



THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES ON LIVELIHOODS: PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN TRADERS IN ONE RESORT MINING TOWN IN ZIMBABWE

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Abstract:

This study sought to find out the socio-economic impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in one resort mining town in Zimbabwe. The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm, qualitative approach and case study research design. Data was solicited from 25 purposively selected participants using an interview guide. The results of the study were as follows: The socio-economic benefits as perceived by the participants included employment and income generation; general economic empowerment opportunities, improved lifestyles of women traders, formation of business groups, inclusion of disadvantaged women, participation in cultural activities and access to healthcare. The study concluded that the various tourism activities women traders were involved in were catalytic in improving the socio-economic livelihoods of women traders. The study recommended that a tourism policy and legislation be crafted in order to create a more inclusive and enabling environment that encourages and empowers women's participation in tourism activities at grassroots level. Further studies could also be conducted in other places in Zimbabwe, in order to obtain a more comprehensive overview of the tourism activities and its impact on women traders' livelihoods.

Keywords: economic, impact, livelihoods, social, tourism, women traders

1. Introduction

Tourism is an important and attractive industry in both developed and developing countries, accounting for 4.69% of global Gross Domestic Product (Ayandibu & Houghton, 2017; Othman & Rosli, 2021). For many small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including women traders, the growth of tourism development provides golden

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opportunities for local people to provide various services and selling products to local and foreign tourists. Scholars such as Deyshappriya and Nawarathna (2020) and Konrad and Bongkochmas (2021) agree that tourism activities can have a positive impact on the growth of small businesses and long-term economic development. Tourism activities have been sources of foreign exchange, economic growth, employment creation and providers of opportunities for host communities in urban growth, infrastructure development, rural development, and cultural heritage preservation (Konrad & Bongkochmas, 2021).

Globally, tourism destinations have been dominated by small to medium tourism enterprises which are active in providing a wide range of products and services that include, inter-alia, accommodation, catering, transportation, attractions and other activities (Molefe, Tauoatsoala, Sifolo, Manavhela & Henama, 2020; Dimitrovski, Todorović, & Valjarević, 2022). In many developing countries, including South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda and Sri-Lanka, various tourism activities have been helping small and medium enterprises to positively contribute towards local economic development as well as poverty reduction (Abdillah, Hamid & Topowijono, 2020; Litheko & Potgieter, 2020). More importantly, small businesses have been playing fundamental roles in the tourism sector which also improve their long-term profitability and performance.

Studies focusing on the impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders have largely been conducted and documented in countries such as Spain, United Kingdom, Malaysia, Thailand, Jordan and Vietnam (Azhar, Koe & Osman, 2022; Ayandibu & Houghton, 2017). However, there is a dearth of such studies in Africa and specifically in Zimbabwe, in a mining resort town context. Therefore, the aim of this study was to fill this gap in empirical literature, by investigating the socio-economic impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in one selected resort mining town north of Zimbabwe.

2. Statement of the Problem

In Zimbabwe, SMEs have been recognised by the government as the means for achieving accelerated economic growth through employment creation (Zimbabwean Transitional Stabilisation Programme Report, 2020). As such, the potential to apply tourism as a tool for sustained socio-economic development has been increasingly considered in the country's national development strategy. These small business actors include SME hotels, travel agencies, hospitality services, catering services and tour guides (Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Associations Report, 2021). However, the potential of tourism activities especially for women traders in the selected mining town has not been fully investigated. Women traders have been facing long-term operational problems that include financial constraints, high levels of poverty, poor performance and high costs of operations (Mshenga, 2020). Districts where the selected mining town is located, had been witnessing more than 80% of the population living below the poverty datum line. In these areas, food insecurity threatens the everyday life of the whole community (COSV

Report, 2022). The growth of tourism activities can boost the growth of women traders thereby potentially improving the welfare of society. It was against this background that this study was conducted; to find out the socio-economic impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in this resort mining town, in Zimbabwe, with the intention of coming up with relevant strategies to improve their socio-economic statuses and business operations.

3. Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to find out the socio-economic impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in one selected resort mining town north of Zimbabwe.

3.1 Secondary Objectives

The study was guided by the following secondary research objectives.

- 1) To establish the social impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in one resort mining town in Zimbabwe.
- 2) To find out the economic impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in one resort mining town in Zimbabwe.

4. Literature Review

4.1 The Taxonomy of Tourism

Jaafar, Rasoolimanesh, Mohd-Bakri and Rasoolimanesh (2019), describe tourism as various activities of individuals travelling to and staying away from places of their usual residence for leisure, business and other purposes. For the purposes of this study, tourism has been described as activities that are undertaken by tourists during their stay in tourist destinations. Tourism is regarded as a potential employment generator and accelerator of growing economies in both developed and developing countries (Praptiwi, Maharja, Fortnam, Chaigneau, Evans, Garniati & Sugardjito, 2021). It is a vibrant force that can stimulate travels to explore nature, adventures, wonders, and societies, discover cultures, meet people, interact with values, and experience new traditions and events.

In addition, tourism has also been viewed as a catalyst that contributes towards the growth of economies especially in many developing countries as it brings the much needed foreign reserves and public revenue (Chin, Law, Lo & Ramayah, 2022). It is not surprising that many countries depend on tourism for foreign exchange earnings, job creation and socio-economic lifestyle development. If properly planned, tourism can generate income which can be spent on physical infrastructure development as well as social infrastructure of the respective countries (Parvaneh-Safa, Yasouri & Hesam, 2021; Abir & Khan, 2022). The role of tourism has been evolving significantly, from not just providing foreign exchange, but also providing opportunities for host communities to participate in urban growth, infrastructure planning, rural development, environmental

restoration and cultural heritage preservation (Akhshik, Rezapouraghdam & Ramkissoon, 2020; Majeed, Zhou, Lu & Ramkissoon, 2020).

4.2 Livelihoods and Its Dimensionalities

According to Ramkissoon (2020), livelihood comprises various capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. Çalışkan and Özer (2021), describe livelihood as a set of activities that are essential to everyday life over an individual's life span. These activities can include securing water, food, fodder, medicine, shelter, and clothing. Livelihoods provide a way of understanding assets people draw upon, strategies they develop to make a living, context within which a livelihood can be developed and factors that make a livelihood more or less vulnerable to shocks and stresses. Livelihood assets can be either tangible (in the form of food stores and cash savings, and other resources) or intangible (such as claims one can make for food, work, and assistance). Furthermore, human capital includes various assets that include skills, knowledge, health, and work abilities (Yuwanti, 2019; Simo-Kengne, 2022). It should be noted that sustainable livelihood occurs if it recovers from pressure and shocks, maintains or enhances its capabilities and assets, whilst not damaging the natural resource base (Ratnasari, Susanti, Ismanto, Tanjung, Darma & Sutjahjo, 2020). Resilience of livelihood can be determined by access to capital, trends, seasonality and economic shocks. These elements can be viewed from the perspective of policy, institutions and other business processes (Noordzij, Beenackers, Groeniger & Van Lenthe, 2020).

4.3 The Theory Underpinning the Study: Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA)

The study was anchored on the Sustainable Livelihood Approach Theory which helped in understanding the impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders. The theory seeks to understand how household livelihood sustainability at individual or household level can be applied to the tourism industry and destinations. The theory traditionally includes a total of five parts that include vulnerability context, livelihood assets, transformation of structures and processes, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes (Mukhtar, 2019). The theory describes livelihood as a way of making a living, recovering from shocks and providing livelihood opportunities for future generations.

The theory argues that sustainable livelihood can be built through understanding of the term activities, capabilities, and assets needed to establish a living (Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010; Traian, 2019). Such, an approach places focus on the assets of women traders and how they can increase efforts to withstand shocks and vulnerabilities to their livelihood (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). The theory also puts much focus on retrieving and interrelating with five assets of communities that can be natural, physical, human, social and financial. Natural assets include natural resources such as water, plants, animals, land, forests, and other environmental resources whilst physical assets include infrastructure, tools, and technology (Upadhaya, Tiwari, Poudyal, Godar-Chhetri & Dhungana, 2022).

In addition, human assets consist of knowledge and skills possessed by various communities, whereas social assets consist of community-based connections, networks, shared norms and values. Finally, financial assets consist of any monetary resources that will be available to a given community (Banskota & Sherma, 2016). Thus, the theory can be useful in providing a comprehensive understanding of the manner in which the communities' livelihoods can be supported through various tourism activities. By drawing attention to assortment of assets that people can make use of when constructing their livelihoods, the sustainable livelihood approach produces a more robust view on what resources are significant for women traders, including not only physical resources, but social capital as well as human capital.

The study used the Sustainable Livelihood Approach Framework mainly because it included usage of tourism activities as a livelihood strategy framework for women traders in one selected resort mining town in Zimbabwe. In addition, the Sustainable Livelihood Approach Framework shows the mutual relationship between tourism activities and sustainable livelihoods (Aref, 2020). The theory was used to explore the connection between tourism activities and host communities. The theory aided in providing a basis on which livelihoods of the less privileged in society and business could be understood (Harilal & Tichaawa, 2018). Tourism activities provide many opportunities for women traders to improve their lives. Flexibility in tourism activities causes women traders to continue their traditions while improving their living standards (Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Zhao & Ritchie, 2017).

4.4 The Social Impact of Tourism Activities on the Livelihoods of Traders

The social impact of tourism involves various ways in which tourism contributes to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family relationships, collective life styles, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organisation (Medina-Muñoz, Medina-Muñoz & Gutiérrez-Pérez, 2019). Social impact is described by Ribeiro, Pinto, Silva and Woosnam (2019), as changes in the quality of life of local residents of tourism destinations with interactions between tourists and the local residents lying at its heart. Social impacts in tourism are the effects on the people of host communities of their direct and indirect associations with tourism. Tourism creates some form of socio- impact because it is, by nature, about bringing people from one culture and background to interact temporarily with those of others.

It should be noted that tourism does affect the socio-economic lifestyle of individuals and groups who live around the tourism areas and activities. It is in this context that the selected mining town is viewed. Tourism has been viewed by Mansor, Ahmad and Mat (2021), as a catalyst for strengthening local communities especially where events and festivals of local residents are the primary participants. Since tourism involves interactive services, this invariably means that host-guest interaction is inevitable and can have significant social impacts. These social impacts can be seen as benefits or costs. The social benefits of tourism, demonstrate positive social impacts whilst the costs demonstrate negative social impacts (Airey & Szivas, 2019). Thus, a better

understanding of the social impacts of tourism is vital in ensuring sustainable management of the tourism industry.

The positive social impact of tourism, that demonstrate benefits to both the local community and small business include preservation of local culture, strengthening communities, provision of social services, commercialisation of culture and art, revitalisation of culture and art as well as preservation of heritage (Dimitrovski, Todorović & Valjarević, 2022; Molefe, Tauoatsoala, Sifolo, Manavhela & Henama, 2020). As contended by Bello, Carr and Lovelock (2019), tourism can be favourable to local traders as they can have access to upgraded infrastructure, facilities and services such as transport and waste water management. Furthermore, tourism can bring better life and increase prosperity to local residents and traders (Ahmed, 2018; Ramkissoon & Sowamber, 2020).

In addition, the tourism sector does have a significant social impact on local communities and the lives and socio-economic lifestyles of local traders and entrepreneurs. Through revenues and jobs that are provided, tourism helps in significantly reducing poverty and improving health, education, and overall well-being (Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill, 2018). As pointed out by Sharpley and Telfer (2019), various tourism activities help in supporting diversity and inclusion, employing and offering opportunities to people from all walks of life, including minorities, youth, and women. This is corroborated by Mwaura and Ssekitoleko (2020), who say that tourism has unique abilities to further protect and engage vulnerable groups and communities, whilst also fostering innovation.

As asserted by Nyaupane and Poudel (2020), the development of tourism does positively affect lives of people around attractions including social aspects of socio-economic lifestyle. In the context of social aspects of socio-economic lifestyle, Yadav, Sahu, Sahoo and Yadav (2020), pointed out that social empowerment means that a community's sense of unity has been proved or made more effective by an activity like tourism. Social empowerment may take place when the tourism activities reduce crime, begging, prostitution and increases a genuine sense of place (Praptiwi, Maharja, Fortnam, Chaigneau, Evans, Garniati & Sugardjito, 2022). Empirical studies by Mshenga (2020), on opportunities for micro and small-scale businesses in the Kenyan tourism sector found significant correlations and relationships between social impact data and socio-economic lifestyle of local traders.

The countries that have witnessed immense social impact on the socio-economic lifestyle of people include Costa Rica, Malaysia, Tanzania and Ethiopia. For instance, in Costa Rica tourism sector accounted for 12% of overall economy and had been a key driver of social progress as shown by positive Social Progress Index (Deyshappriya & Nawarathna, 2020). Social activities that improved included basic medical care, water and sanitation, shelter, personal safety, access to information and communication and environmental quality. Studies in Malaysia revealed that tourism activities had been creating economic opportunities for rural communities to participate and benefit from the tourism sector; thereby reducing the need for rural communities to migrate to urban

centres. Another study by Othman and Rosli (2021), on the impact of tourism on small business performance among Malaysian Islands found that tourism supported members of local communities through the creation of employment opportunities and the development of integrated agricultural supply chains. The study also noted that the Malaysian Islands employed approximately 600 guides, 14,000 porters, and 500 cooks, with islands having the highest school enrolment rates.

In Ethiopia's tourism destinations, of Addis Ababa, Lalibela and Axum, there has been an astronomical rise in community engagement as well as institutional capacity building initiatives. As a result, Konrad and Bongkochmas (2021), noted that more than 5,953 new jobs had been created in the targeted destinations in tourism-related industries such accommodation, catering, and tourist transportation. More interestingly, women had accounted for 64% of all new jobs and new business ventures in handicrafts, agri-business, small catering/coffee and local tour guides/ecotourism businesses (Konrad & Bongkochmas, 2021; Rogerson, 2020). Apart from the economic impacts created by enhanced employment prospects, people with jobs are happier and more social than those without a disposable income (Sarminah, 2022; Gómez-López & Barrón Arreola, 2019). In the case of Rwanda, the government has been prioritising sustainable tourism as it is fundamental to the success of businesses, communities, and the improved experience of travellers (Henama, 2019). In countries such as Indonesia, Kenya and Uganda, women account for 54% of tourism support activities and improves their socio-economic lifestyle (Ayandibu & Houghton, 2017).

However, there are also notable negative social impacts of tourism and these include social change, globalisation and the destruction of preservation and heritage, loss of authenticity, standardisation and commercialisation, culture clashes, increase in crime, gambling and immoral behaviour (Abdillah, Hamid & Topowijono, 2020; Litheko & Potgieter, 2020). Other possible negative impacts of tourism to local communities include destruction of flora, fauna and ecology, water shortage, poaching, hunting and illegal trafficking of wildlife increases (Abuhjeeleh, 2019; Juma, Muhammad & Maher, 2021). In addition, the presence of tourism activities in a community can result in increased price of goods and services, high price of land and buildings, thus, inflation, low paying jobs and increased cost of living (Ekanyake & Long, 2020). Other notable negative social impacts of tourism identified by Zhao and Ritchie (2019) include excessive drinking, alcoholism, gambling, prostitution, high crime rates, smuggling, traffic congestions and overcrowding (Mwaura & Ssekitoleko, 2022; Zhou, Zheng, Zhang, Song & Duan, 2021).

4.5 The Economic Impact of Tourism Activities on the Livelihoods of Traders

The development of tourism activities can positively and negatively affect both the economic lifestyle of small business traders and surrounding communities. It has been noted that tourism supports the conservation of natural resources, promotes alternative energy sources, and enhance women's empowerment (Fabíola & Gilnei, 2021). Moreover, households that are involved in tourism-related activities have significant higher living standards since their purchasing power will have improved (Dimitrovski, Todorović &

Valjarević, 2019). The main economic factors which affect the quality of life of local residents include job opportunities, increased income, business opportunities. In addition, it has been noted by both Çalışkan and Özer (2021), that tourism is an important sector which can mobilise communities to actively participate in economic and development issues. Through tourism, communities will slowly form new habits that are associated with tourism awareness and opportunities for local people to improve their livelihoods.

Several empirical studies have concurred that tourism activities do have a positive influence on new job opportunities, increases family income and stimulates the growth of new entrepreneurs (Akhshik, Rezapouraghdam, & Ramkissoon, 2020; Ramkissoon, 2020; Lan, Zhang, Xue, Liang, Wang & Wang, 2021). A study by Kimbu and Tichaawa (2018), on sustainable development goals and socio-economic development through tourism in Central Africa, found that tourism also played a crucial role in sustaining traditional practices as well as making prosperous communities.

The growth in tourism sector typically results in the development of restaurants, bars, cafes, retail establishments, theatres and other tourism related businesses. These businesses help in improving the quality of life for local residents by expanding their choices available to them in their local communities (Adebayo & Kirikkaleli, 2021). For instance, the rise in leisure travel in Abu Dhabi resulted in private investments in Saadiyat Island which consisted of residential and leisure projects (Ratnasari, Susanti, Ismanto, Tanjung, Darma & Sutjahjo, 2020; Simo-Kengne, 2022). In the same instance, tourism helps in protecting cultural heritage and natural environment through creation of employment, increased income levels, diversified economic activities and increased levels of social awareness. This is expounded further by Noordzij, Beenackers, Groeniger and Van Lenthe (2020), who state that tourism can revive economies of local communities by participating in job creation, income generation, and contributing towards strengthening of local culture and man-made environments.

As noted by Praptiwi, Maharja, Fortnam, Chaigneau, Evans, Garniati and Sugardjito (2021), tourism can be a powerful economic weapon for supporting locals so that they realise sustainable tourism. This is because tourism provides both economic and environmental benefits such as increased income, new job opportunities and triggering emergence of new businesses in rural areas (Abir & Khan, 2022; Chin, Law, Lo & Ramayah, 2022). A survey study by Fayissa, Nsiah and Tadasse (2018), on the economic impact of tourism activities on the growth and development in African countries concluded that tourism receipts significantly contributed to high levels of gross domestic product and the economic growth as with investment in physical and human capital.

Although tourism does have a plethora of positive aspects, there are also some negative economic impacts. According to Lekgau and Tichaawa (2020), drug abuse, illegal sexual activities, and other illegal activities could be accelerated due to tourism activities whilst robbery, and prostitution equally increase in those areas. The other negative economic externalities can encompass rising prices of goods and services. A study in Nepal's small and tourism-sector by Jaafar, Rasoolimanesh, Mohd-Bakri and

Rasoolimanesh (2019), revealed that rising prices of goods and services affected the lives and welfare of all local inhabitants and communities. As expounded by Torres and Momsen (2015), tourism growth can result in increased dependency on foreign imports which, in turn, inhibits the development of local agriculture and small industries.

5. Research Methodology

The research adopted an interpretivist paradigm, qualitative approach and case study research design. The interpretivist research philosophy was considered the most appropriate philosophy due to the need to understand the selected women entrepreneurs' perceptions, experiences, feelings insights, attitudes and motivations on the socio-economic impact of tourism in their natural settings (Cooper and Schindler, 2008; Golafshani, 2017; Yin, 2019; Bloomberg & Volpe, 2018). The qualitative research approach was deemed to be a viable approach as the focus was on how the participants understood the impact of tourism activities on their lifestyles. This approach helped in exploring meanings of society from the participants' settings (Aguinis & Solarino, 2019). With the main purpose of the study being to explore the social and economic impact of tourism activities on women traders, the subjective feelings of these effects was its focus. Moreover, tourism activities were viewed as qualitative experiences and this confirmed the nature of the qualitative approach.

Given the nature of the study, a case study design was deemed appropriate. According to Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt and Wagner (2017), a case study involves the detailed and intensive analysis of one or more cases. The study also identified the case study research design as the preferred research design because it required an inquiring mind during data collection and did not follow any formal protocols. The case study research method was also compatible to tourism research, since it allowed the researcher to narrowly examine primary data within particular events (Hammersley, 2019). Interview guides were used to solicit in depth data from 25 key informants using the non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive and snow balling (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2019).

Non-probability sampling methods involved the selection of sampling units on the basis of the researchers' own judgments on who could provide best information to achieve intended study objectives (Holloway, 2015). All ethical considerations were observed before the actual data collection exercise. The data analysis process included thematic analysis. Bryman (2012) explains thematic analysis as a term used in qualitative research to refer to the extraction of key themes in one's data.

Thematic analysis was used to compare various perspectives, descriptions and reflections of the research participants on the impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders in the resort mining town. To ensure trustworthiness, member checking was used to give participants a chance to check whether their responses had been correctly captured. Trustworthiness has been described by Aguinis and Solarino (2019) as the truth value of study findings.

6. Research Findings

This section gives the main findings based on the study objectives.

Secondary Objective 1: To assess the social impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders in the selected mining resort town.

The objective sought to assess the social impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders in the selected mining town and the table below shows the responses given by the participants.

Table 1: Social Impact of Tourism Activities (N = 25)

Social impact of tourism activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Improved lifestyles of women traders	7	28%
Women forming groups to operate businesses	2	8%
Poverty reduction	1	4%
Inclusion of disadvantaged women	2	8%
Participation in cultural activities	6	24%
Access to healthcare	3	12%
Added-value to urban lifestyle	2	8%
Aspirations for high education	2	8%
Total	25	100

Source: Primary Data (2022).

Results show that the majority of the participants agreed that tourism activities in the resort mining town had been critical in improving lifestyles of women traders and participation in cultural activities.

Participant 3 highlighted that:

“The business activities brought by tourism in this area has meant that we learn about different cultures, increasing tolerance towards women trades, increasing amenities, investment in arts and culture and celebration of local people. Tourism has also contributed to a positive quality of life for the residents.”

Participant 7 stated the following:

“In this mining town, renting houses is very expensive. Due to tourism activities in this area, I no longer have challenges in obtaining money to pay rentals. I also hope that if I continue working hard, one day I will own my own house.”

Participant 8 pointed out the following:

“I can say due to tourism activities in the area, there has been greater tolerance of social differences, empowerment of women, aspirations for higher education to access better jobs.”

Participant 9 had this to say:

"Whenever there are tourists around during the festive season or other public holidays, our lifestyles greatly change as the money from trading beads will be supplementing other incomes to the whole household lifestyles portfolio."

Participant 10 expounded the following:

"As traders in this resort mining town, we now know each other and can now lend each other money to grow our businesses and also boost our businesses. We help each other on issues that will be affecting women in business."

Participant 12 pointed out the following:

"There has been greater positive social impact within the community, access to basic healthcare, sanitation services, shelter, personal safety, access to fast internet and communication as well as access to education. Tourism activities in this town have boosted household incomes, creating jobs, and improving living standards of rural communities."

The study generally showed that there had been some social benefits that had been attained by women traders in the mining town due to tourism activities. From the qualitative findings, the main themes that emerged among participants were that the lifestyles of women traders had significantly improved in terms of poverty reduction, housing and their overall well-being. The results agreed with Mat (2021) who viewed tourism as a catalyst for strengthening local communities especially where events and festivals of local residents are the primary participants. This is in sync with Nyaupane and Poudel (2020) who pointed out that the development of tourism positively affected the lives of people around attractions including social aspects of lifestyles.

It was also noted that inclusion of disadvantaged women and participation in cultural activities in the mining town could be the solution for providing and improving social needs for the women traders. The findings are in line with studies done by Jaafar et al. (2019) on the social impact of tourism which showed that the positive benefits included changing women's quality of life, division of labour, increased behaviour patterns, enhanced community life styles and revival of cultural tradition. As noted by Abdillah, Hamid and Topowijono (2020), local people learn different culture and way of life promoting a better understanding, and cultural preservation.

Secondary Objective 2: To assess the economic impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders in the selected resort mining town.

The study also examined the economic impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders in the mining town. Table 2 shows the findings relating to the economic impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders.

Table 2: Economic Impact of Tourism Activities (N = 25)

Economic Impact of Tourism Activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
New job opportunities	9	36%
Increase in family income	3	12%
Stimulating the growth of new women entrepreneurs	1	4%
Employing young women	3	12%
Providing jobs for women with little formal training	5	20%
Replacing illegal jobs with legitimate sources of income	4	16%
Total	25	100

Source: Primary Data (2022).

From the findings in Table 2, it can be stated that tourism activities have been exerting a positive economic impact on the lifestyles of women traders in the mining town. From the interviews, it was noted that there had been many women in the mining who now depend on working in the tourism sector.

Participant 3 stated the following:

“I have a daughter who is now working for a tour company and she is earning a lot of money. To be frank with you, we sometimes depend on her for a lot of things although she is not that educated. My daughter has been paying school fees for her younger siblings.”

The other economic impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders that emerged from the interview findings included creation of women clubs, rise in various flea markets, general economic empowerment and income generation opportunities.

Participant 8 stated the following:

“If you go to town, you can see that most small shops and businesses are owned by women. During the peak days of tourism activities, these women can have a lot of cash to pay for their basic needs.”

Another participant, 13, who cooks local food for tourists, articulated the following:

“I have become a big name in this mining resort town and I am now known by a lot of people including tourists. I am proud of working in this tourism industry.”

The women who worked directly with tourists also said that they had the advantage of getting tips from the tourists if they provided them with good services. Participant 19 stated that:

“If I do provide a very good service to these tourists, I usually get many tips. For instance, some weekends I can be given up to \$200 by tourists. I can have a lot of money during peak

days which can be as high as \$1200. At the end of the day, I am able to provide for my family and live a decent lifestyle."

Another participant, 21, made the following comment:

"In some areas, the solar panels installed there have enabled local communities to divert towards more diverse economic activities, especially during the night time, so they can, for instance, open kiosks with attractive displays".

From the findings, it was noted that various tourism activities have a positive economic influence on new job opportunities, increase family income and stimulate the growth of new women entrepreneurs in the mining town. The results agree with a study by Kimbu and Tichaawa (2018) on sustainable development goals and socio-economic development through tourism in Central Africa which found that various tourism activities played a crucial role in sustaining traditional practices as well as making economically prosperous communities. The results from the study also agree with Noordzij, Beenackers, Groeniger and Van Lenthe (2020) who stated that tourism can revive economies of local communities by participating in job creation, income generation, and contributing towards strengthening of local culture and man-made environments. The study also noted that perceived economic impact included economic opportunities and lifestyle diversification that reduce economic vulnerability. The findings agree with other studies which showed that the benefits of tourism can be captured more widely by women that seize tourism opportunities (Airey & Szivas, 2019).

7. Conclusions

The following are the main conclusions of the study.

7.1 To Assess the Social Impact of Tourism Activities on the Lifestyles of Women Traders in the Selected Resort Mining Town

Participants perceived that the social impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders included improved lifestyles of women traders, women forming business groups, inclusion of disadvantaged women, participation in cultural activities and access to healthcare. The study concluded that there had been some positive social benefits that had been attained by women traders in the selected mining town due to tourism activities. The positive social impacts of tourism included preservation of local culture and strengthening of communities.

7.2 To Assess the Economic Impact of Tourism Activities on the Lifestyles of Women Traders in the Selected Mining Town

The study found out that there are many women who now depend on working in the tourism sector as a source of employment and income generation. The other economic

impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders in the resort mining town noted in the study included a rise in various flea markets, general economic empowerment and income generation opportunities. The general conclusion from this objective was that tourism activities have a positive economic impact on the livelihoods of women traders in the selected resort mining town.

8. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the study suggests the following recommendations:

- 1) To address issues such as inclusion of disadvantaged women, participation in cultural activities and access to healthcare, the Government of Zimbabwe, needs to ensure that local women are involved in various tourism activities through tourism education, training and awareness programmes. This can also help in building trust in the planning and decision-making process, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities.
- 2) The study recommended that a tourism policy and legislation be crafted in order to create a more inclusive and enabling environment that encourages and empowers women's participation in tourism activities at grassroots level.
- 3) There is a need for new tourism product development strategies which should help in raising awareness of new cultural and natural tourism products. The new tourism product development strategy should seek to increase the distribution of tourism benefits to a wide range of the local population including women.
- 4) To address the new job opportunities and stimulate the growth of new women entrepreneurs, there is a need for the Government of Zimbabwe and private companies to invest in the construction of infrastructures and facilities shared by both residents and tourists as important features for tourism attractions. This will help in increasing government revenues, foreign exchange earnings and poverty reduction at family levels.
- 5) With regard to lack of access to trade information and lack of resources, there is a need to review tourism policy and legislation in order to create a more conducive and enabling environment that encourages and empowers women's participation in tourism activities at grassroots level.

9. Contribution of the Research to the Body of Knowledge

9.1 Theoretical Contribution of the Study

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach used in this study suggested that women's lives could be improved through tourism development and various tourism activities in an area. It was noted that studies focusing on the impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders have largely been conducted in countries such as Spain, United Kingdom, Malaysia, Thailand, Jordan, Vietnam South Africa and Egypt (Ayandibu & Houghton, 2017; Azhar, Koe & Osman, 2022). When it comes to understanding the

Zimbabwean business context, literature on the impact of tourism activities on the lifestyles of women traders has been quite limited (Mugizi, 2018; Nyaupane & Poudel, 2020). The aim of this study was to fill this gap in empirical literature by investigating the impact of tourism activities on the socio-economic lifestyles of women traders in one resort mining town in Zimbabwe.

9.2 Practical Contribution of the Study

Drawing from the findings and conclusions, the study extended the following practical contributions with regard to the impact of tourism activities on the livelihoods of women traders. The results of the study implied that sustainable tourism could help in improving the livelihoods of ordinary people including women traders. The study also implied that government authorities and policymakers could play important roles in policy guidelines, regulatory framework, and budgetary support, provision of inter organisational synergy in planning and implementation of tourism strategies. The research is expected to benefit communities, tourism managers and planners with viable information regarding the potentiality of improving the livelihoods of women traders and contribute towards women lifestyles.

9.3 Limitations of the Study

Some participants were unwilling to give certain information due to the sensitive nature of their business activities. This was mitigated by assuring them that the study was purely for academic purposes.

10. Future Implications

The study was envisaged to make contributions to various stakeholders that include women traders and policymakers. It was hoped that findings from the study would provide a platform for local women traders to use tourism as an alternative source of income. This would also support the government's efforts in promoting tourism, in general and women traders in particular. Findings from the study could help the Government of Zimbabwe to come up with strategies to provide incentives to boost women traders whilst linking it with the global tourism value chain. It was also expected that the findings from this study would help government agencies such as the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) in decision making, policy formulation, planning, development and management of tourism. The study fulfilled a need to identify socio-economic factors that contribute to the livelihoods of women traders so that government can develop policies that will reduce poverty and unemployment.

10.1 Directions for Future Research

This study only focused on women traders in one selected resort mining town. Further researches could be conducted in other geographical areas in Zimbabwe to create a more comprehensive knowledge of women traders and their livelihoods.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES ON LIVELIHOODS:
PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN TRADERS IN ONE RESORT MINING TOWN IN ZIMBABWE

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