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CAVE TOURISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE FORM OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION: INSIGHTS FROM CHIRORODZIVA CALABASH FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

Globally, there has been a gradual realisation of caves potential in stimulating sustainable tourism growth and heritage preservation. Zimbabwe has a rich heritage of caves, with the Chirorodziva Caves in Chinhoyi being the most prominent ones. However, most of these caves remain unexplored and untapped for tourism growth. Cave tourism has at best generally remained understudied and undervalued. This study carried out at Chirorodziva Calabash, explores how cave tourism can be a panacea to sustainable heritage tourism development and heritage preservation. The article is qualitative, combining testimonial methodology, literature review, print and electronic articles, observation and expert views. Results of this study indicate that the development of a sustainable cave tourism product can serve as a text for opportunities such as; state-local communities' partnership in management and conservation of cave resources; preservation of cultural resources around them; cave tourism as an alternative livelihood for local communities, increased tourism revenue and tourism product diversification.

KEY WORDS:

Cave Tourism, Geotourism, Heritage preservation, Alternative tourism



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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Cave tourism which is part of geotourism is slowly gaining global popularity (Kim et al., 2008). This type of tourism is expected to improve the character of the geographical environment, cultural heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the welfare of local residents (Gordon, 2018). However, the potential of the cave as a tourist destination has not been fully explored (Tutik et al., 2018). The potential of cave tourism in promoting sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Zimbabwe has generally never been evaluated. Therefore, stakeholders need to carry out an evaluation of the potential of cave tourism in sustainable tourism development (Ma'ruf, Kurniawan, & Pangestu, 2017; Wibawa, Sujarwo, & Hiryanto, 2017; Chami 2018).

Cave tourism is becoming a well-established form of tourism based on the geological environment (Kim et al., 2008; Weaver & Lawton, 2008). Caves are a tourism resource with potential to provide income to both state and local communities. Globally, there has been a gradual realisation of the potential of caves in attracting tourists (see Lobo & Morretti, 2009; Okonkwo, Afoma & Igwemadu, 2014; Rindam, 2014). However, despite an increased focus on cave tourism, very little has been done to interrogate its significance in sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in most developing countries. Most of the previous research focused on the potential for ecotourism (Kurniawati, Sumarmi, & Aliman, 2020; Sumarmi, Kurniawati, & Aliman, 2020; Saputri, Soemardiono, & Sulistyarto, 2019) and agro-tourism (Kurnianto et al., 2013). Meanwhile, the potential for geotourism has not been studied.

Dowling and Newsome (2017) posit that the development of cave tourism empowers local communities and give them the opportunity to develop cohesive partnerships with the common goal of promoting the area's significant geological processes, features, periods of time, historical themes linked to geology, or outstanding geological beauty. Just as importantly, the development of cave tourism encourages regional investment, creates new businesses and jobs, and generates financial benefits to regional communities. Echoing the same sentiments, Okonkwo et al. (2014) opine that caves if properly harnessed, have the potential to rapidly increase social, economic and environmental benefits to the host community. Evidence from extant literature highlights that Cave tourism successfully pulls approximately 250 million tourists every year with an estimated expenditure of USD2 billion, apart from providing employment to 200,000 people and generating a total household income of USD100 million per year (Forti, 2013). As tourism resources, the mobilising power of caves lies in their intrinsic values of scientific, recreational, aesthetic and cultural values (Tongkul, 2005; Rindam, 2014; Lobo & Moretti, 2009).

Caves as natural resources have a lot of potential for tourism development, which can assist the government, accomplish environmental awareness and environmental control education while also helping the local economy expand (Rindam, 2014). Caves according to Itanyi, Okonkwo, and Eyisi (2013), are extremely valuable to both archaeologists and tourism operators. For archaeologists, caverns and rock shelters provide information on ancient human habitation patterns, including eating habits and religious beliefs, whereas tourism operators and tourists see caves and rock shelters as a way to experience heritage and nature-based tourism or ecotourism. According to Knezevic and Zikovic (2011) caves are endowed with morphological features valuable for tourism development and with special interest to adventure tourists.

A close analysis of extant literature highlights that a number of countries across the globe have slowly began to appreciate the significance of caves in tourism development. In South Korea, thirteen caves

are now open to the public; eight caves have been declared as national natural monuments, three caves have been designated as local government natural monuments, and two caves have been designated as normal caves (Korean Cave Association, 2002; Korean Cave Association, 2002). The caverns are intimately linked to increased economic impacts and improved community cohesion.

Baker and Genty (1998) states that the United Kingdom has more than 20 caves available to the public, with 500,000 annual visits. According to reports, around 500,000 people visited the Waitomo Caves tourism hotspot in New Zealand's North Island, a small settlement with a population of 307 people, in a single year (Pavlovich, 2003; Pavlovich, 2003). Direct economic gains were received by transportation operators, lodging providers, and suppliers supporting other caving activities. The caving tour program combines adventure and instruction over a period of time that necessitates overnight stays (Reimold, Whitfield & Wallmach, 2005).

Naracoorte Caves National Park, which has 26 caves, is one of the World Heritage Sites in South Australia and is well known as an adventure tourism attraction (James, Clark & James, 2005). The visitor center provides interpretation services concerning vegetation habitat and geological formation. In Germany, geotourism has emerged as a buzzword in the tourism industry, as well as with politicians, conservationists, geographers, geologists and academics alike (Frey, Schaefer, Buchel & Patzak, 2005). The German Government declared the "Year of the Geosciences" in 2002 and geotourism was promoted along with the causes of geo-conservation and sustainable development (Pforr & Megerle, 2005).

As stated in Agenda 21, an action plan to accomplish sustainable development declared at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, geotourism is acknowledged as an appropriate strategy for regional sustainable development (Pforr & Megerle, 2005; Pforr, & Megerle, 2005). Geotourism should yield the following three results from the perspective of "preservation via use and education": It should first improve visitor satisfaction by learning about geo-heritage interpretation and geo-objects. Second, it should use sustainable management regimes to meet the goal of environment and heritage conservation. Third, by converting geo-resources into geotourism products, it should provide socio-economic advantages to the region's communities.

1.1 CAVE TOURISM IN ZIMBABWE

Despite being home to many caves such as Terry's Cave in Chimanimani (Manicaland Province), Inanke Cave, Pomongwe Cave, Gulumbahwe Cave, Bambata Cave, Nwatugi Cave, Silozwane Cave (all in Matobo Hills, Bulawayo), Domboshava Caves, Big Cave, Makumbe Caves (all in Harare Province), Chamavaza Cave (Mutirikwe, Masvingo), Ruchesa Caves (Mutoko), Dengani Cave (Masvingo) and Chinhoyi Caves (Mashonaland West) among others, the phenomenon of Cave Tourism has remained under-studied and under-theorised in the Zimbabwean context. However, studies conducted elsewhere indicate that Cave Tourism is fast becoming increasingly important to sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation (see Hong et al., 2012; Tolnay, 2013; Forti, 2013; Okonkwo et al., 2014; Rindam, 2014; Oguamanam & Nwankwo, 2015). The problem is not only confined to Zimbabwe. Literature posits that the significance of most caves for sustainable tourism development, heritage preservation and community benefit especially in developing countries has remained unexplored (see Oguamanam & Nwankwo, 2015; Knezevic & Zikovic, 2011).

The significance of caves in natural resource conservation and sustainable tourism in Zimbabwe is also underplayed. This reluctance to embrace cave tourism comes despite statistics showing that Cave Tourism pulls approximately 250 million tourists every year with an estimated expenditure of USD2 billion, apart from providing employment to 200,000 people and generating a total household income

of USD100 million per year (see Forti, 2013). However, other countries have been quick to realise the potential of cave tourism both conservation purposes and community benefit. Countries such as Brazil (see Lobo & Moretti, 2013), Russia (see Knezevic & Grbac, 2013), Indonesia (see Rachmawati & Sunkar, 2013) and Australia (Dragovich & Grose, 1990) have taken initiatives to tap into the potential offered by Cave Tourism. Successful destinations have set about exploiting the potential of cave tourism for sustainable tourism and heritage preservation. One of the most significant and prominent caves in Zimbabwe is the Chinhoyi Caves. The caves consist of a system of tunnels and caverns, which have been referred to as “dying” in that they are slowly collapsing.

1.1.1 Myth Making Around the Chinhoyi Caves

One legend that surrounds the Caves, and inspires their name, involves Chinhoyi, a Headman who defeated and killed the Nyamakwere outlaws. They used the Caves as their stronghold and murdered many victims by throwing them into the Silent Pool. After defeating the outlaws, Chinhoyi became a Mashona Chief who used the Caves to keep his people safe from raiding tribes like the Ndebele. Oral tradition has it that until a few years ago, one could even come across artifacts in form of Chief Chinhoyi’s grain bins in some of the Caves’ underground passageways. Traditionally, the Chinhoyi Caves are called “Chirorodziva”, which means the “Pool of the Fallen”. The name, it’s believed, was inspired by an incident involving the Nguni Tribe in the 1830s. While moving northwards, the Tribe surprised a group of Shona tribe heroes, who were living near the Caves. The Nguni raiders flung them to their deaths, inspiring the oral tradition that whispers of the bones of the fallen that are believed to still cover the bottom of the Pool can still be heard. In addition to the above mentioned mystery, legend has it that a visitor cannot successfully throw a stone across the Pool, as the sacred spirits who watch over the Pool will catch it and bestow a curse upon the person who threw it.

Figure 1: depicts the sleeping pool in the Chinhoyi Caves



Source: Zimbabwe Travel

This paper, drawing on insights from Chirorodziva Calabash Festival therefore argues that cave tourism can be harnessed as a form of sustainable alternative form of tourism and heritage preservation in Zimbabwe. In order to gather evidence to support the paper’s argument, the section below focuses on the problem statement and adopted research methodology.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Zimbabwe has a rich heritage of caves which may be viewed as potential tourist attractions. Despite being home to many caves, (ZIMPARKS, 2018; Kwashirai, undated), very little has been done to interrogate the potential of cave tourism as a sustainable alternative form of tourism and heritage preservation in most developing countries, Zimbabwe being a case in point. The phenomenon of cave tourism has remained under-studied and under-theorised in the Zimbabwean context. However, studies conducted elsewhere indicate that Cave Tourism is fast becoming increasingly important to sustainable tourism development (see Hong et al., 2012; Tolnay, 2013; Forti, 2013; Okonkwo et al., 2014; Rindam, 2014; Oguamanam & Nwankwo, 2015). The problem is not only confined to Zimbabwe, literature posits that the significance of most caves for tourism development and community benefit especially in developing countries has remained unexplored (see Oguamanam & Nwankwo, 2015; Knezevic & Zikovic, 2011). The increasing interest in caves as a form of alternative tourism has raised issues of sustainability. The sustainability of caves as a tourist attraction anywhere in the world depends on efforts made to conserve these resources and the best conservationists are the people who live in and around the caves. Therefore, the critical question for this study was: What insights for the development of sustainable cave tourism and heritage preservation in Zimbabwe can be drawn from Chirorodziva Calabash Festival. Using a qualitative approach this paper explores insights on the development of sustainable cave tourism and heritage preservation at Chinhoyi Caves in Zimbabwe.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The research adopted the interpretive research philosophy to guide the study. The reason for adopting the interpretivism philosophy is that it renders meaning to phenomenological raw data. The research followed a qualitative methodology allowing the participant's lived experiences to be explored and interpreted by means of qualitative methods yielding results that are inductive and dynamic (Reiners, 2012). The research design was a combination of exploratory and descriptive. The study used both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected on the sidelines of Chirorodziva Calabash, a festival celebrating and aptly named after the caves under study. This gave the researchers a varied unbiased population of festival stakeholders.

Fifteen (15) selected expert views from informants were purposively engaged on a one-on-one basis to clarify certain procedures or information from the documents accessed. These key informants were selected based on their technical or professional expertise, as well as their experience in heritage tourism, geotourism and natural resource management. The rationale behind selecting the above mentioned respondent groups was that reality is best accomplished within a natural setting where the researcher is deeply engaged with the phenomenon of interest and where nothing is taken for granted. In every case, these responses were recorded 'real time' as the interviews unfolded. These interviews on average took 15-30 minutes each. The data was analysed using Braun and Clark thematic analysis (2014).

1.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The study sought to explore insights on the development of sustainable cave tourism and heritage preservation at Chinhoyi Caves in Zimbabwe. Researchers took advantage of respondents attending the CCF to draw their perceptions on cave tourism. Responses were forthcoming and saturation was reached at 15. The respondent pool consisted of traditional healers, Parks officials, Traditional entertainers, Provincial School administrators, University Lecturers, traditional crafters, traditional leaders. Civic leaders, students, host community.

1.6 HARNESSING CHINHOYI CAVES FOR CAVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Cave tourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the wellbeing of its residents (National Geography Society, 2018). This means that cave tourism is a multifaceted form of tourism ranging from natural areas, historical attributes of a place, archaeological sites, scenic landscapes, traditional architecture, local cuisine, music, arts and dance. At the same time, it is a tourism that conserves the environment and enriches the economy of a place.

Evidence from the study noted that Chinhoyi Caves also has a good geotourism attributes with unique geological features that can attract tourists and at the same time sustain the environment, cultural heritage and the wellbeing of the residents if properly harnessed for tourism development. Further, study findings highlighted that the local residents have also seen the potentials of the cave for development as the community as it is offered to the public as tourism product. This shows their concern in the economy and social development of the area which can be seen as an opportunity to develop the cave for tourism purposes. For this reason, a strategy for harnessing Chinhoyi caves through festivals for tourism development is illustrated in the table 1: Table 1: Strategy for harnessing Chinhoyi Caves through festivalization for tourism and community development (*see Appendix I*).

The various strength (S) will help to sustain and promote the cave for conservation of the protected area, which will lead to successful tourism development and management practices and also would help to plan tourism in a manner that both geological and tourism stakeholders should work together in other to achieve common goal. As posited by Hose and Vasiljevic (2012) cave tourism development provisions should be planned in a way that both tourism and geological stakeholders must work towards common agreed aims and objectives, otherwise sustainable tourism development will not be achieved. Having examined the current state of the cave which has tourism value to serve as tourist attraction, it should be documented and published for its features contain therein. This will improve economic benefits to the community and increase number of visitation.

The threats (T) includes restoration of damaged features such as lost colour of the stalactites within the cave which shows signs of dryness and mould, creating community awareness for preservation and conservation of the site for present and future generation The tourism stakeholders will aid in the restoration and conservation of the environment.

Weakness (W) entails making the community to understand the importance of tourism in environmental conservation through direct economy benefit from tourist who pay some amount of money to visit the destination, with this the destination is made clean and preserved. There is also need to formulate tourism plan in marketing and promoting the cave to the public. This can be achieved through the various forms of advertisement like brochures, newspapers, tourism newsletters etc. This will draw attention of tourists to the destination. The cave should also be made accessible through all forms of transportation; while, social amenities/tourism facilities such as communication network, pipe borne water, electricity etc should be provided to attract tourists to the destination. This will be achieved through government collaboration with the private sectors.

The opportunity (O) implies the provision of plan for tourism development and conservation that will constitute community destination enhancement, economic needs and adoption of strategies that will minimize the socio-cultural impacts and boast the destination image.

1.7 STATE-LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN NATURE CONSERVATION, CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND BENEFIT SHARING

As at the time this research was undertaken, the Chirorodziva caves was being presented as a tourist nature attraction in a national parks area, without any community involvement or benefits. Insights from the Chirorodziva Calabash point to the existence of tremendous opportunities for state-local community partnership in nature conservation, cultural preservation and benefit sharing. A constellation of activities could be offered by the local community around the main tourist attraction of the Chirorodziva Cave; especially for international tourists. The ones with tremendous potential for packaging with cave tourism to earn income for the local community could include, multi-cultural traditional music and dance, traditional cuisine, township tourism, agri-tourism, traditional homestead, stone carving, educational tourism (primary and secondary schools and a local university), dark tourism

The Chinhoyi Caves park should be re-designed taking the Chirorodziva Festival events to the actual sight of the caves and making them become key routine features of the caves. ZIMPARKS should create space for community involvement. There is need for spatial re-distribution of the park.

There is need to bring more life to Chinhoyi Caves through spatial re-distribution of what the caves offer. There is need for community involvement in Cave Tourism. The festival indicated that local community can be involved in tourism through the exploitation of various opportunities. This would enrich Cave tourism through community involvement. Only then would Cave tourism go beyond only offering an appreciation of nature.

The Traditional Dance Groups brought a different and refreshing outlook to the event as a whole. The festival highlights the possibility of exploiting the hosting of a traditional dance group at Chinhoyi Caves. Such a group beside providing economic benefits to the local community through employment creation would provide entertainment to Cave Tourists. Such an initiative would enrich the package offered to Cave Tourists.

Currently the Chirorodziva caves offer nature as its main product. Local arts and crafts are not represented. The presence of performing arts such as poets, dramatists and curio-shops exposed the economic opportunities that can be exploited by local communities. In other destinations like Victoria Falls and Kariba, local arts and crafts provide a source of livelihood to the majority of local residents. However, at Chirorodziva Caves, such events are non-existent.

Traditional cuisine can be used a way to brand a destination. They further the theme of heritage and conservation. The successful provision of traditional cuisine as well as the great interest shown indicates that offering traditional cuisine can be exploited for community benefit. The spatial re-distribution of the Chirorodziva Caves park should offer space for hosting arts and crafts as well as stands from where various foodstuffs that make up the local cuisine can be sold to Cave Tourists. This would not only create employment and a means of livelihood sustenance but also enrich Cave Tourism as a tourist product.

Cave tourism development can also bring about preservation and conservation of historical buildings, archaeological sites and the environment. This can be achieved through the collections of entrance fees, souvenir sales, sales of local cuisines, local tour guide fees and so on.

Finally, the environmental implications of Chinhoyi caves to tourism development include conservation and protection of the natural environment. Scenic settings of the cave are a desirable

asset for attracting tourist and also for archaeological purposes as it serves as a source of information about past human activity such as changes in vegetation, habitation sites, and also believed to preserve the cultural sequence of human occupation that make use of the cave at one point in time (Itanyi et al.,2013).

Environmental implications of Chinhoyi Caves also include environmental restoration of biological diversity and sustainable use of natural resources in the area; it will also increase public appreciation of the environment and to spread awareness of environmental issues as it brings people into closer contact with nature and environment, hence it will widen the horizon of the people on the need for environmental conscious behaviour and activities to preserve the environment and also reduce resource degradation.

Sustainable tourism development as anchored on the United Nations World Tourism Organization Global Code of Ethics for Tourism Article I, emphasize on the need for tourism development to foster the attitude of tolerance and respect of religious, philosophical, and moral beliefs diversity among participants (Edgell *et al*, 2008 cited in Misiko, 2015) as such tourism developers and all stakeholders should put into consideration social values of the host community and respect their indigenous practices during tourism activities. In the case of Chinhoyi cave, the tourism developers and all interested individuals in tourism development should ensure that all traditional practices associated with the cave should be respected and strictly adhered to for sustainable tourism development.

According to one of our key informants, most times the tourist disrespect the cultural belief system attached to the cave such as visiting the cave during menstruation. At this junction, the tourism developers should make effort to plan and provide adequate provisions for sensitizing and creating awareness to the public concerning the indigenous practices associated with the cave. For instance, mounting a sign post in front of the road leading to the cave specifying various taboos associated with the cave would help to avert the impending danger that is associated with disrespecting the local norms and traditions.

The economic implications are focused on the revenue/income generated from the site. The main direct tourism income from Chinhoyi cave is the tollgate. The money that is generated from the tollgate is used in maintaining the site as well as for the welfare of the community members. However, the revenue generated from the site is not enough for the maintenance of the site. It is also noticed that most tourists visit the site with their food items such as snacks, drinks etc, thus, resulting to low patronage of petty traders' locally made snacks and drinks. This can be minimized if tourism developers together with stakeholders will provide shopping facilities within the destination so that tourists will patronize from them rather than bringing those food items from outside.

Other indirect sources of revenue include money paid by tourists to motor cyclists and vehicles for conveying them to the site as well souvenirs. This income contributes to the local economy of the host community. Generally, the income generated from the destination is limited because of the fact that the site is not yet fully developed and the management plan is very poor. There is limited exploitation of the entrepreneurial opportunities presented by the production and presentation of the caves as a resource for tourism development.

Moreover, the local community should be educated on how to present tourist product to visitors. The local residents should also be involved in the planning process and development of tourism

destination site as it appears to be desirable and necessary element of sustainable tourism development especially in the case of community-based tourism development.

1.8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Three major themes emerged from the study; state themes harnessing Chinhoyi caves for cave tourism development; state-local community partnership in nature conservation, cultural preservation and benefit sharing and implications of Chinhoyi caves to tourism development.

The implications of harnessing the Chinhoyi caves through festivals cannot be over emphasized. The exploration of these “tourism gems” within the country is vital as an enhancement to gaining competitiveness in attracting the contemporary tourist. Unexplored tourism gems such as caves represent a growing special interest market whose demand has gradually been on the rise globally. Zimbabwe’s tourism sector is earmarked to maximise its competitiveness by reinventing its tourism resource base through tapping from off the beaten track tourism resources abundant in this destination. Failure to do so may have detrimental effects in the destination’s socio-economic growth as it will lose out on a potential revenue source. This ranges from economic to socio-cultural implications. Tourism is an industry with enormous economic, socio-cultural and environmental implications. Tourism like any other industry is often used as a national or regional development tool. In general, tourism development within a community often has implications on the community both positive and negative ways. These implications have been well documented and are classified as economic, socio-cultural, and environmental implications. For this reason, the implications of Chinhoyi Caves to tourism development will be discussed.

The adoption of festivals in stimulating tourism around Chinhoyi caves will alter the economic structure of the community and will be a major source of capital and income to the local people if the cave is properly planned, developed, and managed. Cave tourism development can create job opportunities, earn foreign exchange, produce return on investment for emerging economics, bring infrastructural development and improve living standard of the locals. Tourism can also help to increase revenue generation of the local people and will creation employment opportunities.

The socio-cultural implications of Chinhoyi caves for tourism development are the effects of tourism to the host communities through interactions during tourism experience and encounter. These interactions will bring changes to the quality of life of the residents such as their belief system, traditional lifestyle, family relationships, religion etc. Reimold et al. (2005) point out that geotourism has the potential to alleviate poverty in rural parts of southern Africa. As posited by Kadt (1979 as cited in Blacstock, 2015) tourist and host contacts takes place in three general contexts: places where tourists purchase goods and services from the hosts, places where they are using or occupying at the same time and lastly places in which they meet and share knowledge and ideas. Tourism socio-cultural implications will be identified as both positive and negative.

The positive socio- cultural implications includes promotion of cross-cultural understanding, social transformation, increase in standard of living, development of infrastructural facilities, provisions of goods and services and social stability. Cave tourism development can also bring about preservation and conservation of historical buildings, archaeological sites and the environment. This can be achieved through the collections of entrance fees, souvenir sales, sales of local cuisines, local tour guide fees and so on.

The negative socio-cultural implications associated with tourism activities includes demonstrative effect whereby tourist behaviour at destination influences the host communities especially the young ones. The host community tends to imitate tourists way of life and abandoning their traditional way of life and viewing it as inferior. Another negative impact of tourism is commodification of culture to suit tourist markets which might also alters the original cultural practices and patterns thereby losing its original significance.

Finally, the environmental implications of Chinhoyi cave to tourism development include conservation and protection of the natural environment. Scenic settings of the cave is a desirable assets for attracting tourist and also for archaeological purposes as it serve as a source of information about past human activity such as changes in vegetation, habitation sites, and also believed to preserve the cultural sequence of human occupation that make use of the cave at one point in time (Itanyi *et. al.* 2013).

Environmental implications of Chinhoyi cave tourism development also include environmental restoration of biological diversity and sustainable use of natural resources in the area; it will also increase public appreciation of the environment and to spread awareness of environmental issues as it brings people into closer contact with nature and environment, hence it will widen the horizon of the people on the need for environmental conscious behaviour and activities to preserve the environment and also reduce resource degradation.

Congestions experienced at tourism destination increase the demand for natural resources and also contributes source of solid waste residual that causes pollution. Land degradation through construction of accommodation facilities, parking space and recreational facilities cannot be overlooked. Tourism activities also generate waste products at destination as tourists' litters the environment with used materials such as waste bags, toilet papers, food bags and so on.

Cave tourism will benefit local communities and lead to their development if properly harnessed and developed. This paper has outlined the implication of cave to tourism development and how these implications can be maximized to equal benefits to all concerned in tourism development. Caves are important to tourism industry if properly harnessed and developed as it will rapidly increase economic, social and environmental benefits to the host community. Chirorodziva caves have the potential to be one a thriving destination of cave tourism in Zimbabwe. However, findings indicate that currently ZIMPARKS is the sole beneficiary from Cave Tourism proceeds at Chirorodziva Caves. The hosting of the Chinhoyi University of Technology pioneered Chirorodziva Calabash Festival by 4.1 Hospitality and Tourism students offered insights into how local communities can also share in the conservation and benefits from Cave Tourism. The calabash has the potential to be a national event with the power to change the destiny of Chinhoyi Town from a mere transit town into a thriving Cave Tourism destination. Opportunities for community benefit that emerged include offering traditional cuisine, local arts and crafts, as well as involving the community in conservation initiatives like tour guiding, storytelling at the cave site. Such a packaging would enrich the Cave tourism package offered at Chirorodziva Caves as well as provide social and economic benefits to both urban and peri-urban Chinhoyi residents.

1.9 CONCLUSION

Evidence from both extant literature and study findings suggest that Cave Tourism can be used as a vehicle for promoting sustainable tourism, as well as heritage preservation. Thus, it can be concluded

from the study findings that cave tourism can be instrumental in providing sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation. The above discussion offers openly a few examples of ways in which the communities may also derive benefit through partnership in Cave Tourism development. The bottom line is that this paper was principally meant to provoke responsible authority in tourism development as well as communities to become aware and to start thinking of the potential of harnessing cave tourism as an alternative form of sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Zimbabwe. Collaboration between local authority stakeholders, government agencies, businesses and communities is urgently needed. Collaborative policies in tourism planning need attention to be more proactive in managing growth and development in various tourism destinations.

There is need to orient policy towards cave tourism development. Policy plays a crucial role in governing and regulating the growth of tourism across the globe. However, study findings indicate that the Zimbabwean context is characterised by a presence of a policy framework that lacks not only enforcement but clarity on how to mainstream cave resources for sustainable tourism development. Such policies considering the increased global focus on geotourism, would need to be constantly reviewed to augur well with current global trends in tourist consumption patterns and craft framework to guide the development of cave tourism. There is also need for collaborated efforts between the the tourism industry, communities and the government in general. Collaboration is key in developing the vibrant operation tourism strategies. Findings reveal that current practices are inadequate to deal with the growing frustrations of promoting caves for tourism development. There is need to revamp current initiatives and inject new thoughts into how these cultural heritages can be harnessed for sustainable tourism development and heritage preservation in Zimbabwe. There should also be a symbiotic and synergistic solutions involving all stakeholders on strategy to promote cave tourism. This is a sine qua non for establishing effective strategy system for sustainable tourism development in Zimbabwe.

1.10 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The fact that the aspects touched are not exhaustive, at least in the case of Zimbabwe, implies that tourism authorities and communities near and around caves still have a very broad field in which to select development strategies or practices which need to be reinforced in the pursuit of sound and sustainable cave tourism development. Thus, there is need to develop tailor

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APPENDIX 1: Table 1: Strategy for harnessing Chinhoyi Caves through festivalization for tourism and community development (see Appendix 1).

Harnessing the Strength (S) of the Cave for Tourism Development	Harnessing the Weakness (W) of the Cave for Tourism Development
1) Identify the current condition of the cave and its features.	1) Improving the understanding of the community about geotourism development
2) Documenting and publishing the features of the cave and its scientific value.	2) Formulating a geotourism management plan in accordance with geotourism concept.
3) To formulate geotourism plan development in a manner that both tourism and geological stakeholders must work towards a common goal of conservation enriching tourism experience.	3) Planning of marketing and promotion of geotourism to the public.
4) provide geotourism management model that will include community participation.	4) Improvement of social amenities and tourism facilities.
	5) Community participation in geotourism planning and implementation.
Harnessing the Opportunity (O) of the Cave for Tourism Development	Harnessing the Threat (T) of the Cave for Tourism Development
1) To increase the understanding environmental preservation and conservation to the local residents and the public in general.	1) Creating awareness to the community or importance of environmental conservation.
2) Provision of conservation plan	2) Making provision of conservation and preservation mechanism for the present and future generation.
3) Developing diversification in responding to geodiversity.	3) Restoration of damaged cave features.
4) Host Festivals like Chirorodziva Calabash	4) Formulating management plan for geotourism destination area.
5) Allow communities to participate during the festival.	