Reflections on Major Challenges facing Tourism Sector in South Africa

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Abstract

The article discusses impediments to tourism growth and development in South Africa. It highlights that these challenges hinder the goal of making the tourism sector an economic industry that provides for socio-economic development because they obstruct job creation which is meant to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of South Africans, especially the historically disadvantaged elements of society. To maximise the potential of the tourism industry in creating employment, promoting infrastructural development and poverty alleviation, this article highlights some of the potent solutions that can be implemented to promote tourism development for positive socio-economic growth, development and transformation. South Africa already has legislation, policies, regulations and institutions seeking to achieve adequate safety and security, environmental protection, infrastructural development, skills development and so on, however, the lack of, or non-enforcement and lack of or non-compliance to policies, legislation, regulation, and institutions negates tourism development and socio-economic development for the people of South Africa.

Keywords: Tourism sector obstacles, regulations, immigration, visa, safety and security, crimes

Introduction

The South African tourism industry has significantly developed over the years, contributing to the country's socio-economic transformation by providing jobs for millions of South Africans, reducing poverty and providing infrastructural development (Binns & Nel 2002). Binns and Nel (2002) asserted that "the promotion of tourism has been identified as a key strategy that can lead to economic upliftment, community development and poverty relief in the developing world" (Binns & Nel 2002). Obviously, "tourism has also emerged as a significant development option in post–apartheid South Africa where economic, social and environmental resources are being utilized to promote tourism as a local economic development strategy in South Africa" (Binns & Nel 2002). However, despite these achievements, the full potential of the South African tourism sector for socio-economic development is hindered by a variety of impediments such as crimes, funding, lack of skills, immigration and so on.

Methodology

This article utilised non-empirical literature review approach by intensively reviewing germane literature on some teething problems and challenges being faced by the South African tourism sector in the day to day activities and various interventions that have been strategically put in place to address them. Pursuant to this, contemporary scholarly works including, but not limited to text books and articles, pieces of legislation, policies, strategies, measures and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 were thoroughly consulted, reviewed and utilised for the purposes of finding sustainable and enduring solutions to the identified problems.

Literature review

According to Mxunyelwa and Vallabh (2017), South Africa is an upper middle-income country, which when compared to other countries in Southern Africa has one of the biggest Gross

Domestic Product (GDP). Tourism growth and development are some of the underlying factors contributing towards the growth of South Africa's GDP. Mxunyelwa and Vallabh (2017) asserted that according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2016), the sluggish growth of South Africa's economy makes it difficult to combat the high unemployment rate of 27,7% which continues to escalate amidst high levels of social and economic inequalities.

The main obstacle hindering South African youths in finding employment in the tourism industry is the lack of skills and relevant qualifications in business management (Ashley et al., 2017). Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) should, and must be used as a transformative initiative. In order to achieve this outcome, there should be skill development and training that will enable people to be able to be competent and found appointable in tourism sector. Education and acquisition of requisite qualifications are therefore required to achieve the goal of producing suitable managers with tourism management qualifications (Hsuan et al., 2011). Fundamentally, the lack of qualified tourism managers results in the high failure rate of SMTEs that are intended to create jobs and alleviate poverty(Christie, 2002). Furthermore, the lack of financial management education poses a challenge to SMTEs given the fact that sound financial management forms the basis of running a successful business (Hwang & Lockwood, 2011).

According to Johnson (2013), impediments faced by the tourism industry include but are not limited to high cost of travel, unfavourable climate and weather, cultural resistance, lack of visitor facilities and amenities and lack of capital. Having identified these various tourism impediments, Johnson concurs with Mxunyelwa and Vallabh (2013), that the lack of business expertise and managerial skills is an impediment in tourism development that hinders socio-economic transformation, particularly for previously disadvantaged South Africans.

According to Johnson (2013), local residents which are predominantly the previously disadvantaged black South Africans have little or no experience in managing business other than peasant farming which is a common occupation in their communities. Johnson (2013) observes that the lack of skills and qualifications of South African in business tourism is so severe that foreigners own most tourism-related businesses such as general stores, transportation, hotels, resorts, game parks, tour guides. Yet, even with the commercial farming and agricultural activities, most of them do not make sufficient income to improve their livelihoods because they do not have the skill or competency to do most of the business management such as maintenance, procurement and accounting for most of their farming and agricultural activities. It is against all these skills challenges that this article strongly argue that the previously disadvantaged should be assisted by providing them with the requisite skills and knowledge to enable them partake and participate in tourism sector in order for them to fully enjoy the opportunities and benefits presented by the tourism industry(Ramchander, 2003).

Furthermore, Chili and Ngxongo (2017) pointed out some of the notable challenges such as political instabilities and insufficient funds for tourism development that are impediments to tourism development and that limited participation of local communities in tourism development is a main factor delaying socio-economic transformation. Failure to provide knowledge and awareness about the tourism industry to community members was found to be a factor encouraging lack of participation by community members in the tourism industry(Simpson, 2008). Furthermore, Chili and Ngxongo (2017) indicated that community involvement in the tourism industry plays a crucial role in fostering community development and family earnings which enhance the standard of living for the people in rural communities. According to Chili and Ngxongo (2017), community involvement barriers in the tourism industry are categorised into three namely: operational barriers, structural barriers and cultural barriers. Chili and Ngxongo (2017), provide that the lack of skill and knowledge among community members reduces the communities' willingness to engage in tourism ventures as they only view tourism as an activity for the rich and the elites in the community. Empowering

locals with information and awareness about the tourism industry will encourage community members to effectively participate when decision affecting tourism are being taken because they will be more informed and motivated (Cole, 2006). Furthermore, the community should be at liberty to dictate how tourism-derived benefits should be equitably shared by all interested and affected parties (Andriotis et al., 2018). Successful incorporating of planning for purposes of accommodating changes linked with tourism development into community plans does not occur by chance, and integration of tourism should be implemented as a process rather than a single event (Murphy, 2012). In essence, scholars had identified poor planning in tourism as an impediment to tourism development (Lamont & Ferreira, 2015). It is pertinent to point out that tourism development and management involve much more than destination marketing (Getz & Page, 2016). More importantly, Lamont and Ferreira (2015), documented that tourism planning requires community involvement, adequate radical research to inform planning, planning to inform development and a serious commitment by the community and local government to implement and manage tourism. An attempt to remedy the challenge of poor planning is to include; mechanisms of tourism supply development strategies, tourism demand strategies and organisational structure strategies (Lamont & Ferreira, 2015). One of the challenges pointed out by Lamont and Ferreira (2015) that contribute to poor implementation of planning in the tourism industry is staff incompetency because the implementation of a tourism policy, plan and strategy depends on the competency level of staff employed.

Communication is an important instrument for bringing stakeholders together including staff and tourists to emphasise on the important role the tourism industry plays in uplifting the living conditions of local communities (Binns & Nel, 2002). However, Acheampong and Tseane-Gumbi (2016) pointed out that communication is one of the impediments to tourism development if not effectively and efficiently handled hence, communication should be of utmost importance between the hosts communities and tourists.

Major challenges of the tourism sector in South Africa

Immigration Regulations and Tourism

The South African tourism industry is faced with the threat of losing their constant high volume of tourists visiting the country as a result of the immigration regulations which came into effect on the 26th of May 2014. The then Minister of Tourism according to Hanekom (2014) expressed great concerns over certain provisions of the immigration regulation by stating that "industry role players have highlighted two specific provisions, namely the new requirement for an unabridged birth certificate for minors, as well as the provision for in-person collection of biometric data in tourism source markets. Industry stakeholders argue that these measures may impact on the competitiveness of our destination in an era where countries are attempting to ease visa requirements to promote tourism."

Section 6(12) of the Immigration Act, Immigration Regulations, Amendment, 2014 provides that where both parents travel with a minor they should provide an unabridged birth certificate. In cases where one of the parents travels with the minor, such parent is required to produce proof of consent in the form of an affidavit from the other parent or death certificate of the deceased parent of the child. Furthermore, a person travelling with a minor who is not his/ her biological child needs to produce a copy of the unabridged birth certificate together with permission to travel with the child from the parents of the child or guardian of the child. On the issues of biometrics referred to by Hanekom, Section 6(3) provides that if any person wishes to depart or be admitted into the Republic, he/she must subject himself to the immigration officer prior to his/her departure from the Republic or admission into the Republic. These provisions pose a problem on tourism because people who do not reside near South African embassies, visa centres, and consulates have to incur extra expenses in order to obtain the relevant documentation required for travelling and submission of their biometric.

Regulation of Tourism Immigration

According to the Department of Tourism, tourism development is influenced by the ease and affordability of travelling. The Department of tourism recognises that while other countries make travelling to their countries easier by issuing visas on arrival and providing online visa application, travelling to South Africa is strenuous as travellers have to apply in person for a visa at a high cost and considerable inconvenience. In order to ensure that tourism development is not hindered by strenuous immigration regulations the Department of Home Affairs announced its commitment to managing immigration in a way that promotes national development. The Department of Home Affairs recognises that South Africa receives over 10 million international visitors, who through economic activities sustain millions of jobs.

To ensure that tourism continues to contribute to the socio-economic transformation, amendments have been made by the Department of Home Affairs to the 2014 Immigration Regulations. The amendment of the 2014 Immigration Regulations is in line with the 2015 recommendations made by the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Immigration Regulations (Gigaba, 2018). The IMC was tasked to address concerns raised by stakeholders in the tourism sector regarding the implementation of the 2014 Immigration Regulations (Gigaba, 2018). The Department of Home Affairs made the following changes. Foreign nationals travelling with a minor are still required to have in their possession, documentation that proves parental consent, however South African Immigration officials will insist on documentation by exception only in cases of high risk situations rather than requiring such documentation from all travellers. Furthermore instead of denying entry to travellers who do not possess the required documents, opportunity will be given to such travellers to prove parental consent (Gigaba, 2018). To this effect, South African immigration officials will receive training to ensure the smooth implementation of the revised regulations (Gigaba, 2018).

South African is committed to making travelling easier for the purpose of developing tourism as an economic sector that creates employment and alleviates poverty. As such, amendment of the 2014 Immigration Regulations also include visa waiver, wherein the top 10 overseas tourism markets, i.e citizens of the United Kingdom, United States of America, Germany, France, Australia, Brazil, Canada and Netherlands, excluding China and India, who hold an ordinary passport do not have to apply for a visa to enter into South Africa (Gigaba, 2018). A visa waiver has also been put in place for the citizens of the Russian Federation and Angola to travel to South Africa without the need to apply for a visa (Gigaba, 2018). According to the Department of Home Affairs negotiations are also being finalised to conclude visa waiver for ordinary passport holders in the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Ghana, Cuba, Qatar, Morocco and Iran (Gigaba, 2018). The initiates taken by the Department of Home Affairs to make travelling to South Africa easy will draw more visitors to South Africa and boost the tourism sector to create more jobs, eliminate poverty and provide infrastructural development.

Safety and Security in Tourism

Obviously, state safety and security are major problems the tourism sector is facing on a daily basis in in South Africa (Ferreira & Harmse, 2000). According to Ferreira and Harmse (2002), "tourism can be a key factor in overcoming the many socio-economic challenges facing South Africa if the reality and perception of tourist safety is addressed urgently and adequately." The increasing crime rate in the country undermines the growth of the industry. Furthermore, the destination image of South Africa as presented in different news media outside South Africa is seen as deterring potential visitors, with reports and news of hype surrounding fear and uncertainty over safety and security in South Africa are all perceived as a key deterrent for many potential travellers and tourists (Ferreira & Harmse, 2002).

According to Nkosi (2017), crimes perpetrated against tourists do not only affect the victims but also affect the number of people visiting particular destinations as both domestic and international tourists share their unpleasant experiences of crimes against their bodily integrity and crimes against their property through word of mouth and such news also receive wide coverage by the media. This view is shared by Mudzanani (2017) when he quoted Mabudafhasi, who said "with a crime under close scrutiny in the media, and news spreading at an alarming speed, tourists who fall victim to crime within a matter of hours damage our reputation." The inclusion of South Africa in the list of the world's most dangerous destination destroys the image of South Africa. This consequently affects the growth of the tourism industry because visitors would shy away from areas considered to be dangerous in preference of safer destinations (Ferreira & Harmse, 2000). Criminal activities perpetrated against tourists can be categorised in terms of physical crimes (bodily harm), economic crimes (such as unjustified increase of prices or fraud) and psychological crimes (in the form of harassment) (Davis, 2017). There exists no likelihood that tourists who experienced these heinous crimes could ever revisit or recommend the destination to others(Perry & Potgieter, 2013). Tourism is one sector that has been identified to have the potential of bringing about socio-economic development in most of the communities in South Africa by creating employment in a number of strategic sectors of the economy such as hospitality, entertainment, arts and culture (Perry & Potgieter, 2013). To continue to leverage this, the government needs to ensure enforcement of and compliance to policies and legislation that ensure the safety of those participating in the tourism industry.

South Africa's tourism industry is able to provide socio-economic transformation because of the variety of tourism products that generates incomes and job opportunities (Allen & Brennan, 2004). Mudzanani (2017) observes that business tourism which forms part of the various tourism products has over the years shown immense growth. According to Shaw (2010), it is of paramount importance not only to look at criminal activities against tourists but also to look at criminal activities committed against the business itself. Business helps to generate foreign investment to South Africa, however, crimes targeting businesses discourage foreign investment and tourism crime-related to activities increase poverty due to loss of jobs and investment (Stone, 2006).

Xenophobia and Xenophobic attacks undermine the growth of the tourism industry (Adeleke et al., 2008). The attacks directed towards foreign nationals destroy the economic structure that tourism has built and hinder further socio-economic development accrued to community residents through tourism enterprises (Stone, 2006). The government must take steps to educate people about the resultant effects of xenophobic attacks on tourism and punish those who perpetrate such hate crimes; this will help protect the country's image internally and internationally (Adeleke et al., 2008).

Prevention of Crime against Tourism

One of the solutions to decreasing crime rates affecting sustainable tourism growth is to have a tourism complaints officer as required by section 45(1) of the Tourism Act, 3 of 2014 which states that "the Minister may designate a suitably qualified officer of the Department as a Tourism Complaints officer and publish his or her name in the gazette." Section 47(c) of the Tourism Act, 3 of 2014 obligates the complaints officer that upon receiving a complaint to refer the complaint to the South African Police Services if the complaint alleges that a person has committed an offence. The Tourism Complaints officer must actually compel the National Prosecuting Authority which is responsible for prosecuting crimes in terms of section 179(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, to prosecute those who commit crimes against tourists. In this way tourists will feel that justice is served and that their complaints about crimes are taken seriously. Other measures that can be taken to ensure safety is increasing police visibility in tourism attraction areas and South Africa's points of entry

such as airports because these are places where criminals target tourists (Donaldson & Ferreira, 2009).

The White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa, May 1996 (identification of Key constraints and solutions thereof)

Historically disadvantaged black South Africans were systematically excluded by the apartheid regime from main stream economy, more specifically from the economic benefits of the tourism industry (Rogerson & Lisa, 2005). Following the 1994 first democratic elections, the newly elected government sought to address the injustices of the past and include black people into the mainstream economy of the tourism industry by formalising the industry (Ashley & Ntshona, 2003). To achieve this, the government formulated the White Paper on the Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa,1996. According to the White paper South Africa's tourism industry has been and continues to face a number of challenges that hinder further growth and development of the industry. The White Paper argues that these impediments faced by South Africa's tourism industry have the effect of limiting the tourism industry from playing a more radical and meaningful role in the national economy.

The White Paper identifies the following impediments as key constraints and makes an attempt to provide solutions to them:

Tourism has been inadequately resourced and funded

The government has not prioritized the provision of adequate resources to develop the tourism industry, only marginal resources have been allocated to help to develop the tourism sector (Rogerson, 2006). Incorporation of the tourism as an economic sector requires that the formulation of South Africa's monetary policy must ensure that the tourism sector is adequately funded (Rogerson, 2002). Failure to allocate resources towards tourism development means that tourism will remain a missed opportunity for optimal socio-economic transformation in South Africa (Spenceley & Goodwin, 2007).

The solution to lack of funding in tourism

To realise the potential of tourism as a significant tool for socio-economic transformation, the Department of National Treasury has devoted itself to transfer 52, 7% (R 3, 8 Billion) of the budget for the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) running for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21. Realising that poverty alleviation and infrastructural development can be achieved through tourism, the cabinet has approved additional funding of R 35 Million in the year 2019/20 and R 36, 9 Million in the year 2020/21 through the Economic Competitiveness and Support Package for tourism incentive programme sub-programme.

The purpose of the additional funding is to promote economic growth and job creation targeting market access, tourism grading, and transformation initiatives. Funding for tourism can also be accelerated by attracting Foreign Direct Investment through mobilising international business to invest in South Africa's tourism businesses such as hotels, resorts, guesthouses and so on (Snyman & Saayman, 2009). While this is welcome, in order for the funding to achieve the desired objectives, issues like crimes, safety and so on should also be properly addressed so that the investment will be meaningful and sustainable.

Myopic private sector

The narrow view of the tourism private sector to see beyond their vicinity, limits the sustainable development of tourism because South Africa's tourism private establishments such as hotels prioritise only on products and services offered within their vicinity (Roussot, 2009). However, tourism products offered by the private sector are affected by external factors. For example, fares overcharge by taxi drivers, destroyed environments, dilapidated school, roads and so on are external factors that may impact tourism and consequently the tourism private sector, yet hotels and other tourism related establishments turn a blind eye on these factors. According to the White Paper, hotels and other tourism-related establishments that take these factors into account are often more successful in comparison to those who do not. For instance, this has been proven by the success of Half Moon hotel in Jamaica that adopted half a mile of the highway that leads to the hotel and committed to maintaining the highway. The hotel is also at the forefront of the conservation of the environment around the hotel. Therefore, minor contributions from the private sector are required for community development (Briedenhamn & Wickens, 2004). Such minor contributions include the private sector taking the initiative to be a driving force in providing trainings in marketing, business skills and tourism with regard to services requirements.

The solution for myopic view of tourism private sectors that impact on tourism

The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Regulation of 2004 makes provision for a Social and Labour Plan for mining companies or any person who wishes to acquire a mining right in terms of Regulation 42(1)(a). Regulation 41 provides the objectives of the Social and Labour Plan as the pioneering promotion of employment and the advancement of social and economic welfare of South Africa to contribute to the transformation of the mining industry. Also, the Social and Labour Plan seeks to ensure that the holders of mining rights contribute towards the socio-economic development of areas in which they are operating. Regulation 46 demands that the Social and Labour Plan must contain career progressions plans, skills development initiatives, human resource development, internships, bursaries and so on. To ensure that the private sector in tourism contributes to the socio-economic transformation of the people of South Africa, institutions such as hotels, national parks, amusement parks and museums must provide in details how they intend to provide socio-economic transformation to the people living in the area in which they operate. The Social Labour Plan on tourism must also include skills development, career progression plans, human resource development, and so on. This will in turn ensure that tourism private sector establishments such lodges, game reserves, recreational fishing not only maximise on profits while neglecting to improve the livelihood of the local people by providing them with employment and developing community infrastructures such sports fields, schools, community halls and so on.

Limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups into the tourism industry

The exclusion of historically disadvantaged black South Africans from the tourism industry through apartheid laws was a major contributing factor hindering the socio-economic transformation of Historically Disadvantaged Black South Africans. Moreover, exclusion of the historically disadvantaged black South Africans from the benefits of tourism is also fairly due to lack of tourism information and tourism finance for black tourism businesses, failure by the existing tourism related establishment to build partnerships with local communities and limited incentives to encourage private enterprises that create jobs and promote the development of local capacity.

Solution to the limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups into the tourism industry

To remedy this situation, the government must ensure that implementation of the following incentives provided by the White Paper on Development and Promotion of Tourism of South Africa must be ensured. These incentives aim to promote meaningful inclusion and participation of Historically Disadvantaged Black South Africans in the tourism industry through tools such as the Tourism **Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment** (BBBEE or B-BBEE) B-which seeks to provide socio-economic emancipation of Black people though employment to participate and be involved in the tourism sector. This could be done through the integration of the services/incentives prioritising the involvement of local communities and the previously disadvantaged groups will ensure that local communities and previously disadvantaged groups are not only involved in the tourism sector in order for them to just supply labour services but it will open opportunities for entrepreneurial activities essential for sustainable tourism contributing to socio-economic transformation.

Inadequate tourism education, training and awareness

The historically disadvantaged black South Africans are often unable to compete for meaningful jobs in the tourism industry with other privileged groups because of deprivation of education, training and awareness. Training and education in tourism and hospitality services are only offered to a limited number of public and private institutions at tertiary level. Millions of South Africans who are unable to have access to the limited institutions are left with no skills or knowledge to penetrate the space of tourism and improve their livelihood. In addition, even when these trainings in tourism are available, the apparent disparities in quality of tourism training facilities in the provinces show uneven distribution; where provinces such as Gauteng and Northwest and Western Cape have quality tourism training facilities, while provinces such as Mpumalanga and Limpopo have very little to show in terms of tourism education facilities. The lack of tourism education facilities in these provinces are obstacles to the development of tourism in these provinces and the socio-economic transformation of the people in the provinces.

The solution for education, training and awareness in tourism

The University of Limpopo and other 'black' universities in South Africa should be utilised as beacons of hope in providing much-needed tourism education and training. The institutions must seek to introduce tourism qualifications such as Hospitality Management, Tourism Development and Management, Food and Beverage operation offered in high ranking South African universities such as the University of Johannesburg. These qualifications will provide knowledge and allow the people to penetrate the tourism industry with the required knowledge and skills and contribute towards their socio-economic development. With the government of the Republic providing free education, accessibility to tourism education, training and awareness are made possible (Areff & Spies, 2017).

There is great improvement in the Mpumalanga province. The University of Mpumalanga, another black university, offers tourism education through a Diploma in Hospitality Management as Hospitality Management is an essential part of tourism. The qualification focuses on education, work-integration leaning and skills development required for all levels of employment in the tourism hospitality industry.

Inadequate protection of the environment

It is not only crimes perpetrated against tourists that affect tourism growth in South Africa, illegal trading of wildlife also threatens tourism development, biodiversity and offends against the principle of intergeneration equity which provides that the current generation should pass the earth and its resources to the next upcoming generation in no lesser condition as it was (Hunter, 2011). The principle is supported by both international and domestic legal instruments. The 1972 United Nations Conference on Human Environments declared that there is a need to protect the environment for both the present and future generations. On the other hand, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 provides that the environment should be protected for the benefit of both the present and future generations (Weiss, 1999). Consequences that flow from lack or non-environmental protection are for example, a loss of tourism resources found within the environment, thus negating tourism development required for socio-economic development.

According to Griffiths (2017), the illicit trade in endangered species and wildlife is a lucrative business for profit. In South Africa, animals targeted in the trade where rhinos are poached for their horns, elephants for their ivory, and cheetahs for their skin (Griffiths, 2017). Griffiths further provides that since 2007, the prevalence of rhino poaching have exponentially increased causing the potential extinction of one of the big five animals (Griffiths, 2017). Legislation that seeks to protect South Africa's wildlife such as section 56 of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act of 2004 authorises the Minister to publish a list of endangered species facing extinction stating that people are barred from engaging in restricted activity such as searching, luring, alluring, lying in wait with the intention to capture or kill such specimen or to exercise physical control and so on as provided by section 1 of the Act, without obtaining the required permit in terms of chapter 7 of the, Section 71(1) which provides that no person may carry out a restricted activity without a permit, these provisions must be effectively enforced by South African judiciary to ensure wildlife protection.

According to the NEMBA "Biodiversity means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part and also includes diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems." In order for South Africa's biodiversity to flourish, maintenance of a healthy environment must be prioritised because biodiversity is largely dependent on healthy environment. South Africa is well-renowned and known for its rich fauna and flora life and the destruction of flora may have a negative impact on the tourism industry (Mafunganyika, 2009). Therefore, the provision of section 24 of the Constitution together with other related legislation such as the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 must be enforced by the State through the Courts by prosecuting those offending against the provisions of the Acts to ensure environmental protection while promoting socio-economic development. The government's failure to ensure environmental conservation will continue to curtail the development of the tourism sector.

Adequate Environmental Protection

A major threat to biodiversity and sustainable environmental conservation is the poaching of the endanger species such as Rhinos, Lion and elephant (Reeve, 2014). This criminal activity has devastating effects and consequences on the environment, tourism because most of these endanger species are sources of tourism attraction (Baker et al., 2013). In South Africa, poaching of rhino for their horns for sale at both the national and international black markets as means of medicinal products to cure some diseases such as cancer is also worrisome and concerning (Eloff and Lemieux, 2014). In order to protect rhino from being poached to the extent of extinction, most parks have employed the use of dehorning as a preventive

mechanism by removing their horns this intervention is known as dehorning (Mulero-Pázmány et al., 2014). Professional conservation team usually carry out the task of dehorning and the approach of this mechanism is termed "No horn, No poaching."

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora at in its 17th Conference of the Parties (CITES CoP17) that took place on the 24th of September to the 5th of October 2016, sought to "protect the rhino species by rejecting attempts of legalising the trade of rhino horns based on the ground of reasonable belief that selling of rhino horns will not curb illegal rhino poaching but would encourage the expansion of the market." Also, on the 2nd of October 2016, the CITES CoP17 passed a resolution to "shut down Ivory Markets defeating Namibia's and Zimbabwe's proposal to open Ivory Markets. The resolution is a step in the right direction as a mechanism of protecting elephants from illegal poaching of their Ivory because without a market to sell Ivory(tusks) there is no need or less desire to poach elephants for their ivory."

Another approach that could enhance healthy environmental standards that are essential for tourism development is to prevent environmental degradation rather than seeking to remedy the environmental degradation after it has occurred (Dean and McMullen, 2007). This method is achievable through the enforcement and compliance of the provision of section 23(2)(b) of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998. The Act categorically states that "the objective of integrated environmental management is to identify, predict and evaluate the actual and potential impact on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage, the risks and consequences and alternatives and options for mitigation of activities, with a view to minimising negative impacts, maximising benefits, and promoting compliance with the principles of environmental management set out in section 2, and to ensure that the effects of activities on the environment receive adequate consideration before actions are taken in connection with them provided by section 23(2)(c) of NEMA.

These provisions require involved parties to put in place an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that will stipulate how to prevent harm to the environment or minimise the damage to the environment and even put in place remedial actions in case of any damage to the environment." For example, Section 39 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002 requires that "any person who lodges an application for mining right, reconnaissance permission, prospecting right or mining permit must submit an environmental management plan (EMP), and must be in line with requirements of section 39(3) of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002 requiring that the EMP must, investigate, assess and evaluate the impact of his/her proposed prospecting or mining operations on the environment, establish baseline information concerning the affected environment to determine protection and remedial measures and so on."

The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation of 2006 ensures that "parties comply with the EIA by making offences in terms of section 81 and section 81(2) provides that any person who is held to be liable to an offence in terms of section 81(1) is liable upon conviction to imprisonment not exceeding two years or a fine not exceeding the amount prescribed in terms of the Adjustment of Fines Act of 1991." The South African Judiciary enforced compliance with the EIA in the case of S v Frylink and Another 14/1740/2010 handing judgement on the 6th of April 2011. In this case, the matter essentially revolved around the dispute of whether a wetland existed on the farm Randjlesfontein 405JR where construction of a development project was to take place. Accused no 1 Stefan Frylink and accused no 2 Mpofu Environmental Solution cc were found guilty beyond reasonable doubt in terms of section 81(1)(a) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation of 2006, which states that a person is guilty of an offence if that person provides incorrect or misleading information in any document submitted in terms of these Regulations to a competent authority.

Despite mechanisms to ensure environmental protection and sustainable conservation of species essential for tourism development targeting socio-economic transformation, the decision of the North Gauteng High Court in the matter between Department of Environmental

Affairs (DEA) and private rhino owners, Messrs. J Kruger and J Hume, two trade bodies, Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) and the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA), in 2012 was disappointing. The court declared "the National Moratorium on the trade of rhino horn, derivatives or production, which was put in place on the 13th day of February 2009 in terms of section 57(2) of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 10 2004, by the then Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, as being invalid." The decision was based on the ground that the 2009 Moratorium was not published by the Minister in a national newspaper, as is required by the public participation provisions in sections 99 and 100 of NEMBA. The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) lodged an application for leave to appeal which was denied by both the High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal. The Constitutional Court on the 5th of April 2017 also dismissed the DEAs application for leave to appeal.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust is of the view that the "Department of Environmental Affairs should have been or be afforded the opportunity to meet the requirements of public participation as permitted by precedent." The main reason why the moratorium was implemented as a deterrence for those who seek to use the domestic trade of rhino horn, derivatives or production as a cover for smuggling (De Beer, 2016), this therefore this means that "declaring the Moratorium as invalid opens up room for smugglers to use the legalise domestic trade as a cover for illegal trade of Rhino horn, derivatives or production (Wyler and Sheikh, 2008). In the same vein, the Save the Rhino Organisation advances a persuasive argument signifying that setting aside the Moratorium deferred the prosecution of alleged Rhino poaching kingpins such as Dawie Groendewald and Hugo Ras because the defendants might argue that Rhino horns found in their possession were envisioned for local buyers rather than for export.

Lack of infrastructure, particularly in rural areas

Failure of the local community, especially the rural community, to participate in the tourism industry is largely based on poor infrastructural development in the rural areas. Limited transportation services prevent rural communities from having meaningful participation in the industry either as potential suppliers of products and services or as tourists themselves (Kirsten & Rogerson, 2002). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines tourism as follows "tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure." (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008).

Applying this definition, it is trite to say that tourism is the movement of people from one destination to another for a number of purposes be it for business or leisure/pleasure). Hence, it is imperative for countries, especially those that are have   many tourist attractions such as South Africa must have an integrated transport system which enables people to tour the country with ease. Brown (1999) asserts that tourism development must support infrastructure development, furthermore tourism development that seeks to promote socio-economic transformation cannot lean only on natural attractions, natural attractions must be supported by tourist facilities and supporting infrastructure.

The solution for Infrastructural development in rural areas

Approximately 15%(R 1.1 Billion) of the Department of Tourism's total budget will fund the working for the tourism sub-programme which aims to facilitate the development of tourism infrastructure leading to job creation. The funding is chiefly for SMMEs, accredited training, skills development facilities, programmes targeting food safety, as well as young chefs and sommelier. The aforementioned initiatives of the working for tourism sub-programme are expected to yield 13 475 full-time jobs by the year 2020/21.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Tourism

Even though there are endemic crime and safety concerns in South Africa, the government has reiterated to the nation the significance of tourism on socio-economic development, stating that the current state of affairs indicates that tourism sustains 700 000 direct jobs (Chifon, 2010). Furthermore, in comparison to other growth sectors, tourism is performing exceptionally well. The government also alluded that development of the country is dependent on the country's capabilities to adapt to the constantly evolving technological advancements. Developing countries like South Africa are sluggish in their approach to familiarise themselves with ICT regardless of the benefits of ICT to develop tourism (Shanker, 2008).

Despite South Africa's sophisticated ICT market, South Africa is identified as being left behind in ICT comparison to other African countries and ranking poorly on the overall global indices (Tichaawa et al., 2017). The failure of South Africa to catch up in ICT presents an obstacle for tourism development and socio-economic transformation because Small Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) have been transformed globally (Tichaawa et al., 2017), and SMTEs are considered powerful tools for socio-economic transformation. Creating jobs in tourism cannot be sustained independently from entrepreneurial and business development, hence ICT development in South Africa is important because of the entrepreneurial and business opportunities presented by SMTEs (Tichaawa et al., 2017).

South Africa must seek to include ICT infrastructure in tourism policy, legislative, and relevant mechanisms essential for poverty alleviation and encourage growth in sectors such as tourism(van Heerden et al., 2015). ICT infrastructure helps expose the rural communities to tourism socio-economic projects within their vicinity (van Heerden et al., 2015). One of the ways in which to incorporated ICT in tourism is for tour operators to computerise business functions such as facilitating online bookings and bookings (Lehloenya, 2017). In this way South Africa will be enabled to actively compete and participate in the international tourism value chain, attracting more tourists and bringing much needed socio-economic advancement to the people of South Africa.

Conclusion

Several challenges face the South African tourism industry which stand as a stumbling block towards tourism development and negate the aim of utilising tourism as an impetus for socio-economic transformation. The primary solutions to impediments are embedded in the already existing policies, institutions, legislation and so on, regulating the different problematic tourism areas.

South Africa already has legislation, policies, regulations and institutions seeking to achieve adequate safety and security, environmental protection, infrastructural development, skills development and so on, however, the lack of, or non-enforcement and lack of or non-compliance to policies, legislation, regulation, and institutions negates tourism development and socio-economic development for the people of South Africa.

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