

Full Length Research Paper

Exploring peri-urban and rural tourism stakeholders' perceptions of the social impacts of tourism in the Garden route, South Africa

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The study determined social impacts of tourism in the Garden route along the profile of stakeholders involved in the various subsectors of the tourism industry. Descriptive method of research was used in this study. Resident attitudes toward tourism and perceptions of its impacts are often diverse with development often generating gains for some and losses for others. Findings revealed that most of the respondents are youth, aged below thirty-five years of age. Most are spread between those with grade 12 certificate and those with diploma/degrees. Survey responses to tourism development in Garden route indicated that there is consensus amongst the respondents on the social impacts of tourism in the area as most of the respondents agreed with the statements in the questionnaire. The study identified peri-urban and rural community members' perceptions of social impacts from tourism and a survey of different stakeholders in the various sub-sectors of the tourism industry in the Garden Route area was carried out to assess their perceptions of these impacts. The main reason for the study to be per-urban and rural areas based is because many areas around the Garden route are peri-urban and rural. The Garden route is mostly comprised of small towns surrounded by farming communities and hence the focus on per-urban and rural areas. The study considered only the stakeholders who have been in the industry for at least two years. A 10% of representative sample size (N = 60) was randomly selected from these stakeholders. Therefore, the study was only limited to respondents in the various sub-sectors of the tourism industry who have been in the tourism industry for at least two years. This was done with the expectation that these respondents, due to their involvement in the industry for at least two years, will have a better understating of the impacts of tourism.

Key words: Tourism's social impacts, stakeholders' perceptions, tourism industry.

INTRODUCTION

The impacts of tourism have been reasonably well researched, particularly from the environmental and economic perspectives. In the last few years, attention has turned to exploring the social impacts of tourism and important research is emerging in this area, Mathieson

and Wall, as early as 1982 suggested that 'the social and cultural impacts of tourism are the ways in which tourism is contributing to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family relationships, collective lifestyles, safety levels, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organisations. According to Scheyvens (1999: 247), tourism maintains or enhances local community's equilibrium and community cohesion is improved as individuals and families cooperate to build a successful industry. According to Hatton (2002), perhaps most important, community based tourism is socially

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sustainable and this means that the tourism activities are developed and operated, for the most part, by local community members, and certainly with their consent and support. Local residents' support is essential to ensure long-term success of the tourism industry, and this is particularly important in regional destinations.

Research suggests that it is impossible to sustain tourism to a destination that is not supported by the local people (Ahn et al., 2002; Twinning-Ward and Butler, 2002; McCool et al., 2001). Therefore, an understanding of residents' perceptions and how these perceptions are formed regarding tourism development would be valuable knowledge for the tourism industry particularly for regional tourism development projects. It is therefore necessary to understand how communities perceive the social impacts of tourism in their areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The impacts of tourism have been reasonably well researched, particularly from the environmental and economic perspectives. More recently, attention has turned to exploring the social impacts of tourism and important research is emerging in this area. There is substantial literature documenting a range of methods that are available for the measurement of social impacts. In particular, the concept of a 'social impact assessment' (SIA) as discussed by Finsterbusch (1995) provides an integrated approach to the measurement of social impacts. Much of the research into social impacts focuses on the host community perceptions and examines the negative and positive effects of tourism on the community as perceived by its members. The social ramifications of tourism warrant careful consideration, as impacts can either become assets or detriments to communities. Influxes of tourists bring diverse values to the community and influence behaviours and family life. Tourism might cause a gradual change in a society's values, beliefs and cultural practices. Local residents feel this impact more heavily as they are both the services providers and part of the tourism product itself. Tourism product is more about the experience the tourist gain when visiting a destination. By observing the tourists, local people might change their life style (dressing, eating, entertainment and recreational activities, amongst other things). While this influence may be interpreted positively as an increase in the standard of living, it may also be considered negatively as an indication of acculturation (Dogan, 1987). Individuals and the collective community might try to please tourists or adopt tourist behaviours.

Increased tourism can push a community to adopt a different moral conduct such as improved understanding between sexes (positive) or increased illicit drug use (negative). Tourism may lead to a decline in moral values; invokes use of alcohol and drugs; increases

crime rates and tension in the community (Liu and Var, 1986; Milman and Pizam, 1988). Moreover, with the development of tourism, human relations are commercialised while the non-economic relations begin to lose their importance in the community (Dogan, 1987). In relatively small tourism resort towns, increased population and crowd especially in summer seasons cause noise, pollution and congestion. This limits the use of public areas such as parks, gardens and beaches as well as of local services by the residents, which sometimes result in negative attitudes towards tourists (Ross, 1992). According to Ashley and Roe (1998) tourist intrusion can lead to loss of privacy and disruption. In some cases tourism is also blamed for erosion of culture and importation of outside influence. This intrusion and cultural disruption is the result of cultural differences which relates to basic value and logic systems, religious beliefs, traditions, customs, lifestyles, behavioral patterns, dress codes, sense of time budgeting and attitude towards strangers (Inskeep, 1991: 367). However, it is important that tourism should be concerned with social equity, which is concerned with the conservation and promotion of socio-cultural diversity. Social equity advocates fairness and equal access to resources by all user groups (Mbaiwa, 2001: 499). This is aimed at ensuring equity in the distribution of costs, benefits, decision-making and management, which in theory will eradicate poverty. Tourism development should show that tourism is a socio-cultural event for both the traveler and the host. Cultural tourism should be promoted for the sustainability of the industry. Cultural tourism broadens the scope of the industry, promotes appreciation among the locals and thus ensures a greater community involvement and a more equitable share of the prosperity brought about by tourism. On the positive note, tourism can contribute to the revitalisation of arts, crafts and local culture and to the realisation of cultural identity and heritage.

In order to attract more tourists, architectural and historical sites are restored and protected (Inskeep, 1991; Liu and Var, 1986). Moreover, many people of different cultures come together by means of tourism, facilitating the exchange of cultures (Brayley et al., 1990). In addition to its cultural impacts, tourism is perceived to contribute to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family relations, collective lifestyle, moral conduct and community organisations (Ap and Crompton, 1998). These kinds of social impacts may be positive or negative. With the development of tourism in an area, there might be changes in social structure of the community. Basically, two different classes; a rich class which consists of businessmen and landowners, and a lower class which contains mostly immigrants might emerge in the community (de Kadt, 1979; Dogan, 1987). It also modifies internal structure of the community by dividing it into those who have and have not a relationship with tourism or tourists (Dogan, 1987).

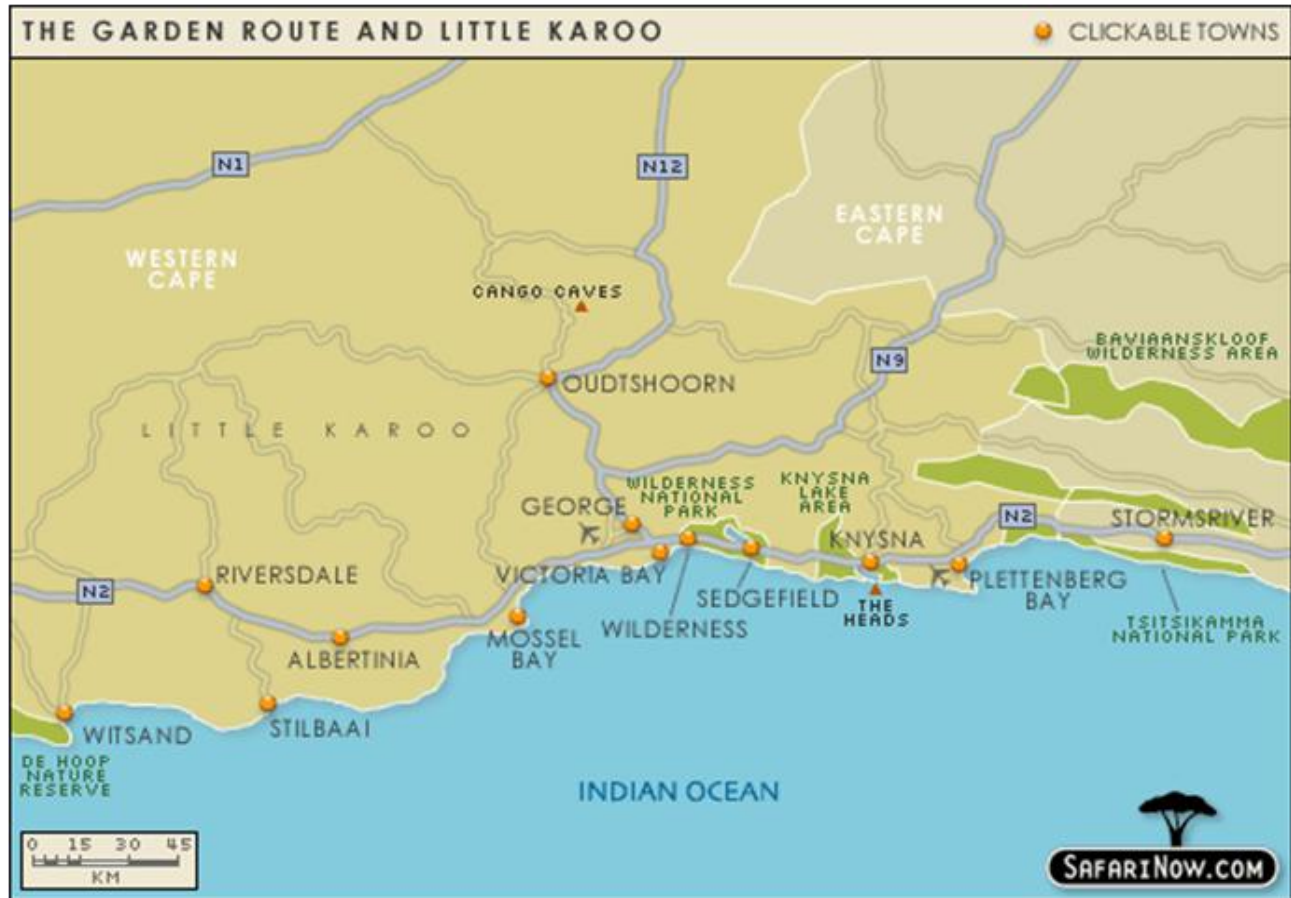


Figure 1. Map of the Garden. Source: <http://www.cybercapetown.com/maps/gardenroute>.

Intense immigration from different cultures of people brings about social conflict in the area.

Generally, impacts of tourism on women are perceived positively such as more freedom, more opportunities to work, increase self-worth and respect, better education, higher standards of living with higher family income. However, some argue that tourism distracts family structure and values, and also leads to increase in divorce rates and prostitution (Gee et al., 1997).

Tourism in the Garden route area

The Garden Route (Figure 1) is a coastal corridor on the western coast of South Africa where ancient forests, rivers, wetlands, dunes, stretches of beach, lakes, mountain scenery and indigenous Fynbos all merge to form a landscape of restorative beauty. This is a strip of land like no other in the world in terms of beauty, natural attractions and unique flora and fauna. Three of South Africa's top hikes take place here, namely: the Otter Trail, the Tsitsikama and Dolphin trails and man's footprint has made little impact on the rugged and sometimes inaccessible coastline. The Garden Route is a paradise

for eco-lovers, bird watchers and solitude seekers and one of the most beautiful parts of the Western Cape. It lies sandwiched between the Outeniqua Mountains and the Indian Ocean. The Garden Route is a popular holiday destination during summer and a tranquil hideaway during the winter months and both seasons are equally beautiful and attractive due to the largely Mediterranean climate. Between July and December each year, the scenic and tranquil areas of the region form a spectacular backdrop for a multitude of blooms, such as the Proteas, Ericas, Vygies, Bluebells, Pin-Cushions, Aloes, Tubers and various other species of Fynbos, as it is well-known that the Garden route is the floral kingdom that is the most varied in the world. The Garden route is part of the Eden District Municipality (EDM) and this municipality has six local municipalities. These local municipalities are: Hessequa, Mosselbay, George, Knysna, Bitou and Oudtshoorn.

The Garden route gets most of the international tourists from those that visit Cape Town. The main attractions in this route include the Cango caves, the slave tree, variety of Ostrich farms, beautiful beaches, Knysna waterfront, Fancourt golf resort Knysna heads, amongst others. This route is well known around the world and Japan soccer

national team was based in Fancourt (George) Denmark and France national teams were based in Knysna during the FIFA soccer world cup.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Garden route of the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The Garden route is situated on the south – eastern coast of the Western Cape Province. It is part of the third largest district (Eden District Municipality) in the Western Cape and shares borders with four other district municipalities: Cape Winelands, Overberg, Central Karoo in the Western Cape and Cadadu District Municipality situated in the Eastern Cape. The research used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Prior to the commencement of the data collection, an intensive desktop study involving the use of old and recent published materials was explored. The desktop study prioritized both national and international accredited journals information resources. With regard to qualitative methodology, participatory forums were used to delineate the research context and premise, whilst the quantitative methods were utilized to measure variables under investigation. A 10% of representative sample size (N = 60) was randomly selected. Three functional projects were identified. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted. According to Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (2005), analysis of the data should be well planned in order to provide the relevant outcome.

In order to conform to the directives of the aforementioned authors, the choice of the analyses used in this research followed the guidelines mentioned as follows:

- That the analysis should ensure that only relevant analysis is undertaken.
- That the analysis objectives provide a check on comprehensiveness of the analysis.
- That the analyses should objectively help avoid redundancy.

Model specification

Given data $\{x_{ij}\}_{n \times k}$, that is, a tableau with n rows (the blocks), k columns (the treatments) and a single observation at the intersection of each block and treatment, calculate the ranks within each block. If there are tied values, assign to each tied value the average of the ranks that would have been assigned without ties.

Replace the data with a new tableau $\{r_{ij}\}_{n \times k}$ where the entry r_{ij} is the rank of x_{ij} within block i . Find the values:

$$\bar{r}_{.j} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n r_{ij}$$

i)

$$\bar{r} = \frac{1}{nk} \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^k r_{ij}$$

ii)

$$SS_t = n \sum_{j=1}^k (\bar{r}_{.j} - \bar{r})^2$$

iii)

$$SS_e = \frac{1}{n(k-1)} \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^k (r_{ij} - \bar{r})^2$$

iv)

$$Q = \frac{SS_t}{SS_e}$$

The test statistic is given by Q . Note that the value of Q as computed as aforementioned does not need to be adjusted for tied values in the data. Finally, when n or k is large (that is $n > 15$ or $k > 4$), the probability distribution of Q can be approximated by that of a chi-square distribution. In this case the p-value is given by $P(\chi_{k-1}^2 \geq Q)$. If n or k is small, the approximation to chi-square becomes poor and the p-value should be obtained from tables of Q specially prepared for the Friedman test. If the p-value is significant, appropriate post-hoc multiple comparisons tests would be performed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here, the results of tourism stakeholder participation in Garden route will be reported. The report provided will cover both descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis will be presided by biographical information.

Biographical information

As shown in Figure 2, a total of 60 questionnaires were successfully collected out of whom 75% were females while 25% of them were males. Out of the 75% of females who completed the questionnaire, 80% of them are less than 35 years of age, while 33% are between the ages of 18 to 25 years and 47% of them are within the age bracket of 26 to 35 years. Out of the 25% of males who completed the questionnaire, 20% of them are between the ages of 18 to 25, while 60% of them are between the ages of 25 to 35 while 20% of them are between the ages of 45 to 55 years old. Figure 3 depicts the results of the respondents educational background and showed that 46.7% of the females' have grade 12 certificate, 6.7% have college certificate while 46.7% have degree/diploma. In contrast, the educational status of the males indicated that 20% of them have grade 12 certificate, college certificate and honours respectively while 40% of them have degree/diploma certificates.

Distribution of respondents according to the tourism sub-sectors

According to Table 1, most of the respondents came from the accommodation and "other" sub-sectors of the tourism industry, both represented by 30%. These two sub-sectors were closely followed by the transport services sub-sector which was represented by 25%. The

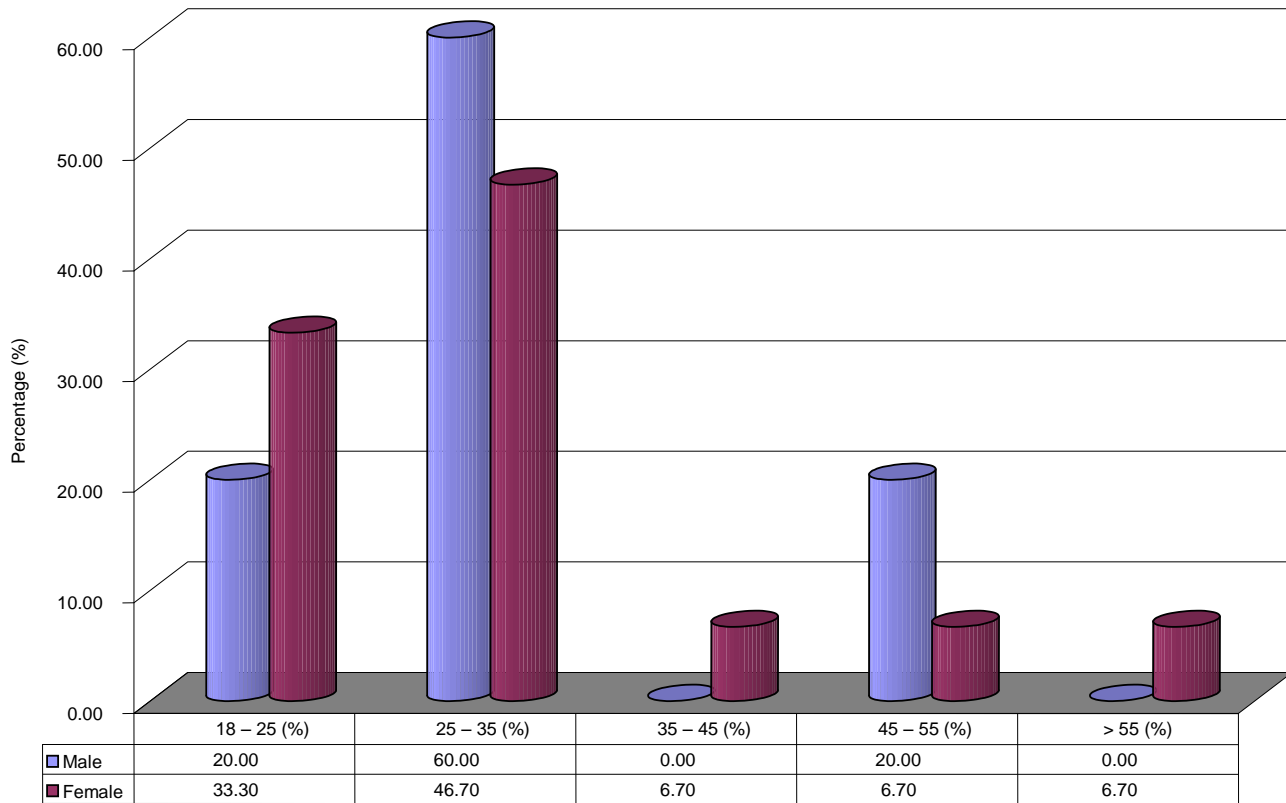


Figure 2. Classification of the different age categories of the respondents.

lowest representation came from the government sub-sector which was represented by 5%. Four operators were represented by 10% of the total respondents. These results may infer that the Garden route is mostly dominated by those involved in accommodation services. The results also point that “other” sub-sectors involved in the tourism industry are dominant and these included amongst others, catering services, travel agents, and art, craft and culture service providers.

Analysis of the influence of tourism on crime, robbery and vandalism

According to Table 2, most of the respondents indicated that they are not sure of the influence of tourism on crime and robbery with a total of 43% and this was closely followed by those who agreed with the statement (40%) that tourism causes crime, robbery and vandalism. A closer look at the results of the study infer that majority of the respondents who were not sure of the influence of tourism and crime and robbery are from the accommodation sector with a representation of 12%, followed by those from “other” sub-sector with 10%. Respondents from the government and tour operators were represented by 8% respectively, however it is

important to note that these two sub-sectors were the lowest represented in terms of respondents with 3 and 6 respondents respectively. It therefore means that neither respondent from government and tour operators agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The results of the study also infer that there were very few respondents who disagreed with the statement with only 12% from the other sub-sector and 5% from transport services. None of the respondents from accommodation, government and tour operators disagreed with the statement. The results of the study therefore infer that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement if those that are not sure are taken out of the equation. Therefore the results support the statement by Inskeep (1991: 374) who stated that problems of drugs, alcoholism, crime and prostitution may be exacerbated by tourism. The results of the study further supports the idea of Goeldner and Ritchie (2003: 302) who indicated that unfortunately, tourist can be easy prey for criminals as they do not know about dangerous areas or local situations in which they might be very vulnerable to violent crimes.

Crime against tourists results in bad publicity and creates a negative image in the minds of prospective tourists. Goeldner and Ritchie (2003: 303) alluded to the fact that economic contributions of tourism may lead to social effects on the host destination and some of those

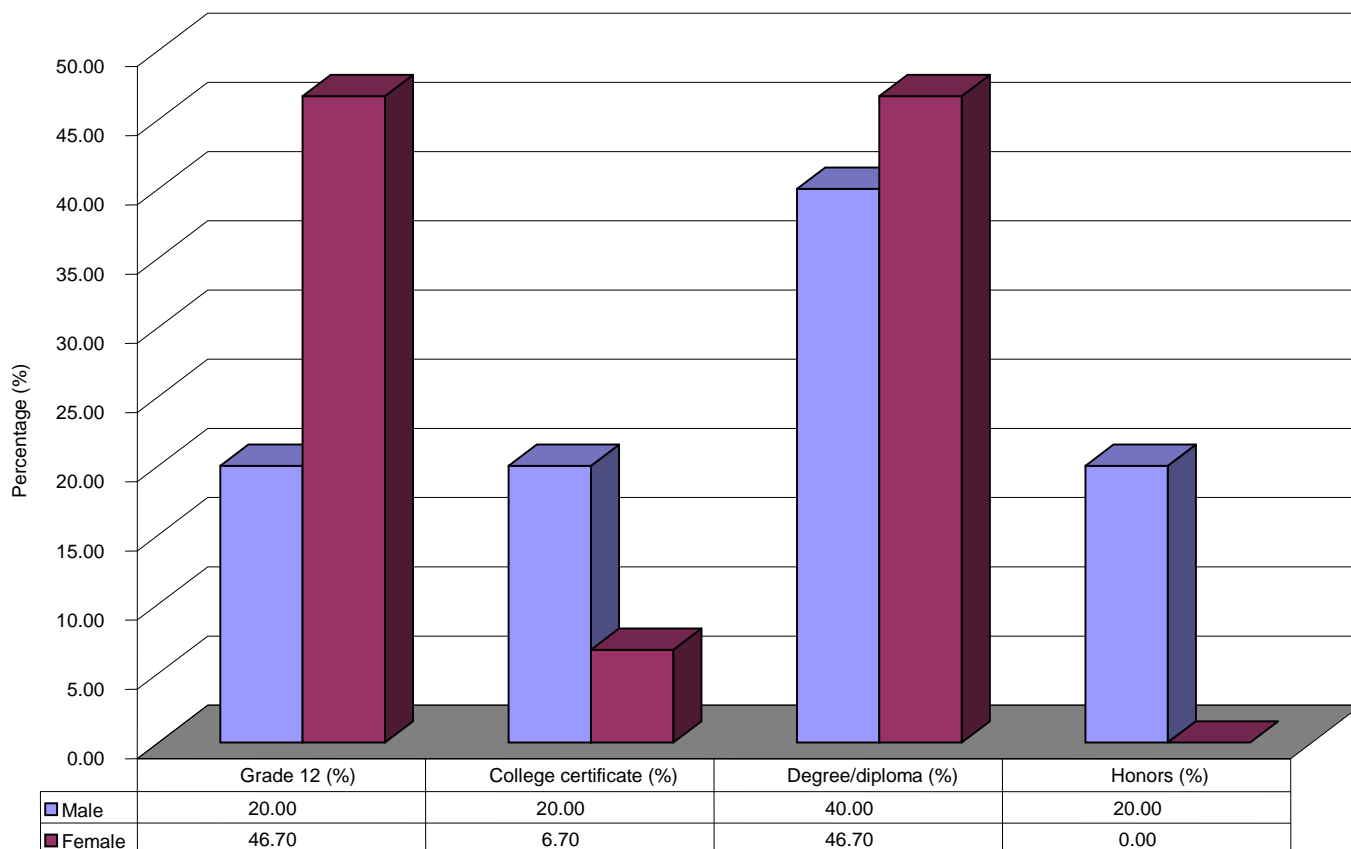


Figure 3. Educational status of the different respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to tourism sub-sector.

Category	Frequency table: Age			
	Count	Cumulative count	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Accommodation	18	18	30	30
Government	3	21	5	35
Tour operators	6	27	10	45
Transport services	15	42	25	70
Others	18	60	30	100
Missing	0	60	0	100

will include introduction of the undesirable activities such as gambling, prostitution, drunkenness and other excesses. Based on the results of the study, it can therefore be concluded that majority of the respondents feel that tourism leads to the negative impacts from a social perspective.

Analysis of the impact of tourism on understanding different cultures

According to Table 3, the results of the study infer that,

none of the respondents were unsure of the impact of tourism on understanding different cultures. In this case, the respondents were in agreement or disagreement with the statement. The results of the study indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that tourism leads to an understanding of different cultures, with a total of 67% overall agreement. It therefore means that 33% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. A closer analysis of the results of the study indicated that all the respondents in the accommodation sub-sector (18) represented by 100% and all in government (3) represented by 100% all

Table 2. Frequency distribution of respondents on crime, robbery and vandalism.

Summary frequency table							
Marked cells have counts > 10 (marginal summaries are not marked)							
	Crime and robbery	Accommodation	Government	Tour operators	Transport services	Other	Row totals
Count		11	0	0	7	6	24
Column percent	Agree	61%	0%	0%	47%	33%	
Row percent		46%	0%	0%	29%	25%	
Total percent		18%	0%	0%	12%	10%	40%
Count			0	0	0	3	7
Column percent	Disagree	0%	0%	0%	20%	39%	
Row percent		0%	0%	0%	30%	70%	
Total percent		0%	0%	0%	5%	12%	17%
Count			7	3	6	5	5
Column percent	Not sure	39%	100%	100%	33%	28%	
Row percent		27%	12%	23%	19%	19%	
Total percent		12%	5%	10%	8%	8%	43%
Count			18	3	6	15	18
Total percent	All groups	30%	5%	10%	25%	30%	100%

agreed with the statement. Two sub-sectors were closely contested on their views of the statement. In the transport services sub-sector, 13% disagreed while 12% agreed with the statement. The same scenario applied to the “other” sub-sector where 17% disagreed while 13% agreed with the statement.

Overall, the results infer that tourism leads to greater understanding of different cultures as the tourists and host communities interact. This outcome of the results is further supported by Bravley et al. (1990) who stated that many people of different cultures come together by means of

tourism, facilitating the exchange of cultures.

Analysis of the impact of tourism on promotion and sustenance of culture

The results as indicated in Table 4 inferred that majority of respondents agreed with the statement that tourism leads to the promotion and sustenance of culture at the host destination. This was indicated by 56% of those who agreed compared with 22% of those who disagreed and those who were unsure. A closer look at the

results revealed that 18% from the accommodation agreed with the statement while 12% disagreed and there were no respondents who were unsure of the statement. All the respondents in the government sub-sector agreed with the statement, even though they are the lowest in numbers (3). In the transport services sub-sector, 15% agreed with the statement, while 10% were unsure and none disagreed with the statement. The “other” sub-sector had 15% who agreed with the statement, 3% who disagreed and 12% who were unsure of the statement. The results may infer therefore that if those who were

Table 3. Frequency table of the impact of tourism on understanding different cultures.

Summary frequency table				
Marked cells have counts > 10 (marginal summaries are not marked)				
	Tourism sub-sector	Agree	Disagree	Row totals
Count		18	0	18
Column percent		45%	0%	
Row percent	Accommodation	100%	0%	
Total percent		30%	0%	30%
Count		3	0	
Column percent		8%	0%	
Row percent	Government	100%	0%	
Total percent		5%	0%	5%
Count		4	2	
Column percent		10%	10%	
Row percent	Tour operators	67%	33%	
Total percent		7%	3%	10%
Count		7	8	
Column percent		18%	40%	
Row percent	Transport services	47%	53%	
Total percent		12%	13%	25%
Count		8	10	
Column percent		20%	50%	
Row percent	Other	44%	56%	
Total percent		13%	17%	30%
Count		40	20	60
Total percent	All Groups	67%	33%	100%

Table 4. Frequency table on the impact of tourism on promotion and sustenance of culture.

Summary frequency table					
Marked cells have counts > 10 (marginal summaries are not marked)					
	Tourism sub-sector	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Row totals
Count		11	7	0	18
Column percent		32%	53%	0%	
Row percent	Accommodation	61%	39%	0%	
Total percent		18%	12%	0%	30%
Count		3	0	0	3
Column percent		9%	0%	0%	
Row percent	Government	100%	0%	0%	
Total percent		5%	0%	0%	5%
Count		2	4	0	6
Column percent		6%	31%	0%	
Row percent	Tour operators	33%	67%	0%	
Total percent		3%	7%	0%	10%

Table 4. Contd.

Count		9	0	6	15
Column percent	Transport services	26%	0%	46%	
Row percent		60%	0%	40%	
Total percent		15%	0%	10%	25%
Count		9	2	7	18
Column percent	Other	26%	15%	54%	
Row percent		50%	11%	39%	
Total percent		15%	3%	12%	30%
Count	All groups	34	13	13	60
Total percent		56%	22%	22%	

unsure of the statement are taken out of equation, majority agreed with the statement.

Conclusion

The social impacts of tourism on a host destination are well recognised in the literature. In the same breath, the tourism industry has become an important sector to both developed and developing countries. Acknowledging the positive advantages of tourism, much research has also been done on the general impacts of tourism and it is important to continue with research on social impacts of tourism to best see how they can be minimised. The results of this study have proven empirically that indeed tourism has significant social impact both positive and negative on the residents of the host community. The results in this study are best described as consensus as many of the respondents agreed with the statements even though there were a number of respondents who indicated that they are not sure of the social impacts of tourism and few who disagreed with the statements. It is important to note that the responses may also be based on the respondents' level of involvement in the tourism industry and the benefits that they derive by being involved in the industry on the basis of how the sample of the respondents were chosen. Since the respondents agreed and disagreed with the statements on social impacts of tourism, the researcher is of the opinion that efforts need to be made on creating awareness in the local communities about these impacts. This will help communities in the peri-urban and rural areas to be aware if they would like to use the tourism sector for economic development and employment creation.

A further recommendation is that local communities need to be taught the strategies to enhance positive social impacts of tourism and strategies to minimise negative social impacts of tourism in their areas.

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