



The impact of Safety and Security on the behaviour of consumers and tourism demand in South African townships

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Abstract

The perception of tourists about safety and security before taking a trip is one the fundamental considerations that influences them when deciding to visit urban areas including townships, which precisely implies that the choice of a destination is hell-bent on having enough knowledge about their safety and security. Empirical data indicates that safety and security of a destination has direct impacts on the tourists' behaviour and an indirect one on its demand. The researcher's intrinsic inference as being backed by literature is that a consumer's behaviour is inextricably intertwined with the safety and security conditions of the destination. The high demand for tourism in a destination is synonymous with safety measures put in place and this paper goes further to postulate that the consumer demand drops immediately when the protection of tourists is neither guaranteed nor assured. Township tourism has been perceived as a pivotal and integral part of the urban tourism product in post-1994 South Africa. Similarly, almost 25% of all international foreign tourists who go to Cape Town participate and take part in township tours. Unfortunately, recently doubts about personal safety have cast an adverse light on the township tourism packages. The importance of the protection of tourists becomes a requirement for all tourism role players as it can lead to serious and devastating negative effects on economic growth if ignored. Tourism success and its niche depend solely on the safeness of a destination. Unstructured interviews with open ended questions that could be probed and focus groups aimed at triangulating information about uncertainty and doubts on the protection and the safety of visitors were used to elicit details on tourism demand and what influences the behaviour of tourists as consumer when choosing a destination. This paper shows unequivocally that relaxation and protection are intertwined and therefore very fundamental in the townships of South Africa. This paper also argues that the government of South Africa needs to drive all the needed safety measures in order allay the fears of both domestic and international tourists.

Keywords: consumer demand, protection, attitude, township visitation, perception.

Introduction

According to Korstanje (2011) tourism seems to be an activity that is inextricably intertwined with mobility and the technological advances that have resulted from the process of modernity. Human beings have often been found to be fond of travelling to various destinations, notably, with their trips associated with countless challenges of security and safety (Tarlow, 2009). It has been observable that safety and security issues are considered to be a motivational factor for the travelling of large communities and tourists (Breda et al., 2006).

The crux of this study is rhetorically and linguistically arguing that being sceptical and unsure of the safety measures put in place in any destination, influences the behaviour of a tourist and the demand in townships, and similarly, these variables become intertwined and inextricably linked. Since the study deals with consumer behaviour as being determined by certainty and guarantee for protection of a the destination, it has conceptually and rhetorically



emanated from previous safety and security studies in tourism as they only determine whether tourists visiting Cape Town, Gauteng and Durban were feeling safe.

According to Visser and Rogerson (2004), South Africa is considered to be one of the safest tourist destinations, However, the inconsiderate and relatively high levels of crime and car hijackings in some townships of the major cities such as Cape town and Johannesburg do threaten the country's tourism growth prospects. Some studies expose Township tourism in South Africa as failing or lacking the ability to empower and change local residents' plight for the better both economically and socially since safety and security is questionable. Invariably, the South African Townships are construed to be places of poverty and crime (George, 2010). Unsafe tourists in any foreign place end up formulating negative images which when spread at home and wherever they go, tend to lead to a decline in tourism activity in an area (Donaldson and Ferreira, 2009). For instance, the incident of the alleged kidnapping and subsequent murder of Anni Dewani, a British honeymooner that took place in the township of Gugulethu in Cape Town and many subsequent reported violent incidences of crimes such as inter alia, car hijacking, police killings and heist robberies at gun point mostly in Soweto (Johannesburg) and rarely in uMlazi Durban have stimulated negative publicity that shrinks consumer visit and tourism demand in townships and in the country in general.

There is absolutely a gap and imbalance of findings from published surveys regarding information about the safety and security of tourists in all the townships of South Africa, since more attention is focusing only on major cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. According to Nemasetoni and Rogerson (2005); Ramchander (2007) there is a scarcity of research to date that has explicitly dwelt and focused on how safety, protection and security influences the consumer's behaviour and tourism demand when considering visiting the townships of SA as destinations. According to George (2003) when tourists feel or sense being unsafe, threatened or likely to be victimised where they intend spending holidays, a negative perception of the destination is created. Similarly, such negative perceptions and attitudes damage the destination's tourism industry which then results in the decline of tourism demand in an area. George (2003) further asserts that a negative attitude of prospective tourists about a destination has an adverse effect on his or her thinking on the visitation of the destination especially when the area is associated with a high crime rate. Secondly, the unsafeness of tourists in the destination prevents them from taking part in activities outside their accommodation facility. Thirdly, tourists who felt threatened in a certain area are also unlikely to return to the destination, and they are not likely to recommend the destination to others.

Donaldson and Ferreira (2009) claim that, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban as the biggest South African cities are the drawcards for both International and domestic tourism. These cities have been successful in attracting and enticing European tourists who exploit a weak currency and attend special events in the country and lengthen their stay by including pre-or post-even trips. Similarly, although there is evidence of tourism growth in these cities, their townships continue to experience significant social challenges. Unfortunately, these cities have many people who are still disadvantaged and underprivileged, such that the gap between the rich and the poor is continuously widening across racial lines in urban areas. This gap becomes the highest and is worrisome for township residents in the country and research has attributed this difference in financial accessibility as a factor that contributes to an increase in crime statistics. It is within the above assertion that the researcher has deemed it necessary to augment and accumulate literature on the issues of safety and security concerning its impact on the consumer behaviour and tourism demand specifically in the South African townships. The paper argues that protection problems for tourists in the South African townships where most Africans reside negatively reduce tourism demand. The perception that South Africa and its townships is not a safe destination and its crime rate is escalating can also have a negative influence on the potential tourist's decision-making process and thereby make them unable to attend events in townships (Robertshaw et al., 2001). Fictitious and negative publicity about any destinations does have adverse effects on tourists' visitation



as their willingness to visit the destination deteriorates. Taking a marketing perspective into cognizance, it is of utmost importance that authorities in the destinations realise the effects of crime on tourists' turnout, and particularly because media coverage of crime incidents spread and depict an area of visitation as an unsafe destination (Lenox and Edelheim 2004).

All reported and unreported crime incidents in the urban areas especially in the South African townships make these destinations to be perceived as the most dangerous tourist attractions, being associated with the highest incidents among their worldwide counterparts. Some of their numerous challenges of crime faced by South Africa are said to have emanated from the post-apartheid era (Demombnes and Ozler, 2005). South Africa, which is reported to be Africa's top destination with an attraction of one in every four visitors to the continent, has earned a reputation for being an unsafe place to visit (Donaldson and Ferreira, 2007). Many scholars argue that criminal challenges do have adverse impacts on tourism at a tourist destination, Furthermore, evidence of escalating criminal incidents for locals in the South African townships, also tends to scare foreign visitors away (George, 2003). Arguably, the general consensus of many scholars is that crime against tourists is prevalent in areas such as urban areas especially the townships (Harper, 2001). This explicitly means that since South African townships are also known for their volatility due to crime, tourism demand is dwindling.

Literature review

The popularity of townships as tourists' attractions has risen since the advent of South Africa's democratic transition that took place in 1994 (Rogerson, 2004; 2008; 2013; Nemasetoni & Rogerson, 2005). Tourism in townships has noticeably, become a niche area which has therefore been assumed to be one of the main market segments of urban tourism and thus, part of leisure and recreational offering in all three major cities of South Africa (Rogerson, 2013). Since townships are features of Africanism in South Africa, they have similarly been marketed to foreign tourists as a must-see destination and the success in the promotion has resulted to Cape Town becoming one of the major city destinations that has grown into a lucrative tourism sector. Township tourism is supposed to be significant and paramount in the light of dispersing the benefits of urban tourism thereby changing the well-being of local residents and readdressing the stark spatial equality of tourism consumption in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban (Cornelissen, 2005).

South Africa has relatively been classified and perceived to be a safe tourist destination although the high levels of crime that threaten the country's tourism growth prospects have not been downplayed (George, 2010). Consumer behaviour is very much influenced by the safety and security of the destination so as long as there no action taken by the relevant government stake holders the demand for tourism in the South African townships cannot rise. According to Rogerson (2013) the township tourism is forming an integral part of the growing 'slum tourism'. The study deals with consumer behaviour and tourism demand as it is inextricably linked with the safety and security of the destination which is in this case the South African townships.

It is therefore worth mentioning that the study is somehow different from other previous safety and security tourism studies in the sense that the dynamics of safety and security as core for tourist visitation has not been investigated in one township under scrutiny. Consequently, the research is underpinned by the theoretical paradigms as it's located in the lenses of the international poverty tourism discourse. It is a discourse that is engaged and embedded in the recent literal debate in terms of safeness and tourists' security as a deterrent of consumer behaviour and tourism demand in the townships of South Africa. The paper argues that safety and security in any destination supersedes everything since it affects the lives of tourists directly if not taken into cognizance.

Acknowledgement of safety and security by visitors has the possibility to disrupt routine decision making so if townships are risky it means the likelihood of them not be popular for tourist is very high (Demombynes & Ozler, 2005). In a study that analyses the safety and



security impact on the behaviour of consumers and tourism demand in general, it was found that choosing a destination by tourists is determined by crime rate and political stability. For instance, the demand for tourism in the townships of Cape Town such as Khayelitsha, Crossroads etc. is low due to incidents of crime. In the risk context –the paradox of fear is important as criminologists assert that the fear of crime tends to be disproportionate to the actual risk of crime (Brunt et al., 2000). While recent reports, on the other hand, illuminated and escalate all those destinations that are synonymous with the danger of crime. Numerous reports on holiday destinations reveal that the messages of the mass media communicated to the public do have a dubious impact on the number of tourists that visit a destination (Lenox and Edelheim, 2004).

However, the tourists' fear is evidently justified, given the number of publications of high crime rates in most tourist destinations of the South African townships and the reports of tourists becoming the victims of crime which end up resulting on serious fatalities. For instance, the case of Anni Dewani a British honeymooner who was killed in Cape Town when she was with her husband (Mawby, 2000; George 2003) went viral and dominated the international media coverage. The significance of tourist destination image is universally acknowledged as it affects people's subjective perception, behaviour and the choice of destination. As Cornelissen and Swart (2006) contend, the issue of crime in the South African urban areas especially in townships is perceived according to the way in which the international media portrays criminal activity and rates. Unfortunately, perceptions of crime on the safety and security of townships as destinations can either scare or woo tourists depending on the truth of the perception. When safety and security is in doubt consumer behaviour negatively changes since the perception of tourists also becomes negative about a township as a destination and this also impacts upon visitor demand negatively.

According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) the behaviour of a consumer is reflected on the behaviour of customers when searching for a purchase, using and evaluating when the products or services which they expect to satisfy their needs are used and evaluated. However, if protective measures in the destination are not guaranteed tourists tend to change their mind and think twice about the visitation of the destination. So if townships are known or labelled as unsafe areas, tourism demand is also adversely affected. The manner in which safety and security is portrayed and perceived by tourist play a vital and a significant influential role in tourist's decision-making process (Ferreira & Harmse, 2000; Mawby, 2000). Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) highlighted factors of political unrest, violence and crime as the pandemic and a challenge of safety and security in townships. They are a potential risk to personal safety and are influential in changing a tourist's perceptions of safety and security regarding choosing a specific destination such as a township. Negative word-of-mouth which has been consistently spread by the South African media coverage regarding the unsafety of townships has made some tourists perceive them as places of risk and insecurity (Cavlek, 2002). The perception does not only affect foreign tourists but also national tourists especially those races that have never dwelt in townships as residents. Actually townships were the architecture of the apartheid regime that were so inferior and poorly designed with their infrastructure including transport network of narrow roads which had no traffic lights until 1994 which brought a new dawn in the country. Thus the townships which the study is focussing on were residential areas of Blacks only and they were found in the periphery of urban areas which had no amenities and shopping facilities.

Mawby (2000) argues that the likelihood that tourists might think twice to change, postpone, or even cancel a travel schedule of a destination such as a township when their concern of their insecurity and personal safety are at stake or in jeopardy, is great. Unfortunately, the hesitation of tourists to visit a destination discourages them to the extent they may end up not visiting the area thereby adversely impacting on the socio-economic development of the country. The development of South African townships as destinations socially and economically rely heavily and directly on the positive image (Donaldson & Ferreira, 2009), and



any threat to the safety of a tourist is definitely detrimental to the development of any destination.

According to George (2002), the hesitation of a tourist to visit a destination with safe uncertainty threatens a holiday destination, especially because bad publicity or negative perceptions about the destination is developed. Crime impedes and retards tourism as it wields a significant blow to the fragile nature of a destination's safety image. Unfortunately, it is very damaging to the destination's tourism industry economically since it might result in a drop of tourism activities in the area. Many incidents of crime that have involved the mugging and probably killings, psychologically challenge many prospective tourists to be doubtful and decide not to visit such destinations. The South African urban areas especially townships that are known to be reputable for having a high crime rate are such townships in Cape Town, Gauteng and Durban. If tourists feel unsafe at a destination, they are not likely to participate in activities outside their accommodation activity. It does not take a genius to suggest and conclude that any tourist whose life has been threatened in a foreign country is not likely to return to destination, and the likelihood is, he or she will never ever recommend the destination to others at home. Although Cape Town for instance, is a world-class destination in many ways, its townships with the evidence of tourists being the victims of crime has been badly affected internationally by barbaric incidents as already mentioned above.

Donaldson and Ferreira (2009) postulate that there are various major risks that are associated with tourism, that's why the focus of the study has been specifically on five major townships that have been unofficially declared as war and political zones of instability. Health risks, cultural and language barriers have been identified as challenges that contribute to tourists becoming easy targets for thuggery. The importance of preventing crime in areas that are popular for tourists is so important since the security issues in tourism (real or perceived) always have a 'slip-over' effect and unfortunately, tourists always associate any security incident with an entire region (Santana, 2003). This study is therefore based on the reality of the crime situation and incidents of crime in South Africa as reported in townships which are situated or found in the outer zonal areas or in the peripheral urban areas occupied by the majority of Blacks who tend to be backward both economically and socially.

A number of studies on crime, safety and security have been conducted in South Africa over the past decade but few of those studies focus on the effects of safety and security on consumer behaviour and tourism demand. The prominent studies have been undertaken or conducted by the Institute for Crime Prevention (Robertshaw et al., 2001; Mattes, 2006). Small sections of major tourism-related surveys by tourism authorities –such as provincial destination marketing organisations and South African authorities are dedicated to a handful of questions on crime and safety issues.

Safety for security, consumer behaviour and tourism demand

The behaviour of tourists as purchasers who are naturally careful in searching for destinations that are safe and secure do evaluate products or services while intending to satisfy their wants and recreations needs (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2010). What tourists as consumer think of regarding the safety of destinations prior to visitation influences the decision-making process and this can be determined by both individual and situational factors (Ferreira and Harmse, 2000). This research paper confirms that if the safety and security of tourists who visit urban areas and townships specifically is not given a first priority consumer demand is adversely affected as tourists' perceptions become negative and irrevocably. Ferreira and Harmse (2000) and Mawby (2000) argue that the perceptions of tourists about the safety and security play an integral role in their decision making process. The lackadaisical attitude of government officials, lack of political accountability and blurred municipal interventions and planning, police invisibility on hot spots, overcrowded entertainment areas for vibrant and energised youth, and so forth are some of the factors that other researchers recognise as having the potential risk to personal safety of the tourists and negative perceptions concerning townships as destinations.



This paper postulates that it is most likely for tourists not to choose ships as destinations unless if they perceive them not risky and dangerous. Mostly, risk is perceived rather than real and Mawby (2000) researched risk fear paradox in the context of travel and made an inference that a tourist may fall victim to crime. The paradox source stems from how crime in a particular destination may be magnified by the media. Visitor satisfaction is an indication of a tourist's intention to revisit a destination. According to Campo-Martinez et al., (2010) tourists with positive or satisfactory experiences are likely to revisit whilst it is highly probably that tourists who are not satisfied with their experience will not revisit a destination in future. Communication through a word of mouth regarding a particular destination, previous travel experience and marketing are all factors that affect tourists' expectations. Bigne et al. (2001) argue that the satisfaction levels are also a deterrent of a consumer to be likely to recommend a destination in the future. They further analysed the relationships between destination image and tourist satisfaction and the tourists' willingness to recommend the destination to others. It was then asserted that destination image influences whether tourists are likely to recommend or possibly return to a destination.

Donaldson and Ferreira (2009) assert that tourists have a likelihood to consider postponing, changing, or even cancelling travel plans to go to a particular destination when their concerns for their personal safety and security are in jeopardy. The above assertion reveals a devastating impact of insecurity or absence of safety majors on the future development of the destination and sustained visitor demand since recreation places rely heavily on positive images, so it is obvious that any threat to the safety of a tourist has an adverse effect to the socio-economic development of the destination.

Major South African townships context

According to Reisinger and Mavado (2006), tourism is associated with five major risks they are terrorism; war and political instability; health risks; cultural and language difficulties; crime and for these, there is an absolute (real) and perceived (subjective) risk. South African townships are still marginalised, and neglected in terms of economic development and are therefore still facing an enumerable social and development challenges. A revelation of the annual release of crime statistics by the South African Police Service (SAPS) gives a clue that Cape Town townships such as Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Mitchell's Plain on the Cape Flats and Durban townships led by KwaMashu and uMlazi declared as a hot spot for car hijackings remain volatile areas as there are recorded statistics of the highest crime rates in South Africa (George and Booyens, 2012). Jurgens et al. (2013) postulate that the townships of SA are historically violent, due to crime and restlessness. The above highlighted safety and security challenges in townships are exacerbated by visible lack of job opportunities, accompanied by persistent problems of infrastructure as compared to nearby affluent areas. Poverty, high population density and lack of growth, and widespread protests over the government's inability to provide basic service delivery, absence of access to housing and land, social distrust and xenophobia worsen the situation (Jurgens and Donaldson, 2012; Jurgens et al., 2013; Ngxiza 2012; Rolfes et al., 2009; South African Cities Network, 2011).

Cape Town which is popular for gangsters, crime, substance abuse and violence against women and children especially on the Cape Flats in Cape Town and Durban townships specifically, Umlazi township which is well known as and declared as the capital of car hijacking are further areas of grave concern. Innumerable studies, have been conducted in SA on crime, safety and security over the past decade. The most prominent are those that were conducted by the Institute for Crime Prevention (Robetshaw et al., 2001; Mattes, 2006).

According to Ngxiza (2012) Ndabo, the CEO of Tourism KwaZulu-Natal once claimed that the recent attacks on foreigners including tourists would surely have a series of negative effects on the tourism industry and the nation. He further postulates that attacks on foreigners are a major setback to the tourism sector in South Africa especially in KwaZulu-Natal because African tourism is critical to our economy, where tourism contributed as much as R189 billion to the economy in 2014 and it is also one of the country's largest employers. According to



Powell (2007) most victims of xenophobic attacks are law-abiding migrant labours, refugees and asylum-seekers in need of a safe and better life for their families in South Africa.

A number of businesses owned by foreigners were attacked, and destroyed during the process of looting which forced owners to flee for the sake of their lives and never returned or came back. Unfortunately, most of these shops were angrily set alight by violent mobs and the storekeepers were reduced to mere spectators as they witnessed their hard earned properties burn to ashes (Donaldson and Ferreira, 2009). This paper concurs with the previous studies on the impacts and effects of crime and volatile unsafe conditions in influencing the behaviour of tourism consumers that ultimately decreases the demand of the destinations. Stone (2006) argues that although bad publicity of South Africa as being one of those third world countries with the reputation for high crime, is also not falling outside the International norms.

It is also important for the study to note that Cape Town, Gauteng and Durban as big South African cities, have been in a global market and are cities which contemplate to increase their competition globally (Lemanski 2007; McDonald 2008). Most civic groups in these cities have therefore, adopted policies and planning frameworks to deliberately position themselves as knowledge-based, creative and innovative cities (Booyens, 2012; Pirie, 2010). Unfortunately, this approach is not sufficient to ensure inclusive job creation and local economic development. Inequality is exacerbated and it impacts immensely on economic opportunities in townships (Booyens, 2012; Jurgens and Donaldson, 2012; Lemanski, 2007; MacDonald, 2008). Consequently, and unfortunately an uneven socio-economic growth trajectory in all these main South African cities tend to be unequal. Jurgens and Donaldson note that the South African townships have experienced a very slow transition which perhaps is due to safety and security challenges. Safety and security challenges in townships have escalated profoundly and are worse such that opportunities for unscrupulous private security companies have emerged and made 'one man's meat another man's poison'.

Research methodology

This study was primarily contemplating to determine whether safety and security for tourists as consumers and tourism demand in the South African townships as destinations are inextricably intertwined and linked. The researcher argues that tangible and practical measures put in place by all the relevant stakeholders to ensure the maximum safety for tourists ups the demand for townships as sought after destinations.

The study was informed based on or emanating from the studies of George (2003, 2010) and George and Swart (2012) which focussed on tourists' perceptions on the impact of safety and security whilst in South Africa. They suggested or gave a leeway and leverage for more research on tourist' sensitivity regarding safety and security and its influence on the demand of townships as destinations. The conduct of this study was therefore the culmination and heeding of the call of the above recommendations. The advent of the study on the safety and security of townships as determination for consumers' behaviour and tourism demand has been unequivocally construed as necessary as it affects the demand for destinations. The study was conducted to look at the phenomenology using a qualitative approach when collecting data on how safety and security impacts on the consumers' behaviour and the demand of townships as destinations.

The convenience sample population was only drawn from Umlazi Township in Durban in two most popularly patronised and functional tourism attractions known as e Yadini and KwaMax Lifestyle. Durban Township was chosen simply because of its close proximity to the researcher while Cape Town is kilometres apart, safety and security in the South African townships is not guaranteed due to high rate of unemployment, absence of law enforcement therein. Evidently, previous studies have depicted Umlazi Township as one of the most popular and second biggest townships in the Southern hemisphere, which is anecdotally recognised as the hot spot or capital for car hijacking.



The sample population were both foreign and national tourists who were chosen conveniently but voluntarily after having been informed of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses without any provision for compensation. Attractions under study were visited for five occasions where only 30 respondents participated in total. Unstructured interviews of open-ended questions were conducted and mostly lasted for not less than forty minutes, sometimes respondents could be stopped for probing in order to seek clarity with an intention to elicit more information needed to help the study becoming more valid with accurate triangulated information. Twenty (20) questions asked during the interviewing process were determined by research questions, the research problem and the objectives of the study. Informants were guided and engaged in the discussion which was continuously recorded so that their input was captured accurately. Informants were asked on how they were being brought to the area and the measures that were taken to ensure and guarantee their safety. They were also requested to disclose their opinions regarding the re-visitation of the destination. For instance, the following questions were asked and probed where necessary: What were their feeling about visiting the township? How were they ensured of their safety and security? Would they consider revisiting the Township? A question on their protection when they were at the site was also asked.

Informants were not at all restricted or rather channelled when responding to questions during an interviewing process as they were allowed to speak freely but they were asked to pay more attention to the aspects that related to their perceptions regarding the safety and security of the townships of South Africa as destinations and their behavioural state of mind prior to visitation. So respondents or informants were prompted to take note of specific aspects of safety and security of the South African townships that might have been forgotten in their previous responses as answers. The qualitative approach to the study was guided and informed by the recommendations of (Lemanski 2007; McDonald 2008 and Maxwell, 2005). The guiding principles of data analysis were based on responses which answered questions that were directly addressing the problem through research questions.

The research instrument was pre-tested to examine the appropriateness and reliability of the instrument through interviewing attractions' visitors. As expected in a country whose residences were racially divided in their townships built for people of colour (blacks), white visitors were more concerned with their safety than blacks who never felt unsafe being in the township. As expected, Black respondents seemed not to be worried and visibly scared of being in the Townships, and there was nothing untoward or strange that it was the white respondents who expressed their panic, fear and discomfort of being in the Township. The results from respondents were sufficiently comprehensive and verified the value of the instrument and statements received. Invariably, the analysis of the content was achieved through copying and reading the transcripts where brief notes were made in the margins when interesting data were found. Thematic analysis was used as a common and applicable qualitative approach in order to analyse data. During data analysis, three-stage method of coding by which the data were first coded openly was used.

The researcher also went through the notes made in the margins and listed the different types of information found, identified whether or not the categories could be linked and listed as major categories or themes.

Discussion of results

Tourists used various perceived reliable information to acquaint themselves about the volatility and security major issues prior to travelling to South African townships, and such sources do not rule out relying on press and print media, internet, radio, travel agents, newspapers, television, local embassy and family relatives living in cities surrounded by various attractions. Considering the fact that the tourism industry requires strong security measures to develop and flourish, it is of crucial importance to pay attention to issues that relate to the safety and security of tourists and a paramount role is played in determining the choice of a place of visit by tourists. It is also undisputable that the demand of any destination is hell-bent on its safety



and security simply because safety factors come first in the minds of tourists. In view of the research participants responses, creating a desirable environment so that tourists feel safe and secure to travel is essential. Nevertheless, this requires support and coordination between the tourism industry and the government through visible policing. Secondary data shows that The World Economic Forum published the third edition of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report in 2009 to provide an analysis of the travel and tourism competitiveness of 133 countries worldwide (Tarlow, 2009). The report indicated that safety and security is more than a significant factor in the determination of competitiveness for a country's tourism sector, as tourists become hesitant and deterred from travelling to dangerous countries or regions such South African Townships. There is always a creation of an atmosphere of fear in the South African townships including Umlazi as a result they are perceived as insecure areas for tourists as outsiders, and this simply means that the tourism industry in the Townships is ruined as the demand plummets.

In contrast, this study revealed different perceptions about the impact of insecurity on tourists consumerism coupled with tourism demand in the township, to some tourists, township tours were safe and enjoyable. Some findings do present and disclose some positive perspectives on the township tourism sector as trump cards for domestic tourists who are not unfamiliar with townships. Two most frequented tourist attractions of Umlazi were found to be safer than perceived by few who rely on newspapers as source of information. The findings of the study also reveal positivity about tourism demand as they alluded that it is not that unsafe in townships as per tourist's perceptions before they visit. The high demand of popular attractions in the Township simply signify the safety and security of those who have now and again visited townships as tourists.

The study also revealed that more interviewees do have some information on the danger that townships pose before going on a tour. The results through findings also revealed that the majority of tourists did not encounter any challenges of unsafeness when visited townships, but a gap between what tourists were told about township crime rates and possibilities and the actual reality was noticed. The finding is virtually consistent with Steinbrink (2013) previous research which revealed tourists' perceptions changing positively after their visit to Umlazi Township specifically. Some other studies do show that tourists' perceptions of townships were more negative before visiting them than after, which could be perhaps due to attributions of misinformation.

It has therefore become evident that tourists' safety and security comes first and impacts directly on the demand of a destination since its choice is hell bent on the invulnerability of tourists. The findings of the research confirmed that satisfaction of tourists about township visitation is relative and compatible with a better chance and the more likelihood to recommend a tour to friends, relatives and colleagues. The majority of interviewees were also satisfied and enjoyed their township tours and this corresponded with the research of Rolfes et al. (2009) which suggested that 72 of respondents who showed jubilation and satisfaction about township tours in Cape Town and Durban. Just off Klipfontein road in Guguleth, is Mzoli's restaurant –a gem of a place known either as Mzoli's place, Mzoli's meat, Mzoli's Butchery or even kwa- Mzoli. It is so ironical that even though to some Cape Town townships are no go zones for other residents of South Africa but it was safer in townships for International tourists and this increases the demand for the aforementioned attraction amazingly. The demand is even exceptional high for both South African and International tourists in the most popular Vilakazi street in the township of Johannesburg which is the only street in the world with houses for two Nobel peace prize winners' icons i.e. Dr Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.



The findings of the study also showed that tourists' perceptions about South African as a safe destination are changing and with the surrounding township tourism being able to stimulate domestic areas that were previously tarnished by negative perceptions of safety and crime. The findings of the study also showed that safety and security precautions are important in order to stimulate township tourism. Similarly, efforts to change negative perceptions spread and increase the demand for visiting in the area. Three main attractions aforementioned in the townships of Gugulethu in Cape Town, Soweto (Vilakazi Street) and eYadini n KwaMax Life style in uMlazi tend to be a draw card for Inbound and National tourists. The tourism demand in these attractions has risen immensely. This study has found that tourists as consumers regard their safety and security as a factor that drives the choice of their destination and it has been found to be undebatable that the demand of any destination depends squarely on how tourists as visitors perceive it in terms of safety and security.

Conclusion

Since 1994, the tourism industry has shown signs of growth in the South African townships in particular, perceptibly, this was due to a regime change which put the country on the spot line as it was transforming after being excluded from the world markets. Due to the country's inhuman past transgressions and its ugly past history of the domination of the majority by the minority, tourism as an industry was a missed opportunity for many. Similarly, it is the advent of a new dispensation that has led to the steady and perceptible tourism growth in the country as improvements in law and order drastically change albeit slowly.

The study has illuminated and accentuated the impacts of safety and security on the tourism consumers' behaviour and tourism demand in the townships and safety has been found to be inextricably intertwined with various factors. According to literature, insecurity and absence of safety precautions in any destination prevents tourists from visiting attractions in the area. So it is fundamental that all tourism role players unite and participate and agree on the practical strategies to use to ensure the safety and security of tourists at all times. This assurance is of utmost importance for the enhancement of the economic development in the areas, meeting the drastic escalation of the demand, good image and the achievement a good reputation for the destination.

Most studies including this one, do reveal that relaxation in a foreign country is one of the main motivational trigger actions for visitation even though they may be other reasons such as buying clothing, weak currency etc. but spending free time and pleasure is core to them and that is why they do not want to be bothered or find themselves harmed, abused or mugged in a foreign country. Donaldson and Ferreira (2009) agree that being peaceful, safe and secure as a tourist is a core and significant requirements for the socio-economic growth of any destination. The safeness of the destination makes it competitive, therefore all role players need to know and always remember that destinations cannot be successful if they are not competitive enough and able to attract required markets. As mentioned above, research has also shown that safety and personal integrity are perceived by tourists as the core reason that they choose a destination (Kozak et al., 2007).

This paper argues that impact of safety and security is inextricably linked with tourism demand and that not all tourists perceive townships as unsafe destinations and some of them realise this fact after a visitation. The findings showed that the majority of tourists did not at any time find their lives being endangered when in the township and this indication reflects that there is a gap between what tourists were informed of about township crime and the actual reality. Similarly, Steinbrink (2013) argues that negative word-of mouth or media coverage contribute



towards what is perceived by tourists in as far as their safety and security is concerned and this shown by statistics as they are commensurate with an increasing number of tourists where there is a positive media coverage.

Kozak et al., (2007) still maintain that there is still a significant demand for township tourism, which is mostly through the promotion of culture-based tourism and reality tourism which shows a contrast of its dwellers in terms of the living standards. Township tourism has the potential and creates job opportunities that stimulate and enhance local economic development, and the enhancement of tourism opportunities in the South African townships cannot be achieved unless skills development and capacity building, unless practical safety measures for tourists are put in place. It has also been argued in the study that developmental models for tourism in the South Africa townships need to incorporate safety measures as well especially because township dwellers or the poor generally benefit very little, if ever at all from tourism activities.

The findings of this study are also considered to be vital and significant for all stakeholders including the government whose mission it is to change the plight of the township residents. According to Leong (2001) honesty and openness about the safety and security regarding crime incidents in the country are core and a point of departure because a government that is suppressing the truth and using propaganda in order to circumvent bad publicity paints a wrong picture about an unsafe tourism destination and this does not help officials as they are portrayed as being irresponsible and running away from full accountability.

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