



Community involvement and participation in tourism development: a Zimbabwe Study

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Abstract

This study seeks to provide insights into the extent of community involvement and participation in the tourism development trajectory within the urban community of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Face-to-face questionnaire surveys were administered to 384 adult members representing each household. The study revealed that communities were not adequately involved in terms of planning, decision making and participation in the development of tourism generally. Communities also perceive the benefits brought about by tourism to be confined to business and government officials as opposed to it being leveraged to the entire community. Communities acknowledge the potential of tourism to accrue benefits to them and express strong willingness to be involved in future development agendas. The paper advocates the need for a concerted effort to capacitate, educate and involve individuals and stakeholder groups in the efforts to remodel the tourism economy in Zimbabwe for long-term sustainability by adopting an innovative community based tourism approach.

Keywords: Tourism development, community involvement, community participation, Zimbabwe

Introduction

In the past two decades, community participation in the development trajectory of tourism has received increased attention from many scholars (see for example Simmons, 1994; Tosun, 2006; Bramwell & Lane, 2003; Okazaki, 2008; Mugenda, 2009; Sebele, 2010; Yu, Chancellor & Cole, 2011; Mugenda, Sirima & Ezra, 2013). The arguments presented by most of these scholars to date have enunciated on the need for communities to be involved in the planning and decision making processes in tourism development initiatives. The rationale provided for such inclusion is to ensure that communities gain ownership and hold a positive view of tourism, so as to make it sustainable. Moreover, as Zamani-Farahani and Musa (2012) posit, the tourism industry relies on the local community's hospitality, explaining that if a host community is happy, it creates a positive image of the destination which in turn generates positive word of mouth. Ambroz (2008) adds that tourism can expand when host residents have a positive attitude towards it and when they feel and see that they have a role in the process of the tourism development taking place in their communities.

Furthermore, Williams (2009) explains that, in the absence of effective planning, understanding of, and participation in tourism development by various stakeholders especially the host community, there are evident risks that any tourism development will become unregulated, formless, or haphazard and also likely to be inefficient and to lead directly to a range of negative economic, social, and environmental impacts. While some research has found the aforementioned risks to be the case in sub-Saharan Africa (See Mugenda, 2009) more research is still warranted to analyse from a country specific perspective, on the issues linked to tourism and the community and to sustainability.



The research foci on community participation in tourism development in the southern parts of Africa has mainly focused on analysing cause and effects in the rural areas, with emphasis placed on community based tourism (See Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015). Regrettably, the focus on urban areas remain limited. Consequently, this study focused on community participation in the tourism development process from an urban community perspective. The focus on Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, and that country in particular, make a useful contribution towards extant tourism literature that has focused on the country.

Overview of tourism in the Zimbabwean context

Zimbabwe is blessed with a number of tourism based products and destinations, which include the famous Victoria Falls, Kariba Dam, Gonarezhou National Park, Matobo Hills National Parks, Chinhoyi Caves and Great Zimbabwe (Chutsi, Mukoroverwa, Katigambe & Mudzengi, 2011; Zunza, 2014). The Zimbabwe economy is mostly dependant on the tourism industry, which is one of the four major sectors of the country's economy along with the agriculture, mining and manufacturing sectors and the sector is seen as a significant contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, investment and export earnings (Chibaya, 2013). Most Southern African countries including Zimbabwe have committed to using tourism as a tool for poverty reduction and improving the lives of disadvantaged communities (Chiutsi & Mudzengi, 2013) hence the country is a signatory to Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tourism Protocol of 1998, which emphasises on tourism as a means to improve the livelihoods of marginalised communities. Data retrieved from the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) (2013), indicates that the industry had witnessed a growth of 20% to 40% since the late 1980s, but it was reported that, of the 1.4 million tourists who visited the country in 1999, less than a quarter of the number visited in the year 2000, showing a dramatic 75% decline in tourism within the space of a single year (Mutana, Chipfuva & Muchenje, 2013). Mkono (2010), holds the view that the stagnant tourism sector meant that, the tourism industry businesses in the country, recorded their lowest demand statistics in decades, with those tourists who had previously frequented the country preferring to visit other destinations, such as the neighbouring Zambia, which is not as developed as Zimbabwe, but which is considered to be more peaceful.

After the land reforms, the government initiated the 'Look East' policy to China hoping to increase tourism activity, however, the policy yielded few, if any, dividends, as the country remained underachieving (Buzinde, Kalavar & Melubo, 2014; Nyahunzvi, 2012). Williams (2009) holds the view that, despite the political turmoil, Zimbabwe's tourism is, however, recovering, with more foreigners starting to visit the country, owing to the inauguration of the Global Accord government in 2009, which has, since then, shown stability and unity, with a growth of 2.3 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2010, which means that there has been an increase of 15% in the number of such arrivals from the previous year (i.e. 2009).

Dodds (2012) states that with many communities now dependant on tourism for their economic livelihood, long-term sustainability through a local, multi-stakeholder process is becoming key for destination management. Comment and Masuku (2013) and ZTA (2014) note that a tourism policy is currently being formulated which will act as a guideline for the tourism sector in Zimbabwe. With a new policy focus, according to eNCA (2014), Zimbabwe's Tourism Minister Walter Mzembi, announced plans to increase the European market from 13% to 31% of the country's tourism industry market. The proposed strategies included rebranding the country's tourism brand to "Zimbabwe-a World of wonders" and adopting community based initiatives. Other future plans for Zimbabwe tourism growth include bidding to hosting the 2034 FIFA football World Cup (Thonycroft & Laing, 2014), which is rather, a misguided calculation, given the current dire state of the economy, which is characterised by poverty and high inflation.

In addition, Nyarota (2016) asserts that the country is taking steps to introduce a Tourism



Satellite Account, which will be used to measure tourism performance and its contribution to the country's economy, the instrument is forecast to help curb leakages, and to help both the government and the private sector to craft tourism policies and strategies for tourism development and improvements. Furthermore, Mzembi (2015) notes that a Visitor Exit Survey was launched in July 2015 to obtain information on visitor characteristics that will assist in developing effective marketing strategies and business decision making by tourism operators, as well as policy formulation and tourism development planning by the government.

Community understanding of tourism

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2007) elucidated that tourism has implications for the economy, natural and built environment, on the local population and the tourists and it is also important for all stakeholders, especially the residents, to understand tourism and its implications for better development of the industry and towards sustainable livelihoods. Okech (2006) highlights the concern of lack of knowledge among local community members, stating that it usually limits their participation in planning and decision-making in tourism development. In addition, Moscardo (2008) is of the view that lack of tourism knowledge limits the community members to be the leaders of tourism projects in their community and also effective planning in tourism development and this has been used as an excuse by many governments in developing countries to exclude the community members in participating.

Studying residents' understanding and perceptions of tourism is important as it clarifies the views of those that are not otherwise heard (Curto, 2006). When the residents understand tourism, and assess its impacts in communities it makes it easier to maintain sustainability and long-term success of the tourism industry (Diedrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009). Johnson and Wilson (2000) are of the view that because most community members do not understand tourism and its impacts, external personnel who have an extensive knowledge of the tourism industry tend to dominate the tourism development process, hence there is an urgent need for community capacity building. Success depends on community level capacity for innovation and leadership which are important variables for the creation and implementation of new ideas as part of the sustainable development process (Kim, 2013).

Community participation in tourism development

Participation is the involvement of all local people and other stakeholders in the formation of programmes or policies that would assist to change their communities (Phiri, 2009). In addition, Croke, Grossman, Larreguy and Marshall (2014) explain that participation is important as it encourages governments to be accountable and also enables locals to be involved in the planning and implementation of projects in their respective areas. Rogoff (2011) is of the view that participation in communities should be a social interaction that benefits the whole community rather than a few individuals. According to Mugenda (2009) community participation is vital in tourism management, as it empowers local members to be involved and participate in the planning of the whole tourism development process. Community participation in decision making encourages people to have confidence in the tourism industry and this improves plans, service delivery and brings the people together as they share common goals (Mugenda et al. 2013). Community participation is often regarded as being one of the most fundamental tools, if tourism is to make a substantial contribution to the national development of a country (Sebele, 2010). Furthermore, Yu et al. (2011) add that the participation of locals at a destination in tourism development is important for successful tourism planning and they should be enlightened about the expected impacts from such development. Host community perceptions and attitudes can positively or negatively affect the tourism development process (Stronza & Gordillo, 2008). Contemporary tourism planning recognises that an integrated and sustainable development approach includes the participation of local communities and residents. Bramwell and Lane (2003) explain that participation in tourism planning for development by



many stakeholders can help to promote sustainable development by increasing the extent of efficiency, equity, and harmony practised.

Tosun (2006), asserts that there are 3 typologies of participation; Spontaneous participation which is when the community has full control and authority, secondly, induced participation, which is when the community have a voice through an opportunity to hear and be heard meaning that the community has no full responsible or participation in tourism development, they have no power to ensure that their views are taken into consideration, often referred to as top-down approach and lastly, coercive participation, where the community is not fully involved in decision-making but some of the decisions are made to just appease the community members by just meeting a few basic needs, so as to avoid socio-political risks for tourism development.

To add to the above typologies of participation, Leksakundilok (2006) asserts, that there are seven more typologies that exist, and he lists and explains them as: Manipulation, where only the government and elite people make decisions and benefit from tourism; Informing, the people are informed of the projects that have been decided on for tourism development but their concerns are not considered; Consultation, the community members are consulted and some of their idea are considered for tourism development in their area, for example they are involved in meeting about the project and surveying; Interaction, community members have a greater involvement, community organisations are the leaders of the tourism development projects and process but have limited support from the government; Partnership, in this type of participation, there is some sort of partnership between developers and community members, the government involves the community by letting them negotiate with external developers and they have some degree of influence in the tourism development process; Empowerment, the community have full complete control over the tourism development process and the locals benefit fully from tourism development; and lastly Self mobilisation, where locals develop tourism themselves and are in direct contact with tourists, they may get help from NGOs but they are in full control of decision making on the tourism development process in their area.

Community involvement in tourism development

The local communities are the focal point of tourism development as they provide the major services at the destination such as accommodation, catering, information, transport and other services (Aref & Gill, 2010). Akama (2011) asserts that the host community should take control of decision-making and be the ones to determine how the resources are to be used in their community because this will encourage them to maintain the structures and practices. The involvement of the local community can encourage the formulation of more suitable decision making and more involvement from locals towards conservation and protection of the environment (Richard & Hall, 2002). The local communities are expected to organise themselves to undertake planning and managing the development of tourism (Asker, Boronyak, Carrard & Paddon 2010) and in addition, they should be involved in all steps of the management of tourism development in their area towards achieving sustainable tourism development (Asian Productivity Organisation (APO), 2004).

In their study, Aref, Redzuan, Gill, and Aref (2010) underscore that the locals are one of the most important components of community development, and that they have a key role to play in the important matter of development. Currie, Seaton and Wesley (2009) express the belief that community involvement plays an important role in sustainable tourism development and incorporation their opinions are evidently vital. Amuquandoh (2010) asserts that the main idea of sustainable tourism development is for locals to be involved and be the main drivers of managing tourism development in their area so that their needs are satisfied, meaning that the local communities are expected to organise themselves to undertake the planning and managing of development. The involvement of the host community should be supported because such



involvement is expected to aid with the formulation of appropriate decisions, and generates an increase in the amount of local motivation, while assisting environmental conservation and protection measures that are likely to be greater than their input (Viljoen & Tlabela, 2007).

The role of the host community in tourism development is vital, and such development of a destination should be planned according to the locals' needs, by involving the local community in the tourism process development (Yu et al., 2011). Such roles include, identifying and promoting tourist resources and attractions that form the basis of community tourism development (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). Given the current foci by the Zimbabwean government, to revitalise/develop a vibrant tourism sector where associated impacts could be harnessed for broader long-term local economic growth and job creation, the involvement and participation of local communities in current developmental efforts is essential. Through empirical data, the study sought insights into the extent of community exposure to tourism, by examining involvement and participation and their general opinion linked to participation intent.

The research study

The case study area from which the primary data was collected for the study was Bulawayo, which is Zimbabwe's second largest city, and which is geographically located in the south-west area of the country. According to Bulawayo 1872.com (2016), the city is home to a heterogeneous community, with the surrounding area having been populated since prehistoric times. In the contemporary era, Bulawayo is seen as having developed from being a town into an international destination, with a rich cultural history. Such richness in culture is underscored by the Bulawayo Publicity Association (BPA, 2013:1) when they assert, "certainly one cannot say that they have experienced the full range of Zimbabwe's diversity, if they have not been to this bustling city in the southern western part of the country of Zimbabwe".

From a tourism perspective, Bulawayo is also known to be the cultural hub of Zimbabwe (Nsingo & Chiutsi, 2013), being comprised of a variety of tourism attractions, three-quarters of which are cultural in nature, including the National Art Gallery, the Museum of Natural History, the Mzilikazi Art and Craft Centre, the Amakhosi Cultural Centre, the Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage and Research Centre, and the Matobo National Park (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), to mention but a few. In addition, Cavendish (2004) suggests that Bulawayo is the home of art and culture in Zimbabwe, with several different tribes being represented within the city's confines, including the Ndebele, the Xhosa, and the Kalanga. The BPA (2013) mentions that the majority of people in Bulawayo speak Ndebele, with other commonly spoken languages including English, Khalanga, Sotho, and Shona. Bulawayo is traditionally the home of the Ndebele people, who were called maTebele, meaning 'refugees' or 'runaways' (Katunga, 2014). Currently, despite the Ndebele monarchy not being as active as it once used to be, the Ndebele people still hold strong to their values and culture. Very few are still involved in traditional ancestral worship, as Christianity now seems to be the prevailing form of worship (Cavendish, 2004).

The BPA (2013) explains that the multicultural city of Bulawayo has given birth to several such internationally known performing arts groups as the Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts (IYASA) and the Zambezi Express. The city has also had the privilege of hosting a few arts festivals, fairs and events annually or throughout the year, including the ever-admired Intwasa Arts Festival, the Imbube Festival, the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, and the A'sambeni Africa Business Tourism Expo. Furthermore, Bulawayo is surrounded by World Heritage sights, as well as by interesting wildlife sanctuaries that best reflect the culture of the entire country, including the Matobo Hills National Park, the Chipangali Wildlife Orphanage, the Mguza Nature Reserve, the Mazwi Game Reserve, the Khami Ruins, and the Tshabalala Sanctuary (Bulawayo 1872.com, 2013). The cosmopolitan nature of the city of Bulawayo in terms of its people and potential tourism offerings, underscore the need for a coherent tourism development and planning foci that considers the input and voices of such people.

The current study made use of a mixed method design that incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. According to Lisle (2011:95), “when mixing both quantitative and qualitative research, the researcher gains in breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration, while offsetting the weaknesses inherent to using each approach by itself”. The researchers’ motive to use more than one method to investigate the question of tourism and community participation in Zimbabwe, was based on Mertens and Hesse-Biber (2012) premise to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings, known as triangulation. In the study, data were collected from urban local community members and local tourism actors, by means of face-to-face questionnaires and interviews.

Local surveys were conducted with a nominated adult member (18 years and above) representing each household, and who were randomly selected participate in the study. According to the most recent data (see Zimstats, 2014) there were approximately 165 345 private households in Bulawayo. Consequently, the sample size was determined at 384 adult respondents based on the sample calculator developed by Isaac and Michael (1981), with the view to ensure that the sample proportion p would fall within .05 of the population proportion, meaning p with a 95% level of confidence. To meet the sample target, the data was collected during a two-month period between December 2015 and January 2016.

Although modified to suit the local Zimbabwean context, the surveys were developed based on extant scholarship on tourism and community participation (see for example Tosun, 2006). The objective of both surveys was to meet the desired study objectives from the above interest groups by adopting a combination of open and close ended questions. This included multiple choice questions as well as Likert type scale questions from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The major variables that were covered in the survey included the socio demographic profiles of the respondents and issues linked to tourism and community participation in general.

Results and discussion

Background of respondents

Table 1 presents an overview of the demographic profile of the respondents. It shows information related to gender, age, monthly income, education level, ethnicity and duration of stay in Bulawayo. The Table show a skewed sample was largely dominated by female respondents (70.4%), compared to male (29.6%). The age of the respondents ranged between 18-85 years, with a vast majority within the working age group of 18 and 54 years. Overall, the respondents could be described as fairly well educated, considering that over 65%% of respondents was busy/had attained some form of higher education. The findings also show that a large proportion (75.3%) of the sample had lived for considerable number of years in Bulawayo (between 10 and over 40 years) which bodes well in terms of providing a historical context of tourism and the community in the case study area. As expected, the community of Bulawayo mostly spoke Ndebele followed by Shona as a local language. Income levels were found to be low, with over 94.5% of those surveyed reported earning household income below USD 500. Many of the respondents were involved in informal business trading, dominated by agricultural produce and livestock as an economic activity.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents (n=384)

Gender	Total, in %
Female	70,4%
Male	29,6%
Age group	
18-24	15.3
25-34	23.5
35-44	22.8



45-54	26.7
55-64	10.1
65-74	1.0
75-85	0.7
Education	
<i>I completed my primary school level</i>	7.0
<i>I completed my secondary level</i>	8.8
<i>I completed my high school level</i>	8.8
<i>I am busy with my undergraduate degree</i>	16.3
<i>I am busy with my postgraduate degree</i>	20.5
<i>I am a College graduate</i>	33.6
<i>No formal education</i>	0.7
<i>I am a degree holder</i>	2.9
<i>I am busy with my diploma</i>	0.7
<i>I completed my postgraduate degree</i>	0.7
Length of stay	
<i>Less than 10 years</i>	25.4
<i>10-19 years</i>	25.7
<i>20-29 years</i>	24.8
<i>30-39</i>	14.4
<i>40 years and older</i>	9.8
Ethnic group	
<i>Ndebele</i>	53.4
<i>Shona</i>	33.9
<i>Kalanga</i>	6.8
<i>Venda</i>	1.0
<i>Tonga</i>	1.3
<i>Sotho</i>	2.0
<i>Other</i>	1.6
Monthly income (USD)	
<i>Less than 100</i>	25.5
<i>101-500</i>	53.6
<i>501-1500</i>	15.4
<i>1501-2500</i>	2.9
<i>2501-3500</i>	1.6
<i>3501-4500</i>	0
<i>4501-5500</i>	0.7
<i>5501-6500</i>	0
<i>6501></i>	0.3

Level of influence and participation in tourism development

Table 2 summarises the extent of to which urban community members participate in the tourism development process from a Zimbabwean perspective. Of major concern is the fact that, a significant majority (72%) indicated that they have had no influence over tourism planning, or opportunities to participate in the decision making (73%) about tourism development of their area. The findings represent a major concern that must be address in the current efforts to revitalise the Zimbabwean tourism economy going forward. In its current form, the findings of this study could suggest that the Bulawayo tourism industry is not consistent in terms of the emphasis made by academic scholarship as well as organisations such as the World Bank on the need for the development of tourism that integrates all stakeholders for sustainable positive outcomes.

The study findings are also inconsistent with the views put forward by Godfrey and Clarke (2000) who argue that the residents of a host destination are meant to take full responsibility for the development that takes place within their community; this enables them to have some influence in tourism developments that take place within their residential area.

Leiper (2004) motivates on the need for community members to be actively involved, and have full influence on what kind of tourism development happens in their communities, so as to



benefit from effectively planned and productive tourism development. Moreover, according to Yu et al. (2011) when communities have an influence in tourism development, it contributes to successful touring planning.

Table 2: Influence and participation in tourism development (n=384)

<i>Statement</i>	Not at all	A little bit	A moderate amount	A lot (a great deal)
<i>I have some influence over tourism planning and development</i>	72%	15.6%	7.5%	4.9%
<i>I have the opportunity to participate in tourism planning and development</i>	73%	14.3%	7.5%	5.2%

Furthermore, a motivation for Zimbabwean authorities to redress the issue of community participation, is also grounded within extant empirical works. For example, Mensah (2012) found that destination host communities and the residents of that area, play an important part in tourism and its development, and without their participation, a holistic community tourism development, cannot be realized or may even result in consequences such as enclave development (Jackson, 2010). Elsewhere, Getz (2010) advocates for the notion that residents of host destination should have control over the development of their particular area, which will serve the purpose of giving them a stake in maintaining structures, or practices, and also, aid to determine the level of impact of tourism on the destination concerned.

While several reasons (lack of awareness of the tourism industry, and holiday opportunities, a lack of culture of taking holidays, poor road infrastructure and signage, lack of coordination between stakeholders such as ZTA, private sector, and the economy and high prices for entrance and activity fees even for domestic visitors) have been put forward as factors that inhibit Zimbabweans from being involved in tourism (Sanderson, Nyamadzawo, Nyarawuta, & Moyo, 2013), the current study found that a substantial number of community members will like to be involved especially in terms of planning and decision making (35%), working in the industry (49%), as well as operating a business (16%).

Who benefits more from tourism in the local community?

Based on the responses recorded in terms of participation, it was therefore not surprising that community members in the current study hold the view that it is the that benefit from tourism (See Table 3) were largely concentrated in the hands of tourism organisations (including micro and macro organisations such as hotels, tour operators etc.) and government officials. This finding illuminates much of what the current situation in sub-Saharan Africa is like, as far as tourism benefit leveraging is concerned. Okech (2010) explains that the value of tourism has always been recognised in Africa, but that relatively few efforts seem to have been made to trickle the benefits down to benefit the local communities mainly due to inadequate planning.

According to Donohoe (2010), tourism can be a source of conflict of interest among the relevant stakeholders (consisting of the local communities, the external actors, and the community members), with provincial guides often being accused of fraud, with them using the profits gleaned from the industry for personal gain instead of for the benefit of the general community. Cultural conflicts also tend to occur between the hosts and the visitors, with such conflicts also occurring among the community members themselves, mostly in relation to the unequal distribution of benefits and tasks and between tribal groupings such as the Ndebele and Mashona.

Furthermore, the results are consistent with Ogechi and Oyinkansola's (2012) assertions that, even though tourism provides employment opportunities for the poor, thereby improving their quality of life, there is still evidence that tourism development, especially in the developing

countries, is still solely managed by the governments and the external companies concerned, largely benefiting them, and leaving the local residents in low-paid positions.

Table 3: Who benefits more from tourism in the local community (n = 384, in %)

	Total, in %
<i>The whole community</i>	17.0
<i>Tourism organisations</i>	56.4
<i>Government officials</i>	26.6

Overall evaluation of tourism impacts

Table 4 shows the responses received from community members in terms of evaluating the current tourism impacts. Over half of the community members believe that the benefits of tourism exceeded the costs to the people living in their community, likewise over half (53.4%) rejected that tourism produces more negative than positive impacts. Evidently, despite the low levels of involvement and participation previously observed above, the finding gives a sense of hope that the residents of Bulawayo might be willing to support additional tourism development projects planned in their communities, as they might feel that tourism comes with benefits, and they might believe that it would be good for their communities.

Table 4: Evaluation of tourism impacts

<i>Statements</i>	Total (n = 384, in %)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Sure
<i>I believe that the benefits of tourism exceed the costs to the people living in my community</i>	7.2	16.9	33.9	19.2	22.8
<i>I think tourism development in the area produces more negative impacts than positive impacts in my community</i>	18.9	34.5	19.5	6.8	20.3

The idea that Zimbabweans may be willing to support future tourism development initiatives and may want to be more involved, could be traced by looking at the extent to which communities are prepared to protect current tourism products linked to their heritage.

The importance of historical monuments and memorials in post-colonial Africa has been important in terms of present-day tourism development, as they tend to contribute to the tourism product offering, despite them equally being a subject of debate in the political arena. In recent times, the argument for the removal of such colonial heritage products has received increased attention. For example, student protests at the University of Cape Town, South Africa saw the removal of the Cecil John Rhodes statue from their campus. Rhodes was the prime minister of the Cape Colony from 1890 to 1896. On his death in 1902, he was buried at the Matobo Hills National Park (a WHS) in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, with his grave coming to be a prominent tourism hotspot in the area. When the respondents were asked whether “*the location of Cecil John Rhodes’ grave attracts tourists to Bulawayo*” (see Table 5), 82.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement, whereas 9.5% were unsure about it. The findings show that the residents strongly perceived the monument as a contributing product offering in terms of tourism.

Furthermore, the respondents were firmly of the view that such a monument should not be removed from the area, considering that the vast majority (80.4%) disagreed with the statement that “*I think that Cecil John Rhodes’ grave should be removed from Bulawayo*”.

A few of the respondents (12.4%) were not sure about the statement, whereas the remaining few (7.2%) agreed with it. The responses that were received to the two statements concerned might imply that the residents of Bulawayo view the Cecil John Rhodes grave as a treasured monument that attracts tourist to the area, regarding it as contributing to the local economy, and holding that, as such, it should not be removed from its present location.

Table 5: Support for the removal of Cecil John Rhodes memorial (n = 384, in %)

Statements	Total, in %				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Sure
<i>The location of Cecil John Rhodes' grave attracts tourists to Bulawayo.</i>	4.2	4.2	45.0	37.1	9.5
<i>I think that Cecil John Rhodes' grave should be removed from Bulawayo.</i>	44.6	35.8	3.3	3.9	12.4

Conclusion

This research has analysed contemporary community participation and involvement in tourism development from an urban Zimbabwean perspective. The diminuendos that emerged and were presented in the paper are reminiscent to several studies conducted previously on the topic. While the study found very limited participation and involvement, it equally illuminates on the willingness of residents to want to be involved in tourism, as well as support future tourism development. The current findings are important, especially in the context of fostering a new kind of tourism development in Zimbabwe and through its current 'rebirth' efforts to reposition the tourism sector as a priority sector that provides job opportunities for citizens and drive local economic growth and developmental agendas. The voices of the host community, and their perceptions of tourism development is crucial for any government or private sector led development initiative.

The study also shows that despite the phenomenal growth in the tourism industry globally over the years, and the forecasted growth in the years to come, there still exist those areas in Sub-Saharan Africa that have not yet been exposed to tourism, planning and must therefore be considered as a priority. Sensitisation and education of communities is important in this regard. Any policy development in Zimbabwe must consider the education of its citizens and how they are involved in planning and participation in tourism. Successful destinations like post-apartheid South Africa has experienced sustained tourism growth, partly owing to the country's recognition of the need to involve and capacitate its citizens (See White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism). Present statistic show that the sector represents a pillar and driver of economic growth for South Africa (Rogerson & Nel, 2016). Therefore, in recognising this, Zimbabwe may be, in part taking a step forward towards revitalising its ailing tourism economy.

However, special attention needs to be taken with regards to community participation and involvement in tourism. Firstly, community members should be allowed and encouraged to be more involved planning, the policy formulation, and the implementation of tourism development, working together with other stakeholders to achieve their common ends. The government needs to lead this endeavour, and to ensure that community members are involved in, at least, some aspect of tourism development. Involving community members in tourism development might act as a form of increasing their levels of understanding.

Furthermore, there is a need for more strategies to be formulated that can encourage more participation and involvement such as domestic tourism and community based tourism. There is equally a need to create opportunities and projects that are aimed at encouraging community members to be more involved either through travelling or entrepreneurship. Affording local communities the opportunity to participate and be involved in the tourism development process can increase their morale and can contribute to a more sustainable tourism development of the destination. Within this context, innovative community based tourism development in local Zimbabwean communities, involving community members, groups, small businesses, and local organizations and authorities, as well as government, is important.



Acknowledgement

The University of Johannesburg is thanked for funding.

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