



# Township residents of a tourism destination: a subjective well-being approach

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## Abstract

Research on township tourism, a popular form of tourism in South Africa, has been well documented. However, according to the authors, there has not been any study done that investigates the effect of tourism on township residents' subjective well-being. Conducting such research is pivotal for policy development and for the sustainability of the township tourism industry, since residents are part of a major group stakeholders of the township tourism industry and they are directly affected by tourism activities. Therefore, the purpose of this article was to investigate whether tourism does have any influence on the subjective well-being (satisfaction with life) of township residents. A survey was conducted in Soweto, South Africa, among residents residing in areas close to tourism activity and areas that are a bit further away from tourism activity between 14 October 2017 and 6 November 2017. A convenience sampling technique was utilised and 276 fully completed questionnaires, which were completed at free will by respondents, were received. Data was processed and analysed through Microsoft Excel and SPSS. Amos was used to conduct the confirmatory analysis as well as the structural equation modelling technique. The results reveal that the measured variables had a positive statistical effect on each other and they validate the Bottom-up spill over theory, which stipulates that subjective well-being/satisfaction with life is gained by satisfaction with life domains. Based on the study's findings, recommendations were made to the key role players in the township industry with the aim of prioritising township residents' subjective well-being. This study is the first of its kind within the South African context as it looks at the relationship between tourism and the subjective well-being of residents of a township. Therefore, this study makes a significant contribution to literature regarding tourism and subjective well-being.

**Keywords:** Residents; life domains; subjective well-being; satisfaction with life; support for further tourism development

## Introduction

Township tourism has been growing in South Africa since the dawn of democracy in 1994 (Frenzel, 2012; George and Booyens 2014; Steinbrink, 2012). Local and international tourists flock to see and experience townships such as Langa (Koens and Thomas, 2015), Khayelitsha (Dickson, 2012) and Soweto (Naidoo, 2013). Research on township tourism in South Africa has been well documented (Booyens, 2010; Briedenhann and Ramchander, 2006; Butler, 2010; George and Booyens, 2014; Koens and Thomas, 2015; Marschall, 2013; Nemasetoni and Rogerson 2007; Rolfes et al., 2009). However, according to the author, there have not



been any studies that solely focus on residents of township tourism destinations. Furthermore, there as far as has been ascertained, there have not been studies conducted that investigate township residents' perceptions of tourism's influence on their subjective well-being. Conducting such research is pivotal as it will provide information that will assist in developing policies for further tourism development (Yu et al., 2011), since residents of tourism destinations are major stakeholders in the tourism industry and their input and their support are vital for the success of further tourism development (Song et al., 2017). Therefore, the main question this study wants to address is: *Does tourism have an influence on the subjective well-being of township residents?*

With reference to the aim of this study, the following concepts were explored: life domains, support for further tourism development, subjecting well-being and satisfaction with life.

### **Life domains**

Life domains refer to the various aspects of an individual's life (Birman et al., 2014). Examples include work life-, family life-, community life- (Kobau et al., 2012), material life-, emotional life and health and safety life domains (Aref, 2011). Activities or events in a life domain can produce positive or negative affect (Venter and Kruger, 2017). For example, traffic congestion may cause residents of a tourism destination to be unhappy (Kim and Thapa, 2018). In addition, life domains are interdependent; activity in one life domain can affect other life domains (Muftić et al., 2014). However, the value or importance of a life domain is subjective to an individual (Huxley et al., 2012). According to the bottom-up spill over theory (BST), satisfaction with one life domain may lead to satisfaction with other life domains (Kruger, 2012). Furthermore, the theory postulates that satisfaction with life domains leads to satisfaction with life (Lee and Sirgy, 2018) Therefore, the greater the satisfaction with life domains, the greater the overall satisfaction with life (Kim et al., 2013). Tourism has an influence on the life domains of residents of tourism destinations (Woo et al., 2018). Its influence is evident in residents' life domains such as the material life-, community life-, emotional life- and health and safety life domains (Aref, 2011; Khizindar, 2012; Kim et al., 2013).

In relation to the material life domain, tourism can provide job opportunities for residents (Monterrubio et al., 2018) and increases residents' standard of living (Suess et al., 2018). In terms of the community life domain, tourism can improve public infrastructure (Carneiro et al., 2018) and cause traffic congestion (Tournaki et al., 2018). In relation to the emotional life domain, tourism can provide more recreational opportunities for residents (Woosnam and Aleshinloye, 2018) and can encourage residents to forfeit their traditional customs (Movono et al., 2018). In terms of the health and safety life domain, tourism can lead to the preservation of the natural and built environment (Sroyetch et al., 2018) and increase criminal activity in an area (Tichaawa et al., 2018). Due to its influence on residents' life domains, tourism can have an influence on residents' subjective well-being (Khizindar, 2012; Woo et al., 2018; Yolal et al., 2016).

### **Residents' support for further tourism development**

Tourism development is an important tool for many developing countries (Dogru and Bulut, 2018; Peters et al., 2018; Sokhanvar et al., 2018). Further tourism development would be highly beneficial for developing countries as it will enable them to reap more of the benefits of tourism (Liu et al., 2017). However, further tourism development without residents' support is unsustainable (Chami, 2018; Song et al., 2017; Thyne et al., 2018). This is so since residents are the rightful owners of the resources found at the destination (Xue and Kerstetter, 2018), they are the workforce of the tourism industry (Jaafar et al., 2015), and they also form part of the tourism attractions at the destination (Letoluo and Wangombe, 2018). Therefore, it is



important to note the factors that influence residents' support for further tourism development (Almeida-García et al., 2016). The gains from tourism can influence residents to be in support for further tourism development (Lee, 2013). Tourism provides employment and recreational opportunities, promotes local culture, and preserves the natural environment (Garau-Vadell et al., 2018). However, tourism has impacts that negatively affect the lives of residents (Carneiro et al., 2018). These include high cost of living, congestion, and cultural exploitation (Tussyadiah and Sigala, 2018). Nonetheless, if the benefits of tourism outweigh the costs residents are more likely to support further tourism development (Yu et al., 2018). Furthermore, the relations between tourists and residents can determine residents' support for further tourism development (Shen et al., 2017). If the relations between tourists and residents are good, residents may be inclined to support further tourism development (Tsaur et al., 2018). In addition, residents' participation in the tourism industry for example community based tourism may encourage them to support further tourism development (Su et al., 2018). If residents gain knowledge about the tourism industry, and are given opportunities to work and manage the tourism industry in their respective communities, they will be more likely to support further tourism development (Ismail, 2015). Moreover, local governments are recognised as one of the major stakeholders of the tourism industry, since they regulate, market and fund tourism in their respective territories (Clausen and García, 2018). If residents do trust and support government plans and activities, then they are more likely to support further tourism development if their local government decides to embark on it (Nunkoo et al., 2018). Therefore, political trust in local governments can influence residents' support for further tourism development (Nunkoo and Gursoy, 2017).

### **Subjective well-being and Satisfaction with life**

Subjective well-being (SWB) is an overall evaluation of one's life (Corcoran and McNulty, 2018). Singleton (2018) states that SWB is an analysis of life based on an individual's experiences and emotions. SWB is regarded as an indication of success in one's life (Bücker et al., 2018), and it is also regarded by governments as an important measure for prosperity and a tool for policy development (Diener et al., 2015; Li et al., 2018; Lorenz, 2018).

According to Lampropoulou (2018), SWB is determined by internal factors such as personality and external factors such as the environment. In addition, SWB is made up of affective well-being and cognitive well-being (Etxeberria et al., 2018). Affective well-being is an evaluation of life based on an individual's feelings (Luhmann, 2017). Cognitive well-being, best known as satisfaction with life (SWL) (Engel and Bless, 2017), is a personal judgement of an individual's life (Kim et al., 2018). SWL is a subjective evaluation that compares an individual's ideal life with his or her current life situation (Cai and Park, 2016).

Lee et al. (2018) state that SWL occurs as a result of satisfaction with life domains. Obtaining SWL is pivotal as it is an indicator of good health, longer life and a positive outlook on life (Fjermestad and Stokke, 2018; Song et al., 2018; Wardecker et al., 2018). However, SWL is temporary due to differing life circumstances (Chio et al., 2018). SWL is a growing concept in tourism research (Page et al., 2017; Uysal et al., 2012; Woo et al., 2015), covering aspects such as tourism labour (Naude et al., 2013), tourists (McCabe and Johnson, 2013) and residents of tourism destinations (Nawijn and Mitas, 2012). Research on the SWL life of residents of tourism destinations indicates that tourism's influence on residents SWL has an influence on residents' support for further tourism development (Andereck and Nyaupane, 2011; Liang and Hui, 2016; Woo et al., 2015).

### **Research Methodology**

The questionnaire consisted mainly of the work done by Kim et al. (2013), but not within the context of this study. The questionnaire consisted of five sections, and these were: *tourism affects life domains, satisfaction with life domains, perceived value of tourism development,*



*overall satisfaction with life and demographic profile.* Section A was made up of statements measuring how tourism affects the material life-, community life-, emotional life- and health and safety life domains and included a five-point labelled Likert scale, where 1 = “not at all affected” and 5 = “very affected”. Section B consisted of statements measuring residents’ satisfaction with various life domains, and it included a labelled five-point Likert scale, where 1= “very unsatisfied” and 5 = “very satisfied”. Section C was made up of variables measuring the perceived value of tourism development. This section in the questionnaire also included a labelled five-point Likert scale, where 1 refers to “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree”. Section D included statements on overall satisfaction with life and contained a labelled five-point Likert scale, where 1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”. Section E contained open-ended questions to respondents, which were intended to determine the respondents’ year of birth, gender, occupation, length of stay in Soweto and level of education.

### **Data collection and research design**

The data collection took place between 14 October 2017 and 6 November 2017 and the convenience sampling technique was utilised. The study population consisted of Soweto residents who reside close to tourism activity and residents who reside further away from tourism activity. The research design was descriptive and data was collected using a quantitative research approach. Trained fieldworkers distributed the questionnaires to Soweto residents who were willing to complete the questionnaire at free will, and 276 fully completed questionnaires were received.

### **Data analysis**

Microsoft Excel was used to capture the data and process the descriptive results. SPSS version 22 was used to conduct the statistical analysis for the reliabilities and the independent sample T-test, which is a statistical procedure used to compare the difference between the mean scores of two different groups (Burns and Bush, 2014). Amos was used to conduct the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the purpose of confirming theories regarding an existing set of variables (Pallant, 2013). In addition, Amos was furthermore used to conduct the structural equation modelling (SEM), which purpose was to evaluate the relationship among a set of variables (Pallant, 2013).

### **Statistical measures**

Al-Adwan et al. (2013) state that a Cronbach alpha value (a popular measure of reliability) has to be above 0.7 in order for it to be deemed acceptable. However, Pallant (2013) stipulates that if a Cronbach alpha value is below 0.7, it is still acceptable as long as the scale has less than ten items and the range of the mean-inter item correlations lies between 0.2 and 0.4. For the purposes of this article, reliabilities were done to see whether the Likert scale was reliable. Field (2013) states that standard regression weights (commonly known as *P*-values) refer to a technique used to determine the strength of a relationship between a predictor and an outcome variable.

Additionally, the predictor variable will predict the outcome variable if the *P*-value is statistically significant. Mease et al. (2014) stipulate that a variable must have a *P*-value of 0.001 in order for it to be statistically significant. For the purposes of this article, standardised regression weights were used to measure the strength of the relationships between the unobserved variables: tourism affects life domains, satisfaction with life domains, perceived value of tourism development and SWL.



According to Field (2013), goodness of fit indices refer to tests used to determine whether data correlates with an observed theory or model. The fit indices that were used for this article include the Chi-square test divided by its degrees of freedom, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the comparative fit index (CFI). For the chi-square test divided by its degrees of freedom, Hooper et al. (2008) suggest that ranges between 2 and 5 are acceptable. For the RMSEA, Hancock et al. (2010) commend that the RMSEA together with its associated interval should be  $\leq 0.5$  in order for it to have an acceptable ratio. For the purposes of this article, goodness of fit indices were used in the SEM and CFA to see how well the goodness overall fit was achieved for both the CFA and the SEM results.

With regard to the T-test, the *P*-value for the difference between the mean scores has to be less than or equal to 0.5 in order for it to be statistically significant (Pallant, 2013). The effect size refers to the calculated difference between two mean scores (Field, 2013). Cohen, as cited by Lakens (2013), confirms guidelines to interpret the effect sizes between the mean scores of two groups, and these are: 0.2 = small difference; 0.5 = medium difference; 0.8 = large difference.

## Results

### Demographic profile

Table 1 summarises the key findings from the demographic profile of respondents who reside close to tourism activity and further away from tourism activity. The table shows that the majority of both groups of respondents have stayed in Soweto for more than 12 years. Table 1 also shows that respondents who reside close to tourism activity have more jobs in the tourism industry as compared to residents who reside further away from tourism activity. Table 1 also reveals that the majority of both groups of respondents were male and have obtained a matric qualification. However, there is a slight difference in the average age between respondents who reside close to tourism activity and respondents who reside close to tourism activity and further away from tourism activity in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic profile of respondents

Demographic profile	Close to tourism activity	Away from tourism activity
<i>Length of stay</i>	68% $\geq$ 12 years	64% $\geq$ 12 years
<i>Employment in tourism industry</i>	36%	26%
<i>Gender</i>	Male: 54%;Female 46%	Male: 53%; Female: 47%
<i>Highest qualification</i>	Matric: 61%	Matric: 61%
<i>Average age</i>	27 years	28 years

### Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA)

A group analysis has been done to see whether statements measuring the confirmed factors were loading the same for residents who reside close to tourism activity and those who reside further away from tourism activity in Table 2. For the Cronbach alpha, the full dataset had been used without differentiating between residents who reside close to tourism activity and those who reside further away from tourism activity as the same Likert scale had been used for both groups.

However the model fit indices in Table 2, indicates the difference between residents residing close and further away from tourism activity. In relation to tourism affects life domains, the emotional life domain was the only factor with an acceptable mean-inter item correlation (another measure used in testing the reliability of the Likert scales used). Nonetheless, all the Cronbach alphas for all the life domains were acceptable.



**Table 2:** Confirmatory factor analyses of confirmed factors

Latent variables	*( $\alpha$ )	*Mic	*M & Std. dev.	*SRW Pval	*GFI	*DGFI
<i>Tourism affects life domains</i>					X <sup>2</sup> /df = 2.85 CFI = 0.84 RMSEA = 0.081 with a confidence interval [0.075; 0.088]	X <sup>2</sup> /df = 2.34 CFI = 0.77. RMSEA = 0.070 with a confidence interval [0.065; 0.074]
Material life domain	0.86	0.47	2.97 ± 0.96	p ≤ 0.001		
Community life domain	0.80	0.45	3.23 ± 0.94	p ≤ 0.001		
Emotional life domain	0.77	0.40	2.99 ± 0.92	p ≤ 0.001		
Health and safety life domain	0.89	0.47	3.26 ± 0.96	p ≤ 0.001		
<i>Satisfaction with life domains</i>					X <sup>2</sup> /df = 3.13 CFI = 0.79 RMSEA = 0.088 with a confidence interval [0.081; 0.094]	X <sup>2</sup> /df = 2.57 CFI = 0.71. RMSEA = 0.075 with a confidence interval [0.071; 0.080]
Material life domain	0.84	0.43	2.73 ± 0.82	p ≤ 0.001		
Community life domain	0.78	0.42	3.04 ± 0.85	p ≤ 0.001		
Emotional life domain	0.74	0.36	3.16 ± 0.76	p ≤ 0.001		
Health and safety life domain	0.86	0.40	2.94 ± 0.91	p ≤ 0.001		
<i>Satisfaction with life overall</i>	0.81	0.39	3.17 ± 0.80	p ≤ 0.001	X <sup>2</sup> /df = 4.44 CFI = 0.91. RMSEA = 0.111 with a confidence interval [0.084; 0.140]	X <sup>2</sup> /df = 2.64 CFI = 0.89. RMSEA = 0.077 with a confidence interval [0.058; 0.096]
<i>Perceived value of tourism development</i>					X <sup>2</sup> /df = 3.54 CFI = 0.86. RMSEA = 0.096 with a confidence interval [0.082; 0.109]	X <sup>2</sup> /df = 2.58 CFI = 0.83. RMSEA = 0.076 with a confidence interval [0.066; 0.085]
Perceived value of tourism development in your community	0.85	0.54	3.75 ± 0.99	p ≤ 0.001		
Level of tourism development in your community	0.58	0.22	3.25 ± 0.83	p ≤ 0.001		
Support for further tourism development in your community	0.66	0.32	3.62 ± 0.92	p ≤ 0.001		

\* Note: ( $\alpha$ )= Cronbach alpha; Mic = Mean inter-item correlation; M & Std. dev. = Mean & standard deviation; SRW Pval = Standardised regression weights / P - value; GFI = Goodness of fit indices; DGFI = Difference between fit indices of the two groups.

In relation to satisfaction with life domains, all factors had acceptable reliabilities and mean inter-item correlations. In relation to perceived value of tourism development, the factors level of tourism development in your community and further tourism development in your community attained a lower reliability; however, their mean inter-item correlations were acceptable. Therefore, all of the factors in Table 2 have an acceptable range in terms of the mean-item correlations and a suitable reliability. All variables contributing to the 12 confirmed factors in Table 2 were statistically significant as they attained a P-value of less than 0.001. The CFA



model fit statistics produced acceptable fit indices for both groups (residents residing close to tourism activity and residents residing further away from tourism activity).

### Independent sample T-test analysis

For the purposes of this study, the T-test, as depicted in Table 3, was used to determine whether there were any significant statistical differences between residents who reside close to tourism activity and residents who reside further away from tourism activity.

**Table 3:** Independent sample T-test between residents who reside close and further away from tourism activity

Factors	N	<sup>a</sup> Close		N	<sup>b</sup> Further		Sig (2- tailed) P - value	Effect size
		Mean	Std. dev.		Mean	Std. dev.		
Material life domain	142	3.10	0.93	137	2.84	0.99	<b>0.03</b>	0.26*
Community life domain	142	3.36	0.89	137	3.09	0.97	<b>0.02</b>	0.27
Emotional life domain	142	3.09	0.94	137	2.88	0.89	<b>0.05</b>	0.22*
Health and safety life domain	142	3.39	0.89	137	3.12	1.02	<b>0.02</b>	0.26*
Satisfaction with material life domain	141	2.80	0.81	136	2.65	0.81	0.10	0.20*
Satisfaction with community life domain	141	3.10	0.86	136	2.98	0.85	0.27	0.13
Satisfaction with emotional life domain	141	3.23	0.77	136	3.08	0.75	0.11	0.19
Satisfaction with health and safety life domain	141	3.02	0.99	136	2.86	0.82	0.13	0.17
Overall satisfaction with life	141	3.28	0.74	135	3.05	0.85	<b>0.01</b>	0.28*
Perceived value of tourism development in your community	142	3.75	1.04	136	3.75	0.95	0.95	0.01
Level of tourism development in your community	142	3.45	0.86	136	3.40	0.79	<b>0.00</b>	0.51*
Support for further tourism development in your community	142	3.73	0.91	36	3.50	0.93	<b>0.03</b>	0.26*

Note. Effect sizes: \*0.2 Small difference; \*\*0.5 Medium or visible difference; \*\*\*0.8 Large difference.

(a) Residents residing close to tourism activity; (b) Residents residing further away from tourism activity

In Table 3, the mean scores were higher for residents who reside close to tourism activity than for residents who reside further away from tourism activity, except for the factor “perceived value of tourism development in your community”, which had a similar score for both group groups ( $\bar{x}=3.75$ ). The majority of the factors in Table 3 achieved statistical significance; however, all the effect sizes in Table 3 are small. The structural equation model will be discussed next.

## Structural Equation Model

Figure 1: Structural equation model to determine the influence of tourism on township residents' SWB

Note. \* Statistical significant on a 5% level of significance ( $p \leq 0.05$ )

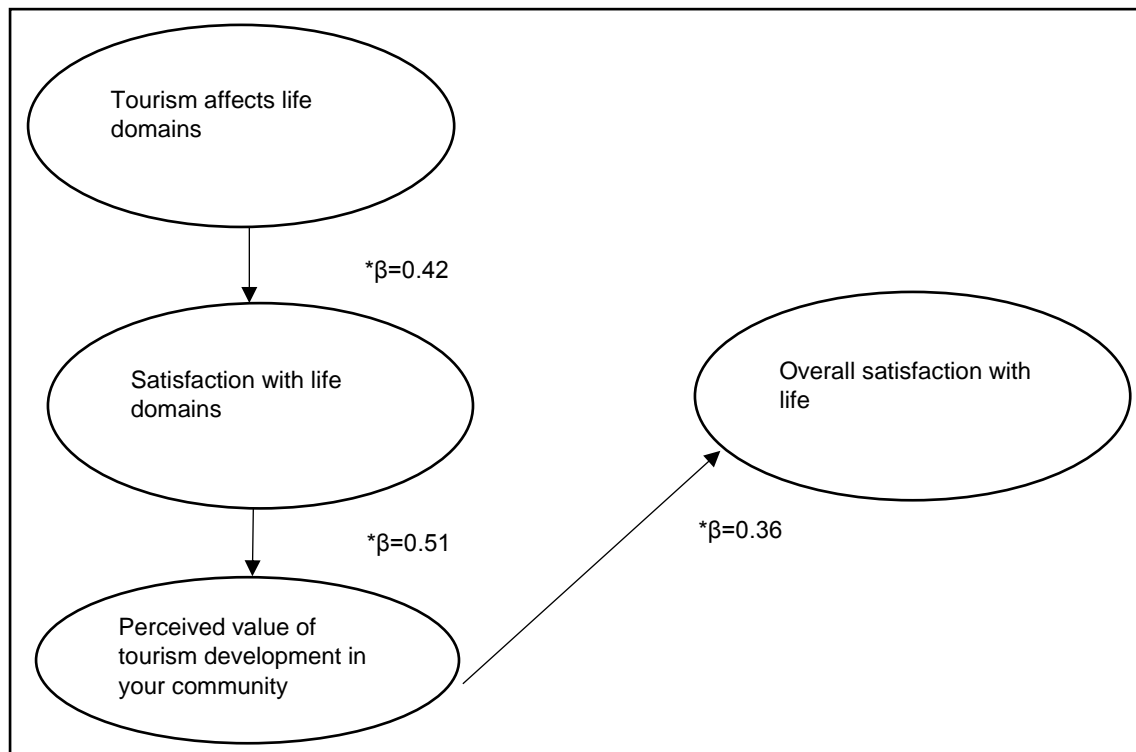


Figure 1 displays the SEM that was used to determine the influence of tourism on township residents' subjective well-being using the BST theory, which states that individuals can gain SWL through gaining satisfaction with various life domains. Figure 1 demonstrates the relationships of different variables and how tourism influences the SWB of township residents. All regression weights shown in Figure 1 were statistically significant. Concerning the model fit statistics of the model, Chi-square divided by degrees of freedom value of  $\chi^2/df = 2.25$  was yielded, which is regarded as a good fit. The model produced an acceptable CFI (0.91) and a RAMSEA of 0.07 with a 90% confidence interval of 0.06 and 0.08. Therefore, an acceptable model fit was achieved for the 12-factor model.

In Figure 1, the factor "tourism affects life domains" had a positive statistical effect on "satisfaction with life domains". The factor "satisfaction with life domains" had a positive statistical effect on "perceived value of tourism development". The factor "perceived value of tourism development" then had a positive statistical effect on "SWL". The results support the findings of (Kim et al., 2013), Liang and Hui, 2016, and Nawijn and Mitas, (2012), who all assert that tourism affects residents' life domains and tourism's effect can make residents satisfied or dissatisfied with their lives. This ultimately creates a positive or negative view of tourism development and consequently increased or decreased SWL. Therefore, the results of the SEM validate the BST, which stipulates that SWB (or SWL) is gained through satisfaction with life domains (Senasu and Singhapakdi, 2018).

## Findings and implications

Regarding the T-test analysis, the results reveal that there was no significant difference between residents who reside close to tourism activity and the residents who reside further away from tourism activity. Therefore, there is not much of a difference between both groups'





perception of tourism's influence in their lives. In terms of the CFA, with specific references to the overall goodness of fit indices, no major differences were found between residents who reside close to tourism activity and residents who reside further away from tourism activity. Concerning the SEM, the model has 12 factors, which were divided into four groups, which included residents who reside close to tourism activity and residents who reside further away from tourism activity. All 12 factors were statistically significant and they produced an acceptable goodness of fit. Moreover, the model denotes that tourism has an impact on residents' life domains, which then has an impact on their satisfaction with their life domains, their perception of further tourism development and their SWL.

Based on the results of the SEM, the main question of this study has been addressed: Tourism does have an influence on the SWB of township residents. This implies that the key role-players in the township tourism industry should take note of tourism's influence on residents' SWB and develop strategies to ensure that tourism is highly beneficial to the residents. In doing so, residents would be more satisfied with their lives and it will entice them to greatly support the established tourism industry and further tourism development. Furthermore, industry should educate residents about tourism, and encourage them to actively participate in running tourism enterprises townships in order to garner support for the tourism industry from township residents.

### **Limitations**

The study made use of a convenience sampling technique and this makes the empirical results only applicable to the context of this study.

### **Conclusions, contributions and recommendations for future research**

The purpose of the study was to determine whether tourism does have any influence on the SWB of township residents. The study revealed that tourism affects residents' life domains, which has an impact on residents' satisfaction with their life domains and it ultimately affects their SWB and support for further tourism development. The key role players of the township tourism industry in South Africa should prioritise residents' SWB, as it is critical for the sustainability of township tourism and its expansion.

Within the South African context, this study is the first of its kind that looks at the relationship between tourism and the SWB (SWL) of residents of a township. In addition, the study is the first of its kind that differentiates residents who reside close to tourism activity and residents who reside further away from tourism activity in relation to SWL. Furthermore, the study makes a methodological contribution, whereby the SEM incorporates the factors residents residing close to tourism activity and residents residing further away into the model. For the purposes of future research, this study can be extended to other huge townships in South Africa. Furthermore, similar research can be done in other townships outside the borders of South Africa to determine whether there are any similarities or differences in what was determined from this study.

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