

ANALYSING TOURISM REMOTE TERRITORY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA: A CASE OF MENYAMYA DISTRICT, MOROBE PROVINCE



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Introduction

- *UNWTO defines tourism as the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.*
- Tourism has been recognized as one of the largest and fastest industry manipulating the global economy because of its actual and potential astounding economic impacts.
- Less developed countries like PNG reinvent their wheels to make tourism as a growth strategy to achieve a wider spectrum of their economic objectives.

Introduction

- Tourism is an important contributor for wealth creation in PNG (PNGV2050).
- The country being blessed with unique natural attractions with vast endemic flora and fauna species and a very diverse culture, attracts various types of travellers.
- Most of the unique and strong attractions in PNG that can lure tourists both local and international can be seen and experienced in a ***remote tourism territory***.

Background of the Study

- PNG TPA CEO, Mr Jerry Agus, said Morobe is the largest province in Papua New Guinea in terms of landmass and population with huge potential in terms of developing tourism, but over the years the province hasn't taken advantage of that simply because there was ***no leadership and commitment at the leadership level and at the provincial administration level.***
- Tourism has been a sleeping giant in Morobe province for a good number of years. There are a lot of untapped tourism potentials. Last year (2018), the Provincial Governor Ginson Saonu said, ***“WE WILL REVIVE TOURISM IN MOROBE”***
- Remote Menyamya District in Morobe has been considered a tourism wealth area of the province and the current MP Thomas Pelika will be banking on tourism to take the district forward.



RESEARCH MOTIVATION

- Menyamya holds unique and strong attractions despite its remoteness. If these tourism potentials will be explored and developed, Menyamya will emerge to be a promising remote tourism destination in PNG.
- Despite MOU signed by Menyamya MP and PNG TPA (2019), there has been no tangible results yet. *Through this research, the findings and the information could be helpful for them to devise sustainable tourism plans and programs for a remote tourism territory in PNG.*

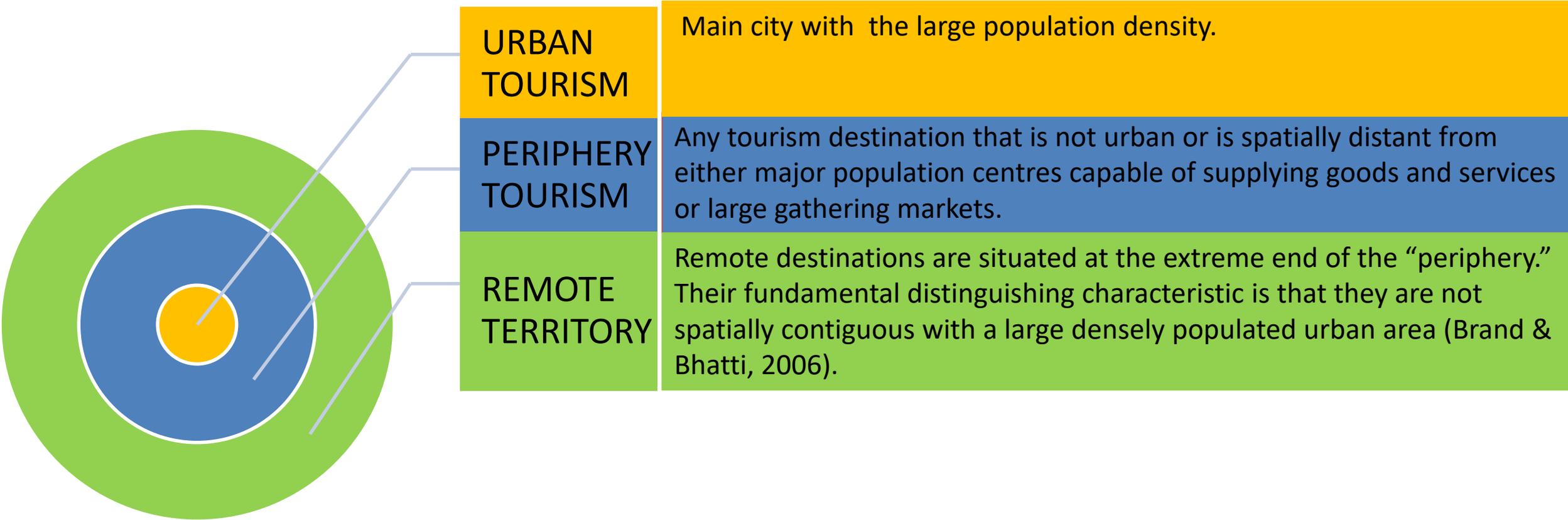
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this paper is to describe a remote tourism territory (Menyamy District) to better understand its dynamics particularly its potentials for tourism whilst analysing the constraints in order to devise sustainable tourism plans and programs.

REMOTE TOURISM TERRITORIES: Definition

- Remote tourism territories are located at considerable distance from major centres of population or economic activity and they are dependent on external market and capital due to lack of internal critical mass (financial & human resources) so they face specific challenges in establishing viable linkages with other places, and become engaged in a process of ***connection seeking*** (Schmallenger, Carson & Tremblay, 2010).

REMOTE TOURISM TERRITORY



Characteristics of Tourism Remote Territories (Biredenhann & Wickens, 2004)

1. Setting Appearance: *Entirely Natural Landscape far from suburbs and cleared farmlands. No built structures.*
2. Infrastructure Provision: *Nil to limited infrastructure provided*
3. Access: *No motorised access, no formed tracks*
4. Interactions with locals: *Not applicable*
5. Market characteristics (Activity vs Destination): *Tourists ask themselves what do I want to do and where can I do it (special interest tourist)*
6. Tourist personality: *Adventurous and willing to take risk (Allocentric tourists)*
7. Size of travel party: *Very small*
8. Information provisions and channels: *Word of mouth*
9. Role of travel guide / company: *Dependence upon guide for facilitating experiential outcomes.*
10. Size of market: *Minority of population*

Research Design

- Qualitative/Descriptive Case Study
- Primary Data- Interview
- Secondary Data- Desktop Research/Literature Review
- Document Analysis

Tourism Statistics

Global, National, Provincial

GLOBAL (2018)

- 1.4 billion international visitor arrivals
- Contributed to \$8.8 million of the world's economy
- created 319 Million jobs, 1/10 jobs globally
- Generated 10.4% of all global economic activity

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (2018)

- 94,627 Visitors (9.5%▲)
 - K691.3 Million in tourism receipts
 - Average length of stay: 9.3 nights
 - Purpose of Visit:
 - 50% Business
 - 33% Holiday
 - 17% Visiting Friends/Family
- (IFC, 2018)**

MOROBE PROVINCE (2018)

- **9,462 visitors (10%)**
- **Mostly business travelers (IFC, 2018)**

Tourism Products in PNG (Niche Market)



Adventure

- 20% of holiday visitors
- Spend USD10.3 Million
- One person spends on average \$1,603 per trip
- Average length of stay = 11.2 nights

Historical

- 6% of Holiday Visitors
- Spend USD5.3 million
- Each person spends \$2,767 on average per trip
- Average length of stay is 9.2 night

Cultural

- **21% of total holiday visitors**
- **Spend a total of USD24.8 Million**
- **Each person spends on average \$3,673 per trip**
- **Average night of stay is 11.6 nights**

Bird watching

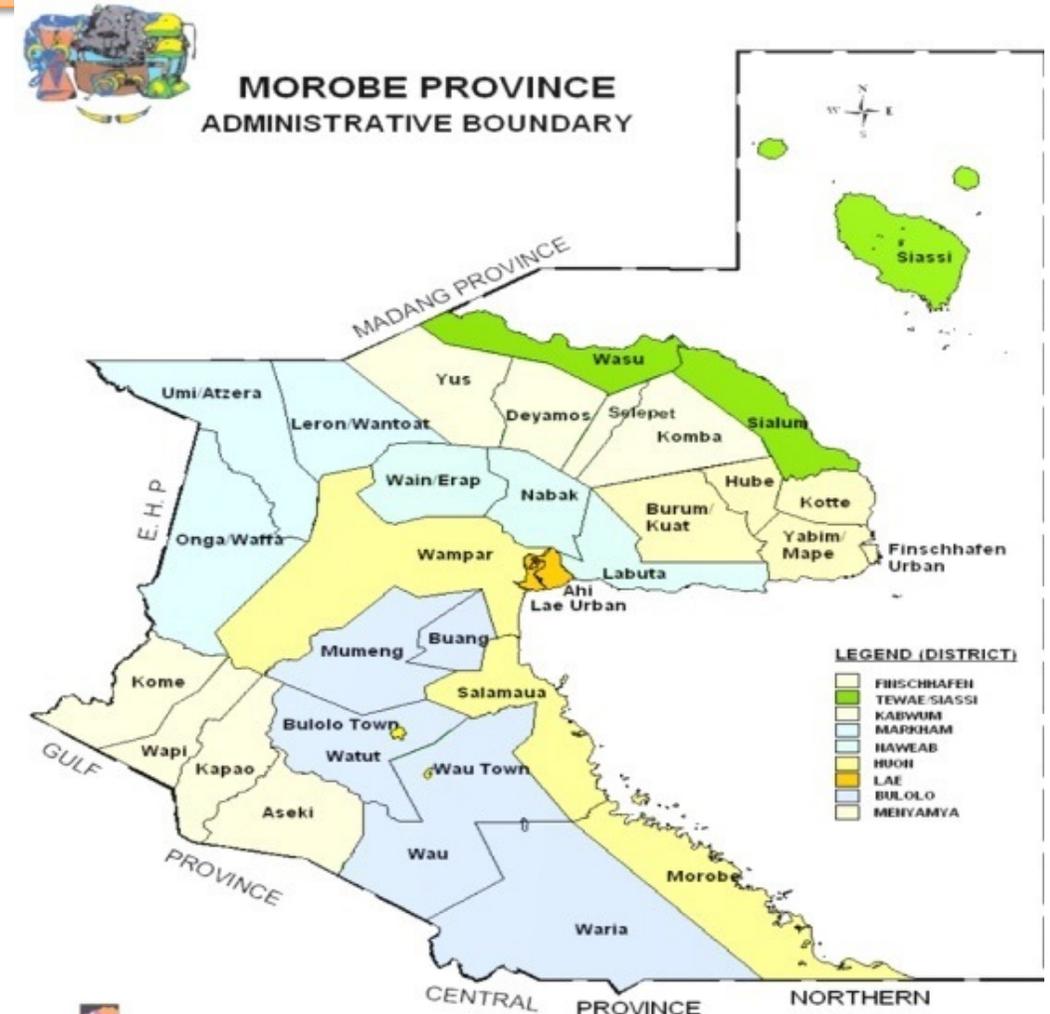
- 4% of holiday visitors
- Spend a total of USD9.5 million
- Each person spends \$7,392 on average per person
- Average length of stay is 16.7 nights

Diving

- 12% of holiday travellers
- Spend a total of USD9.9 Million
- Each person spends on average \$2,557 per trip
- Average length of stay is 10.6 nights

Profile of Menyama District

- Menyama District is one of nine districts in Morobe Province and also one of the most neglected one.
- Capital: Menyama
- LLGs: Kome, Wapi, Kapao & Aseki
- Land Area: 3, 729 km²
- Population: 87, 209 (2011 Census)
 - Density: 23/km²



Status of Menyamya as a Remote Tourism Territory

1. Attractions (Tourism Potentials)



Cultural



Adventure



Historical



Birdwatching



Agri-tourism

Cultural Tourism (CULTURAL SHOW)

- Menyamya Cultural Show
Established in 2017, the Menyamya Cultural Show displays a myriad of Menyamya District's cultures, dances, food, costumes and crafts. TPA will provide financial assistance to stage this festival bi-annually.



Cultural Tourism (ANGA CULTURE)

- Anga Culture (also called Kuka Kuka) tribe
- Aseki is home to the Anga Culture. It describes the way of life of the people in and around Menyamyama to Aseki
- With peculiar and gruesome custom of wearing human finger necklaces
- The Anga tribe, while comprising some of the smallest people in the country, was one of the most ferocious and feared of Papua New Guinea tribes and one of the last known to give up cannibalism.
- The Anga is the only tribe within PNG to perform “mummification”

Sources: National Geographic (2016), The Rambling Wombat (2017) & PNG TPA (2019)



Cultural Tourism

Mummified/Smoke Bodies of Aseki

- The purpose of mummification in cultures that perform it is usually the pursuit of eternal life, or at least of the continued physical presence for those who have died (National Geographic, 2016)
- The Anga used to smoke their dead and leave the mummified bodies in burial caves and cliff ledges to watch over their descendants.
- Under the current MOU, PNG TPA will support the development and promotion of the smoked bodies of Aseki as a major cultural tourism product of Menyamya and Morobe Province.



Adventure Tourism

- Mountaineering
- Bush walks
- Trekking
- 4 Wheel Driving
- Motorcycle
Adventures such as
Dirt Bike Riding



Historical Tourism – Bulldog Trail

- This track was deemed to be more difficult: longer, steeper, higher elevation and rougher than the more famous Kokoda Trail
- Bulldog Track is the Kokoda's little brother
- The Bulldog Track was an important supply line and evacuation route for Australian military forces based at Wau in 1942.



Bird Watching

- Trek the famous Bulldog Track beginning in Lakekamu Basin, a huge forested basin rich in birds and wildlife (PNG-TPA Website).
- Access to bird watching sites is a major impediment.



Agri-tourism In Menyamya

- Aseki-Menyamya areas are known for producing high organic coffee. The climate is perfect for year-round coffee farming.
- They have the world class honey
- Menyamya has fresh produce fruits and vegetables. Apples are also grown there. However, according to Pelika (2018), Menyamya lack market opportunities to sell fresh produce.



Status of Menyamya as a Remote Tourism Territory

2. Accessibility

- Accessibility to whole of Menyamya District is only by road as all airstrips are currently closed (TPA, 2019).
- Deteriorating roads and impassable to any type of road transport except for Toyota Land Cruiser.
- 8 hours drive from Lae to Menyamya
- The current road condition will cost a traveller K50-K100 to travel using PMV's from Asenki to Menyamya and then to Bulolo and down to Lae through some rough but amazing sites (Pelika, 2018).



Status of Menyamya as a Remote Tourism Territory

3. Amenities

Accommodation

- 2 Lutheran Guest Houses
- Other available accommodation facilities but not to standard.

Telecommunication

- All Vsat and telecommunication lines are out

Health

- 2 Health Centres run by Lutheran Health Services.
- Most government aid posts are closed.

Water Supply

- Water is supplied through tanks in the station.

Banks

- All banking services are out except for bank agents

Power

- District headquarters is powered by diesel generator but for 2 hours daily. Schools operate their own gensets.
- There is also a hydro project proposed for Menyamya

Why Develop Tourism in Menyamya-A Remote Territory in PNG?

- Morobe Province basically attracts business travellers and by developing remote territories like Menyamya, the province may attract genuine leisure tourists.
- Menyamya has a unique culture and strong attraction regardless of its remoteness (TPA, 2019) that can entice special interest and allocentric tourists.



Why Develop Tourism in Menyamya-A Remote Territory in PNG?

- According to Pelika (2018), *“Menyamya has so much in history that needs to be told to the outside world with some of its unique sites, culture and traditional beliefs including its physical environmental surroundings.”*
- Menyamya can offer PNG’s major tourists products for leisure travellers like cultural tourism, adventure tourism, historical tourism, and bird watching.



Tourism Constraints & Challenges (General Perspective)

- Infrastructure
The main challenge in Morobe province (IFC Survey, 2018) and Menyamya District
- Safety and security
- Cost and price
“Hefty entrance fee, equivalent to around US\$25 plus an additional and exorbitant \$US150 fee should you wish to take photographs”- The Rambling Wombat, 2017
- Lack of general awareness
- Ineffective public service machinery (corruption)
- Cultural sensitivity
- Threat of commodification
- Lack of accommodation facilities

Tourism Constraints & Challenges (PNG- TPA Perspective)

In Morobe Province:

- Lack of leadership
- Lack of political will
- Lack of support from the ground

In Menyamya District:

- Accessibility (roads)
- Lack of basic amenities and facilities
- Budget constraints
- Land owner related issues
- Community preparedness to accept tourism activities
- Communication network and other related infrastructure
- Lack of capacity to develop tourism

Conclusion

- Menyamya has a lot to offer as a remote tourism territory. Its strong and unique cultural practices are its primary pull factors which are complimented with other potential tourism products. These may captivate the interest of PNG's niche market regardless of its remoteness.
- Menyamya's "disconnectedness" from the core and periphery tourism areas hinders its economic progress and may affect successful implementation of future tourism development plans and programs
- The identified constraints and challenges in developing Menyamya as a potential remote tourism territory tend to emerge from the absence of political will and direction to deliver, at least, the basic provision of services and facilities, first, to its local people.

Recommendations

- Effective “remote tourism planning” is required to develop and promote cultural tourism in Menyamya in order to preserve and protect local people’s socio-cultural fabric and identity whilst embracing tourism.

- For these tourism plans and programs to take off, building fundamental facilities and systems is crucial for tourism and other economic activities to function.

- The development of Menyamya as a remote tourism territory entails proactive roles to be played by the political leaders and other key tourism players in dishing out tangible projects beneficial to both local people and potential visitors.



THANK YOU!

