Residents' perceptions and attitudes towards urban tourism product offerings in Harare, Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The main objective of the study in this article was to evaluate the perceptions of some Harare residents on urban tourism product offerings, particularly with regards to the current state of tourism product offerings and their contribution to the residents' livelihoods. A questionnaire technique was used to meet the objective of the study, in which the residents' perceptions were measured on a five-point Likert scale. A total of 246 respondents were interviewed, with the findings proving that their perceptions about tourism offerings were generally negative. The results show that the highest perception score was for the item "the current tourism policy of Harare allows for the residents to engage in tourism activities" (2.72), whereas the lowest perception score was for the item "I am happy with the current quality of tourism offerings in Harare" (1.88). With regards to the results, the study concludes that there could be a lack of STD, which is considered an overall objective of tourism development, and this raises concerns in relation to the well-being of the residents in Harare. With regard to the results, the study identified the ZTA as the main stakeholder with the mandate to address such issues identified in the study, in which three recommendations were put forward: (1) To formulate a tourism policy that promotes effective community involvement; (2) to promote local investment in tourism, which could serve to attract the community members and to boost their participation in tourism activities; and (3) to promote domestic tourism to the residents in such a way as to change how the residents perceive tourism offerings in the country.

Keywords: Residents, tourism product offerings, urban tourism, tourism product, Zimbabwe

Introduction

Urban tourism is defined by Mupawaenda (2007) as being a concept referring to a set of tourism resources or activities that are located in towns and cities that are offered for touristic consumption. The concept of urban tourism may also refer to such things as leisure, or holiday, time spent in cities, during which the tourists conduct touristic activities of a sundry nature, such as shopping, watching shows, and visiting exhibitions and natural attractions, among others (Hayllar, Griffin & Edwards, 2008; Hedblom, Andersson & Borgstrom, 2017). The above could imply that cities are multifunctional environments that attract visitors for various reasons (Rasoolimanesh, Roldan, Jaafar & Ramayah, 2017:762). Urban tourism has played a fundamental role in relation to the economic restructuring and transformation of livelihoods in a number of different countries (Rogerson & Visser, 2011; Fagerton, 2017). Research has also shown that urban tourism has acquired greater prominence in a number of countries, with evidence of the above being found in studies of such countries as: Australia (Sharma & Dyer, 2009); Botswana (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017; Moswete, Thapa, Toteng & Mbaiwa, 2008); China (Ding *et al.*, 2015; Lo, 2017a,b; Xiao & Wall, 2009); Germany (Dirksmeier & Helbrecht, 2015; Fuller & Michel, 2014); India (Matos-Mar, 2012); the Middle East (Khirfan, 2014; Wilbert, 2017); Malaysia (Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017); South Africa (Ivanovic, 2014; Lemanski, 2017; MacKay, Simpson & Patel, 2017; Rogerson, 2008, 2011; Rogerson & Visser, 2014); Spain (Hof & Salom, 2015); Turkey (Momeni & Keyhanfar, 2016); the UK (Terhorst & Ozturk, 2012); the USA (Bonimy, 2011); and Zimbabwe (Magure, 2015; McGregor, 2013; Moyo, 2016; Rogerson, 2016). The above studies have focused on the role that urban tourism has played in the transformation of the respective countries. Few studies have explored the residents'

perceptions of, and attitudes towards, tourism development (see Bonimy, 2011; Dirksmeier & Helbrecht, 2015; Moyo, 2016; Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017; Sharma & Dyer, 2009; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015a,b). Gursoy, Chi and Dyer (2010), as well as Sharpley (2014), express the viewpoint that the fundamental aspect of successful sustainable tourism development (STD) is the residents' engagement therein. The viewpoint is consistent with Rasoolimanesh *et al.*'s (2017:199) assertion that tourism development has undoubtedly affected communities. Hence, their perceptions are considered crucial for the planning, policy and strategy implementation undertaken by the relevant governmental organisations towards igniting urban tourism development. With regards to the above, scant analysis exists with regards to the residents' perceptions of urban tourism product offerings (Bonimy, 2011; Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017). In the Zimbabwean context, there has, heretofore, been no known empirically based study in the public domain that has focused on the urban residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, urban tourism product offerings, despite the major cities (Harare and Bulawayo) being the hub for most of the business and leisure tourism in the country. This provides a unique opportunity to address the research gap involved, especially considering the place of importance of residents in the development of urban tourism. As such, a study that determines the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, urban tourism offerings has been undertaken. To achieve the goal in question, the article is structured as follows: a brief literature review is presented next, followed by the research problem statement and the objectives. The study methods, followed by the results and the conclusion sections, comprise the rest of the article.

Literature Review

Morupisi and Mokgalo (2017) argue that tourism develops around communities, with the residents' support being required for its attendant success. The assertion could imply that it is impossible to separate communities from tourism development, in which the latter plays a pivotal role in transforming the livelihoods of the former. Accordingly, the quality of life of the residents could be changed in terms of: job creation (Nunkoo & Smith, 2013); local investment (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010); the preservation of environmental resources (Nawijn & Mitas, 2012: 848); as well as the promotion of local culture (Kim, Uysal & Sirgy, 2013). Mirimi, Utete, Mapingure, Mumbengegwi and Kabote (2013) state that a receptive host community is an important feature of a successful STD, as such receptiveness avoids the cumulative annoyance, or antagonism, that could otherwise lead to more serious social problems (such as crime, strikes or xenophobia), which could affect the smooth running of tourism. Thus, obtaining wide community support on matters pertaining to tourism offerings is an essential element of any development strategy (Giacomo & Angelo, 2013; Ribiero, Do Valle & Silva, 2013). In the above regard, STD's main goal is believed to be meeting the expectations, needs and issues affecting the residents through tourism. The residents have, therefore, the role of sharing suggestions and ideas that should help to identify the relevant tourism offerings (Giacomo & Angelo, 2013), as well as the key issues brought about by the offerings, as affecting their livelihoods (Trawoger, 2014) involved. Against such a background, it becomes important to investigate how the residents perceive the tourism product offerings around their communities, so as to be able to propose ways of enhancing the offerings' potential to transform communities. Besides, the nature of tourism product offering at any given destination is complex to understand (Koutoulas, 2001), and compounding to the problem is the fact that the product offering can be consumed by both local residents and tourists.

Elsewhere in the extant literature, Laws and Pan (2004:277) identify *visitor satisfaction* and the *reduction of the negative impacts of the tourism industry on the host communities and their cultures* as two main issues addressed by tourism development. Sharma and Dyer (2009:189) advance this argument, in which they raise the concern that tourism planners usually overlook the importance of residents in tourism planning and, hence, do not tend to engage with them. Furthermore, various studies (see, for example, Choi & Sirakaya, 2005; Dunham, Freeman & Liedtka, 2006; Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Lawson, Williams, Young & Cossens, 1998;

Williams & Lawson, 2001) stress the need for studies that focus on the significance of the residents' perceptions of tourism product offerings, since they are crucial tourism stakeholders (Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017). Rasoolimanesh *et al.* (2017) argue that tourism development is a turning point in the livelihoods of the host communities, when change escalates in relation to their lifestyle, behaviour, socio-demographics, and values (Almeida-Garcia, Pelaez-Fernandez, Balbuena-Vazquez & Cortes-Macias, 2016; Hall & Page, 2014). As such, the residents' perceptions must be determined regularly, so as to ensure that proper plans and strategies are implemented for the right people at the right time (Sharma & Dyer, 2009:188). Additionally, the residents' perceptions contribute to the successfulness of STD, because incorporating the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, tourism product offerings gives the residents a sense of ownership of their resources (Chen & Turner, 2012; Khazaei, Elliot & Joppe, 2015), allowing them to support sustainable management of their tourism resources (Sharma & Dyer, 2009). Sharma and Dyer (2009:192-193) advance the above theory by emphasising the importance of considering residents' perceptions of tourism offerings, in relation to which they state "a community powered by appropriate information and involvement in the decision making process is more likely to support preferred types of tourism development".

Sharma and Dyer's (2009:192-193) viewpoint offers a perception that successful destinations are ones that are receptive to residents' engagement, in which the latter's perceptions are determined on a regular basis to ensure that the strategies implemented cohere with the constantly changing trends in residents' needs, concerns and expectations. Conversely, Sharma and Dyer (2009), as well as Williams and Lawson (2001), argue that a lack of incorporating the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, tourism offerings is one of the drivers of tourism failure in destinations. The argument supports the viewpoint that incorporating the residents' perceptions of tourism offerings, in terms of tourism development, is seen as a means of: (1) increasing efficiency (Illankoon, Tam & Khoa, 2016); (2) bettering destination performance (Jani & Nguni, 2016); (3) increasing destination performance (Whitford & Ruhanen, 2016); (4) enhancing the destination's competitiveness (Holden, 2016; Kim & Youn, 2017; Lee & Chen, 2017); (5) paving the way to economic development (Holden, 2016); and (6) building and enhancing the destination's reputation (Wadekar, Agrawal, Paunikar, Dobarkar, Chaudhary & Wankhede, 2017). Other views (see, for example, Almeida-Garcia *et al.,* 2016; Hall & Page, 2014; Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017: 762) contest, in the context of urban tourism that such urban facilities as public transport, road infrastructure and basic urban amenities cater *primarily* to the urban resident, while they are similarly available for use by the tourist. Therefore, the urban residents also have an equal chance to bring forward their concerns, needs and expectations, through their perceptions and attitudes in the above regard, insofar as the development of such facilities and tourism offerings is concerned (Rasoolimanesh *et al.,* 2017).

Research Statement and Objective

After Zimbabwe's economic status faced a downswing, and the rate of tourism dropped (Mlambo, 2014), the multiplicity of challenges prevailing at the time made it close to impossible to revive the industry (Zengeni & Zengeni, 2012). Some of the challenges concerned were argued to be: the change in tourists' tastes in relation to the contemporary tourism offerings (Mutana & Zinyemba, 2013); the new tourism offerings that required developing (Mzembi, 2014); the fact of new stakeholders coming into play, while some left the arena (Chingarande, 2014); the growing irrelevancy of some tourism policies and strategies, such as Zimbabwe having had to change its tourism brand name (Chibaya, 2013); and the fact that other competing destinations had poached and marketed the country's tourism offerings for their own benefit. An example of the latter was South Africa, Botswana and Zambia having begun to promote Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls as part of their own package tours (Mutana & Zinyemba, 2013). The above-mentioned challenges entailed the adoption of a multidisciplinary approach

to the revamping of Zimbabwe's tourism sector, requiring input from the different heterogeneous stakeholder groups concerned (Katsamudanga, 2015; Sibanda & Ndlovu, 2017). In relation to the above, Sharma and Dyer (2009) advance that community members are at the centre of tourism development at a destination. Hence, their perceptions, in such regard, can be considered important in terms of the effort made to redress the existing gap, and to redevelop the tourism offerings involved. More so, Douglas (2017) identifies that there is, as yet, no known study in the public domain that has sought to determine the residents' views of urban tourism product offerings in the Zimbabwean context. Hence, the current study sought to redress the prevailing research gap. To achieve the above, the study sought to determine the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the urban tourism offerings in Harare. The specific objective was to: study the perceptions of the Harare residents on tourism offerings, particularly with regards to the current state of tourism product offerings and their contribution to the residents' livelihoods. In the study context, tourism product offerings are considered to be the total products comprising of a combination of all the elements, which a tourist consumes during his/her trip in Harare. This also includes "specific products which are components of the total tourist product and can be sold as individual offerings such as accommodation, transport, attractions and other facilities for tourists "(Koutoulas, 2001:2), and consumed by local residents as well.

Methodology

MacMillan (2013) defines a research design as the planning of a scientific enquiry, and the formulation of a strategy to find out something. Along the same lines, Creswell (2009) defines a research design as being a process that is comprised of plans and procedures for research, which span the taking of decisions, from the making of broad assumptions to the adoption of detailed methods of data collection and analysis. In the current study, a quantitative research design that incorporates a case study approach was adopted, with a questionnaire technique being used to gather information to fulfil the objective of the study. Yin (2014) defines a case study as an investigation of a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident. In the present article, the city of Harare was used as the case study area, with the following section providing the justification for its use. Given the circumstances that Zimbabwe has gone through, from being the best tourist destination in Africa in 1995 (ZTA, 2014) to being one of the most dangerous places in the world to visit between 2001 and 2008 (UNWTO, 2012), the country has become a perfect case study for the current research study, which seeks to determine the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, urban tourism offerings. Hence, Harare, the capital city and the centre of development of Zimbabwe, was the focus of the current study.

A stratified random sampling technique, which is also known as a proportional, or quota random sampling, technique, was used in the study (Creswell, 2014). Creswell (2014) explain stratified sampling as a probability sampling technique, wherein the researcher divides the entire population into different subgroups or strata, and then randomly selects the final subjects, proportionally, from the different strata. The population is divided into overlapping groups, consisting of strata N1, N2, N3, such that N1 + N2 + N3 = N, before doing a simple random sample of f = n/N in each stratum. The survey population was stratified geographically, based on Harare's three local municipalities: the City of Harare; the Chitungwiza City Council; and the Epworth Local Board. The main reason behind using the above-mentioned technique was that the researchers wanted to ensure that the research was able to represent not only the overall Harare populace, but also the key subgroups of the population, especially the small minority groups in such neglected areas as Epworth, Harare.

In the light of the study's purpose, the researchers were concerned with ensuring that all the population groups' perceptions, despite their geographical location, were represented, and, hence, the necessity for stratifying the population. A questionnaire was used as the research

instrument to determine the residents' views. A total of 246 questionnaires were completed by the survey group. Further, to ensure that the required stratification was achieved, Harare was divided up into seven strata, with a total of 35 (average) respondents per stratum being randomly selected to ensure that every stratum was represented in the study. The obtained data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 24. The use of such software allowed for the conducting of statistical tests to generate the inferential data that assisted with the presenting of the results.

Results and discussion

Profile of the respondents

The survey instrument used to gather the required data to achieve the objective of the study found out that there were more female respondents (58%) than male (42%). Though every age group was fairly represented, the average age of the respondents was 30 years old. Further, the study also found out that many of the respondents had a fairly good educational background, with 31% of them having completed an undergraduate degree, and 27% having completed a diploma/certificate. Most of the respondents (50%) described their economic status as average, with 23% of them indicating that they were business people, while 20% indicated that they were unemployed and could not find a job. The following section consists of a discussion of the results obtained with regards to their perceptions.

Perceptions and attitudes regarding tourism product offerings in Harare

To study the respondents' perceptions and attitudes, twelve variable statements that measured the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the tourism offerings in Harare were given for them to indicate their associated level of agreement based on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. The variable statements considered usability, satisfaction, involvement, and socio-economic perspectives. According to Table 1, the responses to the variable statements indicated a generally negative attitude towards tourism product offerings from the respondents.

According to the results portrayed in in Table 1, the respondents refuted the statements made that Harare's tourism offerings were tailor-made for international tourists only (M=2.11), that Harare offerings were well-marketed for the consumption of the local residents and tourists (M=2.27), and that the cost associated with Harare's tourism offerings was good value for money (M=2.01). The respondents however indicated that tourism products were the main reason for tourists to visit Harare (M= 2.65).The results show that, inasmuch as the respondents were aware that the tourism offerings in Harare were as equally made available to the residents as they were to the tourists, they still thought that a challenge of usage of the offerings existed, due to the limited marketing and associated high costs. In such regard, Manjengwa (2007), Sibanda and Ndlovu (2017) and Douglas (2017) argue that the Zimbabwean tourism authorities and planners know too little about what the country can offer as tourism offerings and, hence, only limited strategies have been put in place to promote the usage of such offerings. Such a shortcoming has problematized the formulating of policy, and the developing of strategies, that might otherwise have enabled them to maximise their offerings. In other words, the results could mean that there might have been a lack of a proper tourism policy and strategy in Harare. Therefore, the results obtained in such regard argue for the closure of the existing gap in the tourism industry in Harare in relation to the above. Further, the respondents highlighted that the tourism offerings in Harare did not offer good value for money. This issue of concern may be attributed to the current economic situation in Zimbabwe, where there are no, or only limited, funds available for renovating the depreciating infrastructure and tourism offerings. Further to the above, the ZTA (2015) indicates that Zimbabwe's economy is still succumbing to the sanctions imposed on the country at the

commencement of the new millennium. The imposed sanctions are believed to have triggered such challenges as the investors' shutdown and the economic breakdown of the country (Mirimi *et al.,* 2013). The above could have escalated to a lack of development and marketing of, and investment in, the tourism offerings of Harare.

Level of satisfaction with tourism offerings in Harare

The respondents indicated a negative response to variable statements on their level of satisfaction with tourism offerings in Harare. They negated the following statements: I often visit local attractions in Harare (M=2.05); I am happy with the current tourism offerings in Harare (M=1.88); and I am satisfied with Harare's current tourism contributions to the country's economy (M=1.95). Based on the mean scores for the above variables, the responses were, consistently, negative to all the statements made, meaning that the respondents were not satisfied with the tourism offerings in Harare. Giacomo and Angelo (2013), as well as Mirimi *et al.* (2013), argue that the residents' sense of dissatisfaction could lead to their annoyance or antagonism, which could result in the development of more serious social problems, which could affect the smooth running of tourism. The residents' lack of visiting tourism offerings, as well as their dissatisfaction with tourism's contribution to the country's economy, could have resulted from the benefits of tourism not accruing to them, and only benefitting specific stakeholder group(s). Further, Sibanda and Ndlovu's (2017) objection that tourism development in Zimbabwe is structured in such a way as to benefit very few stakeholder groups has relevance here. Conversely, the results may be interpreted from an economic perspective. Given Zimbabwe's current situation, it could be that there is a lack of adequate investment in tourism to ignite economic growth. As indicated by the DEAT (1996), investment in tourism is one of the key areas of development. Therefore, the limited investment in tourism due to the departure of many foreign investors from the country could be a contributory factor as to why the industry and the current state of the offerings were not to the satisfaction of the respondents.

Furthermore, respondents felt that the Harare community was not being involved in the tourism planning and development of the city. Evidence of the above is portrayed in Table 1, in which they are shown to have refuted the statement made that community members were consulted by the tourism planners before any tourism project took place (M=2.08), and that the local tourism authorities encouraged the residents to experience Harare's tourism offerings (M=2.14). The result could be a clear indication that the Harare residents were being portrayed as fringe stakeholders. The assertion that the residents might be seen as the fringe stakeholders in Zimbabwe was consistent with Chiutsi and Saarinen's (2017) concern that tourism development in the country was centralised in such a way that it did not address the wide spectrum of all the involved stakeholder groups' concerns, more specially the residents, but, rather, that it mostly contributed to the government's predetermined objectives. The result might also be related to Muchadenyika's (2015) and Douglas' (2017) argument that tourism development in Zimbabwe has been conducted in the absence of a resident perspective. Another issue of concern that might arise in connection with the findings made could be in relation to the number of studies (see, for example, Aref, 2010, 2011; Lindberg & Johnson, 1997; Ribiero *et al.,* 2013) that advocate for 'constant communication' with the residents as the fundamental element of community development, as well as being key to achieving the STD goals. The absence of the above-mentioned scenario could be one of the contributing factors to the failure of tourism in Zimbabwe. Another justification of the lack of community involvement in Harare could be the current political situation in Zimbabwe. As politics play a big role in the production and accumulation of wealth, and in its distribution, the power to distribute that wealth is under the discretion of a few individuals/institutions, leaving it a closed book as to how such wealth is distributed. To protect their own interests, the few individuals/institutions involved might limit the number of people to become involved in the

development of such economic activities as tourism, resulting in the limited involvement of residents in such regard.

Despite the fact that the respondents denied that tourism products in Harare were planned in such a way that benefitted the local residents and the environment (M=2.14), the responses to the socio-economic and environmental contribution of the tourism products were generally fair. In their responses, the respondents indicated that the current tourism policy of Harare allowed for the residents to engage in tourism activities (M=2.72), and that Harare's urban tourism offerings provided entrepreneurial opportunities for the local residents (M=2.69). However, it is important to note that the high score level reflected in relation to the above statements was influenced by a number of respondents who were neutral on the variables. With regards to the results obtained, a number of studies (Keyser, 2009; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015b; Weaver & Oppermann, 2000) offer the perspective that there is universal agreement on tourism's economic potential for enhancing the well-being of the local communities. Conversely, the tourism sector of Zimbabwe has the potential to enhance the country's economy, although it has not yet done so (Douglas, 2017). Inasmuch as the results prove that the benefits of tourism have not yet been maximised in Zimbabwe, the Annual Tourism Statistics and Trends Report prepared yearly by the ZTA shows evidence that a considerable number of tourism receipts are received annually by the country. For example, the ZTA (2015) recorded a 9% growth in the number of tourism arrivals in Zimbabwe in 2015, compared to in 2014, with a total contribution of $886 million being made in the form of tourism receipts. In the light of the above-mentioned report, the residents' rebuttal of the statement that tourism enhanced their standard of living can be seen as disturbing, especially after the sector has contributed so much to the country's economy. The question lies with the allocation that is made to the state budget, which should result in some budget allocation towards the enhancing of the country's communities.

Table 1: The respondents' perceptions of Harare's tourism offerings

Item	Variable statements	N	Mean	Std deviation
V1	Harare's tourism product offerings are tailor-made for international tourists only.	246	2.11	.934
V2	I often visit local attractions in Harare for leisure purposes.	246	2.05	1.01
V3	I am happy with the current quality of tourism product offerings in Harare.	246	1.88	.988
V4	I am satisfied with Harare's current tourism contributions to the country's economy.	246	1.95	.982
V5	Community members are consulted by tourism planners before any tourism project takes place.	246	2.08	.893
V6	The current tourism policy of Harare allows for the residents to engage in tourism activities.	246	2.72	.862
V7	The local tourism authorities encourage the residents to experience Harare's tourism offering.	246	2.14	.796
V8	Harare's tourism offerings are well marketed for the consumption of local residents and tourists.	246	2.27	.979
V9	Harare's urban tourism offerings provide entrepreneurial opportunities to the local residents.	246	2.69	.860
V10	The costs associated with Harare's tourism offerings are good value for money.	246	2.01	.932
V11	Tourism products in Harare are planned in such a way that benefits the local residents and the environment.	246	2.14	.734
V12	Tourism products are the main reasons for tourists to visit Harare.	246	2.65	.871

Responses based on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, 5=strongly agree)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of the current study indicate that the respondents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, tourism product offerings in Harare were negative. The negative perceptions and attitudes portrayed could be evidence of a lack of STD, which is considered an overall objective of tourism development (Giacomo & Angelo, 2013; Trawoger, 2014). In addition, they could raise concerns in relation to the well-being of the residents in Harare, for the residents are considered to be crucial stakeholders in tourism development (Laws & Pan,

2004:277). In a similar situation, elsewhere, a number of studies (Aref, 2010, 2011; Mirimi *et al.,* 2013; Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017; Moyo & Tichaawa, 2017) have identified the importance of residents in tourism planning, development and management, and have recommended, thereafter, that effective community participation in that regard should be observed, so as to ensure that community development and STD are equally achieved. In the present study, key issues to emanate from the results have been identified as being: (1) the lack of local and foreign investment in tourism; (2) the lack of a comprehensive tourism policy and strategy; (3) the lack of usage of tourism offerings; (4) the current economic situation; and (5) the lack of community involvement in tourism planning and development. All the above issues have influenced the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents.

With the aims of addressing the issues concerned, and of changing the attitudes of the residents, as well as of proposing a way in which sustainability and community development can be achieved, the current study identified the tourism authorities, the ZTA, as being the key driver involved, with the mandate to facilitate positive change in such regard. The authorities could formulate a tourism policy that promotes effective community involvement. The chief concern to emerge from the results of the study is that the Zimbabwean residents are being neglected, while their role as important tourism stakeholders remains undefined. Communities are important in developing tourism, because their environments are playgrounds in which tourism performs, and where tourism is developed, so as to enhance their sense of socio-economic well-being. Hence, a comprehensive tourism policy that promotes community involvement and that stipulates the roles of the residents could be seen as a panacea for redressing the omission of the residents' engagement in Zimbabwean tourism development.

According to the DEAT (1996:27), key areas in a tourism policy that advocates for community involvement include: (1) safety and security; (2) education and training; (3) the financing of tourism, and the accessing of finance; (4) environmental and cultural resources management; (5) infrastructure development; and (6) the promoting of local investment in tourism, among others. As such key areas are crucial to consider in the policy formulation for successful tourism development in Zimbabwe, they should be reflected in the tourism policy. In addition to the above, the ZTA should facilitate the positive participation of locals in the tourism sector. One of the ways of doing the above is to give the locals a platform from which to identify potential tourism resources, and from which to voice suggestions as to how to develop the resources in such a way as to sustain their socio-economic well-being, while, simultaneously, avoiding the violation of their interests and the destruction of their environment. The DEAT (1996) identifies residents as crucial role players, with the limited integration of the residents being identified as a major driving factor towards the failure of tourism at a destination (DEAT, 1996; Moyo & Tichaawa, 2017).

Further, the ZTA should promote local investment in tourism, which could serve to attract the community members and to boost their participation in tourism activities. Investment opportunities could be seen in terms of financial aid, education and training programmes, and empowerment (DEAT, 1996). In the case of Harare, in relation to which the respondents lamented the fact that the residents were not being included in the tourism development of the city, promoting local investment through the aforementioned investment opportunity areas could result in the positive engagement of communities in the tourism industry, as well as in the wide community support therefor. Lastly, it is also important to promote domestic tourism to the residents in such a way as to change how the residents perceive tourism offerings in the country. As the respondents indicated that they did not often visit attractions, strategies should be put in place to encourage the locals to travel domestically, and to participate in tourism activities. The reason for the respondents to have refuted that the tourism policy

allowed for the residents to engage in tourism activities could have been because no such strategies were in place to facilitate such engagement. Hence, to change the prevailing negative attitude, the ZTA should develop and implement such strategies to engage the residents with tourism activities in Zimbabwe.

The current study sought to determine the residents' perceptions and attitude regarding urban tourism offerings in Harare. Specifically, the study was designed to gather the perceptions of Harare residents on the tourism offerings made, particularly with regards to the current state of tourism offerings and their contribution to the residents' livelihoods. As the perceptions were found to be, in general, negative, the study further emphasised the importance of community involvement in tourism planning, policy formulation and strategy implementation, as a way of achieving STD and community development in Zimbabwe. The findings of the study also provided the perspective that Zimbabwean residents might not have been involved in the tourism planning for, and development of, their areas, and neither were the benefits of tourism accruing to them. Such could be a bad reflection on the country and its current state of tourism performance, especially considering that the tourism industry tends to rely greatly on the reception and hospitality of the host communities (Ribiero *et al.*, 2013:657). Therefore, it should be developed, to a greater extent than before, with the purpose of catering for the needs and expectations of the community members involved (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997).

Limitations and future research

The study was limited to the residents' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the urban tourism product offerings in Harare, with a view to understanding how Zimbabwean tourism is perceived by the locals. Based on the residents' views presented in the current study, future research could be conducted that should conform with the current study's findings, as well as contributing to the identification of key issues on the STD in Zimbabwe's urban destinations. In addition, the study focused only on Harare as a case study area. Future research could be conducted focusing on two or more major cities in Zimbabwe, with a view to allowing for a comparative analysis to be done of how perceptions vary across two or more urban areas, and within particular stakeholder groups, in terms of their similarities and differences. Lastly, a study that focuses on the influence of sociodemographic variables on the urban residents' perceptions of tourism offerings could be envisaged from the standpoint of the current study. In addition, a more insightful and interesting angle of research within the same context will be to ascertain the views of Zimbabwean tourists.

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