (2002) have so far been beautiful on paper but could not be implemented. There is poor monitoring of activities and policy implementation that further cripple the development of the craft sector. The support mechanisms are very minimal. My study reveals that the business viability objectives and proposed actions initiated through the National Ecotourism Strategy (NES) has not been successfully addressed over the past years. One of the actions proposed to encourage collaboration between eco-tourism operators, as an

attempt to reduce economic constraints associated with small-sized businesses, has still not been achieved. My study establishes that local operators within the craft industry operate individually and therefore struggle to upgrade themselves and hence develop. One of the handicraft entrepreneurs suggested that it will be helpful if the government can build a craft market that will bring together artisans under one roof. Such measure he says will further facilitate information sharing and cooperation between the locals and even makes it easier for the buyers to find them.

My study reveals that facilitating improved access to finance for prospective entrepreneurs, another objective listed under the National Ecotourism Strategy still remain a major problem. This is indicated by the absence of appropriate financial services or schemes to assist small businesses involved in the production of crafts. Within the National Ecotourism Strategy efforts were made to promote citizen enterprise development through the newly established Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA). However, it was noted that CEDA still remain out of reach for the local entrepreneurs and does not necessarily cover most of the financial needs previously provided by FAP. To my view, based on the findings, the current financial scheme that demands a detailed viable business plan is not appropriate for locals given the fact that their level of education is very low. Moreover, my study identified that not much effort has been made by the government to encourage enterprises with a similar focus to link up thereby providing national networks of single-interest activities as proposed within the National Ecotourism Strategy. Local entrepreneurs are reluctant to take the initiative to form an association and therefore needed to be encouraged. My study reveals that so much that is said and written on small-scale business development has little effect on the problems it seeks to address. Policies are often made at a national level with little consideration on how they affect those businesses at the grassroots level.

7.9 Networks Perspective

Based on my findings, the industrial network in the Ngamiland (**Figure 12**) is poorly developed and does not provide a favourable environment for the development of small-scale handicraft businesses in the region. The support given to the small handicrafts

entrepreneurs by the supporting organizations in terms of promoting entrepreneurship and informing policy formulation is very minimal.

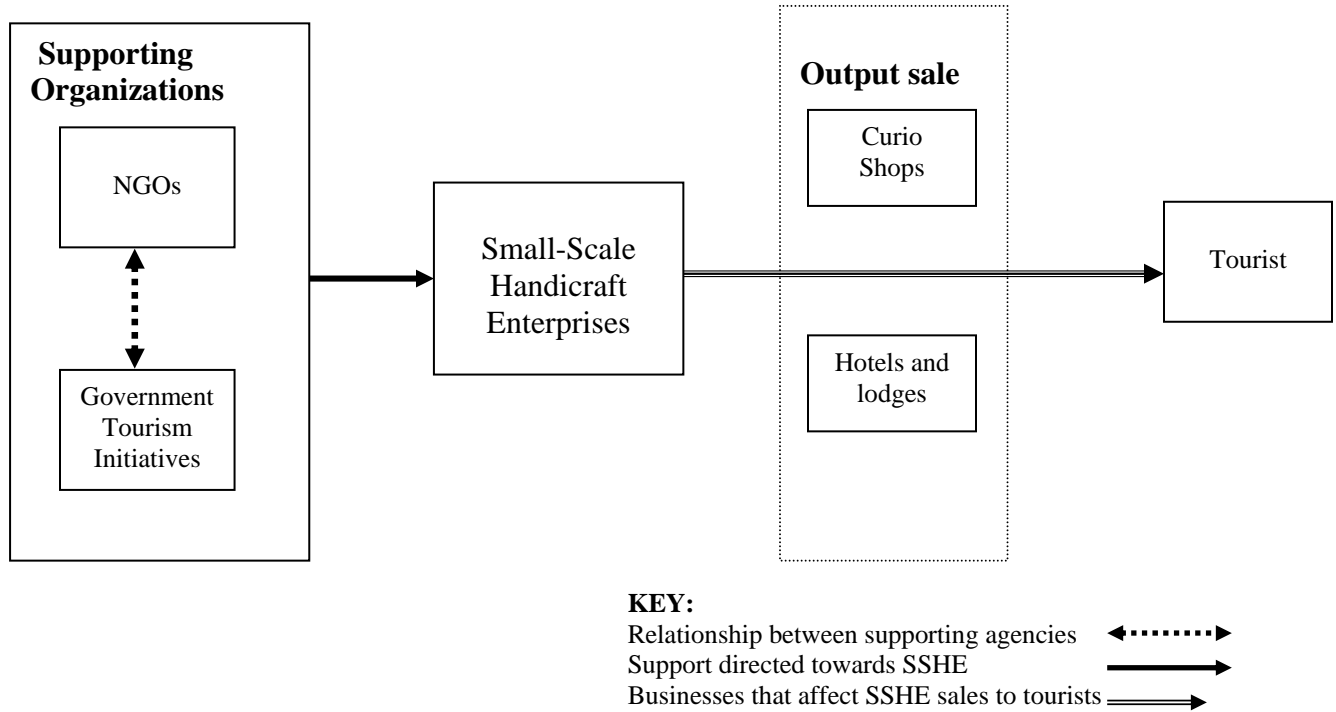


Figure 12 Industrial network system in the Ngamiland District

This is attributed to the lack cooperation between the government and NGOs in terms of sharing ideas. My study reveals that there is still more research to be carried out specifically on the role of entrepreneurship and its importance towards small-scale business development by these supporting organizations. The Ngamiland industrial network is characterized by poor information flow, unfavourable terms of trade and manipulation on the side of small handicrafts enterprises. Limited supply of crafts to curio shops, hotels and lodges by the small handicrafts entrepreneurs is also one factor that affects growth. Sales to tourists are further affected by intense competition from foreign owned curio shops that are better situated as compared to the small handicrafts enterprises in remote places and away from the significant flow of tourists. According to my study the handicrafts entrepreneurs hardly consult curio shops that have direct contact with the tourists due to their favoured location, and get information on what the market

prefers. In the process such problems, surrounding the small handicrafts entrepreneurs, are adequately addressed, my study calls for a network oriented system in which all the small handicrafts enterprises are brought together to form an association. It is within this network that actors involved can learn to trust and share information with each other in terms of trade.

Williams and Motanari (in Riley 2000) held that the economic activities of tourism are embedded within a political regulatory framework. However, this study notes that 'institutional impediments' that are manifested in the form of bureaucracies and rigidity stifle development. Local participation in general and business initiatives of small-handicraft entrepreneurs in particular do not meet with supportive policies. The quality of support is very poor. Instead government often promotes activities at the top with less focus and control below. Therefore, in order for small businesses to survive that environment, my study also calls for a network in which social relations amongst the craft enterprises can play a complimentary function. It was noted in my study that small handicrafts entrepreneurs do not make efforts to develop contacts amongst themselves as well as with other actors within the craft industry. Social processes in the form of personal contacts can play a major role towards an accelerated profit. Through such networks of social relations, small handicrafts entrepreneurs can effectively work together towards a common goal. It is only through collective understanding and common culture that entrepreneurs can excel in their business. However, my study notes that the poorly developed craft system can be further attributed to lack of business culture.

Summary

In sum the chapter highlights the importance of networking in the process that problems surrounding small handicrafts enterprises can be adequately addressed. It notes that by coming together small enterprises can help each other where such problems related to finances, information, marketing and other issues are concerned. Amongst the major constraints outlined has to do with lack of entrepreneurship coupled with limited support and commitment by responsible organizations. It further indicates that the business

viability objectives and proposed actions under the Botswana National Ecotourism have so far been beautiful on paper but has not met with success.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusions

Lack of finance, especially start-up capital, has been identified as one of those constraints that affect the *establishment* of small handicrafts enterprises in the Ngamiland District. Artisans find it hard to secure the initial capital due to the difficulty in accessing the current financial scheme (CEDA). There is need for a financial scheme that will be easily accessible to the locals. In coming up with new financial schemes, it is important that the government considers the level of education among the locals, more especially those that have not been fortunate enough to go through formal education. Lack of finance and lack of training and education are perceived as a source of other problems. Due to problems related to securing finances, small handicrafts entrepreneurs are unable to effectively market their products as well as extend their sales beyond the Ngamiland region. The small entrepreneurs cannot afford to advertise their products or even put up attractive signs to show where their small businesses are located. Access to finance in this case is taken as a facilitator; it does not necessarily guarantee business success.

Information poverty is yet another factor that promotes handicap amongst small handicrafts entrepreneurs. My study reveals that the small handicrafts entrepreneurs lack information in three key areas; a) information on how they can take advantage of the available financial schemes and services, b) market information relating to new and existing customers as well as effective selling and marketing strategies, c) information on business management and entrepreneurial skills. Lack of information coupled with poor marketing impedes *development* of the enterprises. Poor marketing of crafts is attributed to the location of some of these enterprises that are excluded from the significant flow of tourists. Curio shops, which constitute medium enterprises in my study, are situated in places such as the airport, hotels and lodges. Since these outlets have more contact with the tourists, small-scale handicrafts entrepreneurs can learn a lot from them in terms of what the tourists prefer.

My study further identified that the production of craft in the Ngamiland District is under threat by increasing levels on environmental degradation due to over harvesting of

materials by producers. Such conditions are made worse by the absence of sufficient measure by the government to ensure the replenishment of materials. It is important that the government continue to encourage locals to practice sustainable harvesting methods, and also make available plots to grow the palm tree. Problems related to transport also lead to a situation where artisans constantly harvest materials in the same area. Therefore, continued efforts through CBNRM programmes are needed to ensure that artisans harvest material in a way that would not affect future utilization. Lack of raw materials and transportation problems has been noted to affect *growth* in terms of the quantity of products.

Entrepreneurial and managerial skills needed to promote a sustainable craft industry in the Ngamiland region have been noted to be lacking amongst the small handicrafts entrepreneurs. My study found out that lack of entrepreneurial skills amongst the handicrafts entrepreneurs constitute yet another constraint to development of craft businesses. *All the small handicraft enterprises have been noted to be on the survival stage.* There is very limited knowledge amongst the local entrepreneurs of what is involved in running a business. This is due to lack of basic business skill pertaining to management strategies, marketing, management of finance, and other entrepreneurial skills needed for a successful business, such as critical and creative thinking, goal setting, human relations and communication, and problem solving. It has been noted that foreigners in the Ngamiland District have more entrepreneurial experience and are in most cases capable of taking up business opportunities that are not exploited by Batswana. This is evident in my study where foreigners own most of the curios shops in the village of Maun.

My study determined that the attitude and perception of artisans towards the intervention by the government in production and marketing of crafts is very negative. Artisans feel that the government has in the past years failed to provide the necessary assistance. However, they share the same views with some of the government officials themselves in terms of the rigidity and bureaucracy of the government. My study reveals that institutional arrangement and support services are insufficient to stimulate and build small handicraft businesses in the Ngamiland District. The handicrafts entrepreneurs also complain that the government has not been able to provide them with adequate training in

running a business. Though exhibitions and workshops are carried out occasionally to help market their products, most of the artisans feel that such exhibitions promote the same people every year. In order for the government to reduce most of their problem, local entrepreneurs call for a craft market that will bring them under one roof. In that way they will be able to share ideas and improve their products.

Based on the views of the handicraft entrepreneurs, my study also reveals that the support by NGOs in promoting tourism related activities is very minimal. The link between the government and NGOs has been noted to be weak and characterized by poor information flow. Though working with the government from time to time, NGOs such as Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) through CBNRM programmes has in the past years directed attention towards conservation of natural resources while less focus has been placed on community development, dealing with such issues as entrepreneurship and business management.

One can conclude by saying that the problem facing the small handicrafts enterprises is attributed to the fact that crafts are generally perceived across the country as having a very low value and contributing little to the economy. Due to the obstacles discussed above, my study held that currently the small-scale handicrafts enterprises do not constitute a vital innovative force in the tourism industry of Botswana. These enterprises just absorb a labour force that would otherwise be unemployed and at the same time do not allow the locals to explore new tourism opportunities. My study reveals that over the past years the craft industry has not met with supportive policies. In terms of the future prospects for the development of the craft industry within the Ngamiland region, one can say that, a seed does exist and need constant watering to germinate. This should be done through training and education that incorporates various institutional factors. In the process of addressing problems surrounding small handicrafts enterprises should be adequately addressed, my study highlights the importance of networking in which grouping of small handicrafts enterprises can play a complimentary function. Networks of social relations are important as a form of social capital.

8.2 Recommendations

1. Appropriate Financial Services and Schemes

The government should set up a financial scheme that is more relevant and specific to the needs of the handicrafts entrepreneurs. The scheme should be in such a way that it is easily accessible, offering short loans to the small local entrepreneurs payable over a period of one year. When offering such financial assistance, there should be thorough monitoring of activities by officials from the Integrated Field Services (IFS) as well as constant courses on how the entrepreneurs can generate income for their businesses. At the same time small handicrafts entrepreneurs can be encouraged to come together and form financial groups. This will further help them overcome problems related to finance by jointly marketing their crafts and sharing costs.

2. Craft marketing

In addition to improving marketing skills, the government should provide a market place for crafts in the Ngamiland region. By establishing a market place that can bring together artisans under one roof, problems related to location and transport of raw materials affecting growth can be reduced. Efforts to market Botswana as a perfect tourist destination should also promote the cultural aspect and not only concentrate on wildlife and wilderness. In marketing the tourism industry outside the country during international trade fairs, officials should also strive to market local crafts along side.

3. Product Diversification

Together with the government, NGOs should encourage the diversification of products. Experts should be brought from places like Zimbabwe, or even within the country, to further improve skills in other craftwork in the Ngamiland District, especially in the area of woodwork and pottery that is lacking in the region. Because of poor designs, many of the products need improved finishing standards to meet the quality required for sale into the domestic or international markets. By improving the quality of their products, the small handicrafts entrepreneurs can better face up to the competition from imports of

handicrafts from neighbouring countries. Through product diversification, cultural tourism may help the small entrepreneurs to obtain a better footing in the market.

4. Training programmes

Training programmes must place more emphasis on entrepreneurship. There is need to promote entrepreneurial skills needed for the development of small handicrafts enterprises. Further training should aim at to improve marketing strategies, crafting skills and techniques including product development skills. Responsibility for providing these services should not be left in the hands of government institutions alone.

5. Entrepreneurial skills

Activities by NGOs through Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) should go beyond conservation measures to cover entrepreneurship and management skills. It has been noted that local craft entrepreneurs do not possess the necessary skills that can better enable them to benefit from the booming tourism industry in the Okavango Delta. Entrepreneurs should be given a clear understanding of what it takes to be a good entrepreneur with emphasis on planning, organization, management, vision, goal setting, and crisis or risk management strategies.

6. Botswana National Craft Association (BNCA)

The government should help small handicrafts entrepreneurs to establish a National Craft Association that will help in the production and marketing of crafts in and outside the country. The association should be run completely by the handicrafts entrepreneurs with representatives from all government department and organizations dealing with crafts. The association should promote a form of network that will facilitate information sharing. It should further encourage collaboration as well as improve trade relations between the concerned parties. Its objectives should be to communicate problems affecting the handicrafts entrepreneurs and how the government can best assist them. The association should strive to empower the small handicrafts entrepreneurs so that they feel strongly in control of such activities that they consider to be important aspects of their lives.

7. Participatory Approach

Efforts to develop the craft sector in the Ngamiland region should strive to engage the small handicrafts entrepreneurs in decision-making. Local entrepreneurs should take part in decision making in order to enable them to voice their concerns. In that way they will have a sense of responsibility in making sure that their resources are utilized in a sustainable way.

8. Sources of Raw Material

Alternative sources of raw materials are needed to tackle problems related to scarcity of resources. Lack of raw material means that people must learn to improvise in order to maintain production. There is need for serious monitoring and control to ensure that communities harvest raw materials in a sustainable manner. Efforts by the locals to engage in conservation measures should be encouraged.

9. Unity and Support

Any intervention by various stakeholders should be characterized by unity of vision and support. Relevant parties must sit down and decide how they can best work together to improve the craft industry. There is need for increased commitment and support by the government. It is very important that future national developmental plans consider crafts in the process.

10. Policies and Strategies toward Small-Scale Handicraft Development

NGOs should play a vital role in informing policies towards handicrafts business development such that strategies adopted effectively address the problems of those lives or activities it seeks to embrace. Research should further contribute to individual development by opening up new and better ways of doing things based on past experiences. Therefore, new strategies and policies are needed that will contribute to the ability of the small handicrafts entrepreneurs to increase the control they can have over their activities as well as their relation with each other. NGOs in Botswana should become more serious about evaluating the impact of their work and communicate the lessons of their experience back into policy formulation. Their priority must be to bring

people together around common issues in a joint search for progress. They must concentrate on encouraging associations at the grassroots level that may be able to exert pressure for change from below. Alternative strategies should include the perspectives of those who are participating in these strategies. There is need for collaboration between the concerned parties in order for all this to be addressed successfully.

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APPENDIX 1

THE THREE SETS OF QUESTIONS

Part 1

Questions for the small-scale handicrafts enterprises

1. Outline of the Firms History

- (a) What are the main products produced by your business?
- (b) When was your Business first established?
- (c) How many employees do you have?
 - i. 0-5
 - ii. 5-10
 - iii. 10-15

2. Input Material

- (a) What kind of material do you use to produce your products?
- (b) What are the source(s) of raw materials?
 - i. Internal
 - ii. External
- (c) What problems do you encounter in accessing these raw materials?
- (d) Are you satisfied with the quality and availability of these raw materials?

3. Selling and Buying

- (a) What are the markets for your products?
- (b) If yes, where do you sell most of your output of products?
 - i. Locals – (what shops or informal outlets)
 - ii. Tourists – (where)
 - iii. Hotels and Lodges (which)
 - iv. Other, please specify
- (c) Why should a customer prefer your products, do you offer?
 - i. Better quality
 - ii. A lower price
 - iii. A higher profile (figure/form)
- (d) What does your sales depend on?
 - i. Price
 - ii. Advertising
 - iii. Design
 - iv. Others, please specify
- (e) What profit margin per unit do you need monthly to keep your business running?
 - i. P500-1000
 - ii. P1000-5000

- iii. P5000-10000
- iv. 10000-20000

- (d) What do you do with the surplus you generate from this business?
(Reinvest in what, where, why/ consumption)
- (e) What is the greatest barrier to gaining profits and expanding your firm?
- (f) How do you respond unexpected demands in terms of?
 - i. Price war
 - ii. Increased demand of products
 - iii. Others, please specify
- (g) How do you respond to slimmer profit margin?
- (h) What do you think are the future prospects of your target market?
- (i) Please outline the changes your business has made to deal with the crisis or setback.
- (j) To what extent is your business successful and Why?
- (k) Have businesses like yours closed down the last five years, if so which and why

4. Marketing Strategies

- (a) What do you consider to be the best way of marketing your products?
- (b) What problems do you encounter in marketing your products?
- (c) Do you market your products outside the country?
- (d) If, yes what form of marketing strategies do you use?
- (e) Do you get any help in marketing your products?
- (f) Where is the sales outlet?
 - i. Sell yourself
 - ii. Sells via middle men
 - iii. Sells to shops in hotels and lodges
 - iv. Sell to other shops
- (g) Do you have any plans of expanding your business?
- (h) If 'Yes', what are your plans?

5. Competitors

- (a) Competitors who make similar products are
 - i. Locals
 - ii. Foreigners
 - iii. Others, please specify
- (b) Size of firms which are major competitors
 - i. Small
 - ii. Medium
 - iii. Large
- (c) What do you consider to be the sources of their competitiveness?
- (d) In light of this, what do you do to keep your business at a competitive level?

- (f) What has the organization achieved and how/why?
- (h) What do you understand by trust in business relationships and how does it (lack of it) affect your business?

*Is there something else I should have ask you that I didn't?

Part 2

'Elite Interviewing'

Questions for prominent and well- informed individuals within organizations or community

1.Nature of Relationship

- (a) To what extent is your organization/firm involved with small-scale business Industries?
- (b) What type of information is at your disposal with regard to small business?
- (c) In your view how do you see the importance of small handicrafts business towards their contribution to the tourism sector and the economy as a whole?
- (d) Is your organization/firm working with the government in helping small handicrafts businesses to develop?
- (e) Please specify the type of assistance you offer to such small- businesses

2. Assistance from Government and local authorities

- (a) Can you indicate the type of support offered to small handicrafts businesses by the government?
- (b) Are there any organizations that you are aware of that contribute towards the growth of handicrafts activities?
- (c) What role has the government played to solve the problems faced by small scale enterprises in tourism?
- (d) What policies have been developed by the government to insure sustained growth of small-scale enterprises in the tourism sector?
- (e) How do this policies and regulations affect the core activities of artisans?
- (f) How does government plans for economic development affect small firms?
- (g) Is there any particular types of investment that the government favours in these plans?
- (h) What measures are taken to protect small-scale enterprises in tourism sector against competition from South African investors and other external?
- (i) Outline the strength and weaknesses of the above policies and measures

3. Handicaps imposed on Small handicrafts by their size compared to larger Firms.

Competitiveness

- (a) In your view how do you consider the following as sources of advantage with regard to competitiveness of small handicrafts business?
- i. Product development
 - ii. Scale of production for the products made by these small firms
 - iii. Efficiency of production
 - iv. Marketing expertise
 - v. Channels of distribution which the firms uses

Please elaborate on each

- (b) What do you consider to be the major obstacle for small handicrafts to operate at a competitive level?
- (c) What can be done by whom to reduce the obstacles and improve conditions?

Market

- (a) Do you think there is a market for the various handicraft activities in Botswana?
- (b) If, yes what is the target market and how accessible is it?
- (c) What do you think are the future prospects for the target market?
- (d) Does your firm/organization help to promote handicrafts activities in and around the country?
- (e) What do you require from those you help to promote?
- (f) Are small firms at a disadvantage compared to larger firms with respect to market expansion? In What respect and Why_____
- (g) What strategies should be adopted to help provide small firms with a better market thereby improving their sales?
- (h) What do you get out of this relationship?

Financial access

- (a) Do you think small handicrafts activities are getting the required financial assistance?
- (b) Does your firm/organization contribute financially towards the development of small business industries?
- (c) If 'Yes', how do you ensure that the money given to these small businesses is used for the benefit of the business?
- (d) Are there other organization that you are aware of that financially assist small business industries?
- (e) What's your view with regard to past (e.g. FAP) and present financial schemes set up by the government?

Machine utilization

- (a) To what extent are the following affecting technology choices within small scale industries in general?
- i. Lack of education
 - ii. Insufficient training
 - iii. Inadequate management experience
 - iv. Limited local material

v. Shortage of capital

Miscellaneous

- (a) In your view what do you consider to be the major constraint for the development of small-scale handicrafts within the tourism sector?
- (b) Is there something else I should have asked you that I didn't?

Part 3

Curio shops

- (a) What are the main products sold by your business?
- (b) Whom do you prefer to buy from? (Your best supplies)
- (c) How do you select your suppliers?
- (d) Do you buy directly from the artisans or from the middlemen?
- (e) What emphasis do you put on when purchasing your products?
 - i. Quality
 - ii. Design
 - iii. Others, please specify
- (f) Do you prefer local or external products? Why local, other places in Botswana, Foreign (countries)
- (g) Do the products differ in quality and style from local, national & foreign suppliers?
- (i) What do you require from your suppliers?
- (h) How often do you purchase your products?
 - i. Daily
 - ii. Monthly
 - iii. Other, please specify_____
- (i) What terms of agreement do you have with your suppliers?
- (j) Do you get a constant supply from the artisans or is there a delay due to the following
 - i. Shortage of material
 - ii. Transport problems
 - iii. Insufficient technology
 - iv. Others, please specify_____
- (k) To whom do you sell your products?
- (l) Do you sell the products at the same amount that you purchase from the artisans?
- (m) What is the price range?
- (n) Periods of the year with high levels of sales
- (o) How would you describe your competitive strength compared to small handicrafts?
- (p) Do you think small handicrafts activities get enough exposure in terms of marketing their products?
- (q) How do you as a medium enterprise help the artisans overcome their problems?
- (r) Is there any association between the firms?
- (s) Do you think there is a market for the handicrafts activities in Botswana?
- (t) How accessible do you think the market is?
- (u) What do you think is its future prospects?

(v) What do you consider to be the major obstacles for small handicrafts to operate at a competitive level?

(w) Do you think the government is doing enough to promote small handicrafts in Botswana?

(x) What do you think the government should do?

*Is there something else I should have ask you that I didn't?