LOCAL RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN MANGOCHI, MALAWI

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Mangochi, Malawi. This paper is based on results of a survey of 196 households together with ten key informant interviews. A concurrent triangulation mixed method was used to ensure well-validated and substantiated findings. The study findings indicate that local residents perceive specific positive and negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism in their community. Some of the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism include the provision of jobs; improved personal incomes; stimulation of the local economy and improved security in the destination area. However, the study also revealed two major negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism: the migration of people to the area in search of jobs; and the influence of Western visitors on local culture and "the way of life" of local people due to the demonstration effect. The paper indicates the degree to which local residents perceive different socio-

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cultural impacts of tourism development in an African local community setting. Therefore, the paper will assist tourism planners and local government in the planning and implementation of tourism development strategies for the area aiming at consolidating local residents' support for tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the preferred development agents and economic alternatives to more traditional primary and secondary sectors in developing countries (Opperman & Chon, 1997). Many developing countries have regarded tourism as a means for development as it is one of the economic sectors in which principles of free trade apply. Due to tourism's rapid and continuing growth and associated potential economic contribution, it has been widely regarded as an effective means of achieving development and poverty alleviation in non-industrialised countries (Binns & Nel, 2002). In Malawi, a sub-Saharan nation with high levels of poverty, tourism has been identified as one of the priority sectors for economic development. The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (2011 – 2016), a national medium-term development strategy, identifies tourism as a priority sector and champions the development of wildlife tourism, cultural tourism and adventure tourism (Malawi Government, 2012).

It is argued that for a tourism industry to thrive and be sustainable, the support of host communities is essential (Ryan, Chaozhi, & Zeng, 2011). Hence social impact studies that gauge levels of support are a crucial input to tourism planning and decision making (Tovar & Lockwood, 2008). This realisation has led to increasing attention being given to the perceived impacts of tourism development in informing planning and policy considerations for tourism development (Ap, 1992; Ap & Crompton, 1998; Lankford, 1994).

Often tourism development is wrongly accused of being the sole agent of rapid social and cultural change in host communities, and the attention given to the negative changes overshadows the positive contributions of tourism development (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002). Though this is the case, Sharpley and Telfer (2002) argue that socio-cultural impacts in a destination occur not only through tourism but also through other globalising vectors such as the international media. Although the socio-cultural impacts of tourism have been extensively studied, researchers still identify the need to conduct further work in more diverse

geographical locations (Tosun, 2002). Most of the studies have also been contradictory in their findings (Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma, & Carter, 2007) but Tosun (2002) asserts that the contradictions might be explained by the differences in the local environment where the studies are conducted as socio-cultural impacts can significantly be influenced by the place-specific nature of the host – guest interactions. With this in mind, this paper assesses the socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in Malawi. Research on Malawian tourism remains underdeveloped (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2011) and this paper advances our understanding of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in this destination. Ultimately this paper contributes to a body of knowledge that is key to the successful development, management and marketing of existing and future tourism developments (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Lankford, 1994).

TOURIST – HOST INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Socio-cultural impacts of tourism can be viewed from different and overlapping viewpoints: tourism impact studies, tourist – host interaction, tourist systems and tourists and their behaviour (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 2008). Research on the social and cultural impacts of tourism mostly falls into three categories: the tourist, the host, and the tourist – host interrelationships. This paper focuses on the tourist – host interrelationships in order to consider the effects of the contacts between hosts and guests (Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

The tourist – host interrelationship concept has been central to the socio-cultural impacts of tourism literature since Smith's (1977) seminal collection: *"Hosts and guests – The anthropology of tourism"*. The research focus has mostly been on international tourism which often presents a wider gap between the socio-cultural characteristics of the tourists and hosts. These differences have a bearing on the magnitude of direct socio-cultural impacts associated with tourism development (Inskeep, 1991). Such socio-cultural characteristics include: basic value and logic system, religious beliefs, traditions, customs, lifestyles, behaviour patterns, dress code, sense of time and attitudes towards strangers (Inskeep, 1991).

International tourism is considered a major source of intercultural contact through the tourist – host encounters in the contemporary world as tourists from industrialised nations visit destinations in the developing countries (Dogan, 1989). In most developing world destinations such as

Malawi, international tourists find their encounters with local communities fascinating and unique as the host is usually from a different culture while the hosts may see the meetings as one of those many superficial relationships they have to go through during a tourist season (Wall & Mathieson, 2006). Local hosts may take advantage of such encounters and become exploitative by providing tourists with simplified and condensed experiences of the area (Cohen, 1988; Wall & Mathieson, 2006). As such, tourism may commercialise the usual spontaneous hospitality activities in these destinations. The tourist – host relationships are also viewed to be unequal and unbalanced in most cases as hosts feel inferior to tourists due to their apparent wealth (Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

Negative socio-cultural impacts

Tourism needs the support from local residents in a destination to strive and this realisation has eventually led to increasing attention being given to the perceived impacts of tourism development (Ap & Crompton, 1998). Tourism development brings in changes in a host community which affect people's habits, daily routines, social lives, beliefs and values (Dogan, 1989). Some of the major negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism include: the demonstration effect, commodification, staged authenticity, increase in crime, prostitution, overcrowding and loss of amenities for residents, neo-colonisation, relocation of traditional settlements, drug abuse, alcoholism, vandalism, and breaking up of family structures (Archer, Cooper, & Ruhanen, 2005; Cohen, 2004; Cooper et al., 2008; Inskeep, 1991; Mason, 2008; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Mbaiwa, 2005; Pizam, 1978; Shaw & Williams, 2002).

Demonstration effect

The demonstration effect is one of the direct aspects of socio-cultural impacts of tourism which happens when tourists influence the behaviour of the host population (Cooper et al., 2008). This happens due to the introduction of foreign ideologies and ways of life into societies or communities that have not been exposed to lifestyles of tourists (Bryden, 1973). Mathieson and Wall (1982) argue that international tourists display unusual behaviour on vacations as there are fewer constraints and as a consequence hosts develop a misconception about tourists. As such most host communities in developing countries start to desire foreign

commodities or adopt ways of living displayed by tourists (Shaw & Williams, 2002).

The local population's aspirations to the material standards and values of tourists lead to copying of tourists' consumption patterns and the young members of the community are more susceptible to the demonstration effect (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). The adoption of the foreign values by a host community can also lead to premature departure to modernisation producing rapid and disruptive changes to the society (Shaw & Williams 2002). These disruptive changes include international and intra-national migration as employment opportunities created by tourism in resort towns facilitate the movement of people in many countries (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). The demonstration effect is taken to be beneficial if the local residents are motivated to get better education to improve their living standards (Shaw & Williams, 2002).

Commodification

Cohen (2004) defined commodification as a process by which things and activities are evaluated in monetary value in a trade context thereby becoming goods and services. Tourism has a corrupting effect brought by the cheapening of artistic values or the commoditisation of local traditions and customs, for instance, the performance of religious or historical ceremonies on demand, out of context and for monetary reward (Pearce, 1989). As a result, commoditisation leads to the organisation of pseudo-events which are planned, designed to be performed to order by tourists and have minimal relationship to real elements on which they are based (Mason, 2008).

Culture loses its objective when it becomes a commodity for financial transactions and usually crafts, ceremonies and rituals are exploited, made more colourful, dramatic and spectacular in order to attract the attention of tourists (Cooper et al., 2008). It should be noted that these pseudo-events can eventually become authentic events replacing the original events or practice and there is a danger for the hosts to forget the true meaning and significance of the practice or event overtime (Mason, 2008). Cohen (2004) also argues that commoditisation can lead to the exploitation of the local residents and their cultural resources by outsiders as the process is mostly initiated by culture-brokers and entrepreneurs from outside the local community.

Staged authenticity

In most destinations, there is now an increasing demand for tourism products that offer cultural authenticity (Cooper et al., 2008). In a bid to provide tourists with sufficient cultural exposure to satisfy their demands while preserving the true cultural identity of the host community, the local residents opt for staged authenticity (Cooper et al., 2008). In staged authenticity, the host community strives to convince the tourists that the festivals and activities being performed are authentic while they still ensure that the tourists do not manage to penetrate behind the stage curtains (Archer et al., 2005; Cooper et al., 2008). But it is argued that this approach can lead to increasing levels of penetration by tourists when the firewall curtains continue to retreat when trying to provide greater tourist experiences and diversity in a competitive tourism market (Cooper et al., 2008). With this situation, the host population will find it difficult to maintain the integrity and pride of their culture.

Prostitution

In many destinations sexual exploitation and/or prostitution has grown rapidly as tourism and more recently a major tourism market has grown up around sex tourism with Thailand, the Gambia and some Central European countries marketing the sexual content of their products (Cooper et al., 2008). It should be noted that prostitution existed before the growth of mass tourism (Mathieson & Wall, 1982), but it is argued that tourism development has created locations and environments which attract prostitutes and their clients. A study by Mbaiwa (2005) in the Okavango Delta in Botswana also found out that tourism increased prostitution in the area as prostitutes target tourists and business people from other urban areas visiting the destination. Shaw and Williams (2002) also contend that tourism development often creates a favourable environment for prostitutes and the breaking of moral bonds of behaviour by tourists when they are away from home usually leads to the expansion of prostitution in host communities. Although tourism increases the dividends of the prostitution trade, it is not solely responsible for it (Shaw & Williams, 2002). At the meantime, the proliferation of AIDS is slowing down the growth of prostitution or the sex element in the tourism industry though many tourists from industrialised countries usually relax their sexual morals during vacations (Cooper et al., 2008).

Crime

Crime is another aspect of negative socio-cultural impact of tourism associated with tourism. Though the link between crime and tourism has been suggested, it is hard to establish whether crime increases simply because of tourism or the increased population density or urbanisation (Cooper et al., 2008). Though this is the case, a number of studies indicate that crime is one of the negative impacts perceived by local residents in a destination. Vandalism, drug abuse and disorderly behaviour are some of the crimes which are perceived by local residents as the most negative of the impacts of tourism development (Pizam, 1978). The presence of large numbers of tourists in a tourist area usually provides the source for illegal activities including drug trafficking, robbery and violence which have been reported in Brazil, Florida and Jamaica (Cooper et al., 2008). Studies by Ap (1990), Ap and Crompton (1998), Brunt and Courtney (1999), and Mason and Cheyne (2000) also confirm that tourism increases rates of crime in a destination area.

Neo-colonisation

One extreme perception of tourism development and its effects is the view that it is a form of colonialism and imperialism (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). It is argued that though most developing countries do not have any legal ties with metropolitan powers, economic relationships between them are still considered essential hence tourism is regarded as a neo-colonial activity. Tourism in most developing countries is dominated by foreign companies where most better paying and managerial jobs are occupied by expatriates (Mbaiwa, 2005). With the domination of foreign companies, tourism is characterised by leakages, thereby wealth is transferred from the destination area to points of tourist generation, as the most goods consumed by tourists are imported (Mathieson & Wall, 1982).

Relocation of local communities from their traditional settlements and exploitation of local residents

Tourism development has forced communities to move from their traditional settlements to pave way for the construction of tourist facilities and establishments and wildlife management (Mbaiwa, 2005; Archer et al., 2005). Such movements completely disrupt the way of life of local people. Holloway (2006) gives examples of the removal of Masai tribesmen from

their Ngorongoro lands in Tanzania, to allow tourists free movement to photograph wildlife and in Botswana the Gana and Gwi Bushmen have been evicted from their land in the central Kalahari game reserve to open the area to tourism. Exploitation of porters has been reported in many mountainous destination areas such as in Mt Kilimanjaro, in the Himalayas and on the Inca Trail in Peru where porters carry heavy loads of up to 60kgs and dressed in inadequate protective clothing (Holloway, 2006).

Overcrowding and loss of amenities for residents

In most cases, local residents become irritated and resentful when amenity features, shopping and community facilities become congested by tourists (Inskeep, 1991). Such overcrowding greatly inconveniences the local residents making them feel out of place in their own area. At times local beaches are even closed off to the local population by physical barriers such as fences denying local residents access to a public amenity (Inskeep, 1991). It should be noted that with continued developments, tourism may exceed community tolerance thresholds to increased congestion, noise, littering, rising prices and changes to customary ways of life which eventually leads to antagonism (Ross, 1998).

Positive socio-cultural impacts

Some of the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism include: improving quality of life, increasing the availability of recreational facilities, improving quality of public social services such as fire and police protection, improving understanding of other cultures, preserving cultural heritage and promoting cultural exchange (Ap & Crompton, 1998).

Economic benefits and improvement of quality of life

The economic benefits of tourism which include provision of income and employment improve people's quality of life in a destination (Inskeep, 1991). Tourism serves as a catalyst for the development of other related sectors such as construction, agriculture and fisheries hence the economic benefits are further enhanced (Inskeep, 1991). The economic benefits to local residents can further be improved through community based

tourism initiatives where the local residents are actively involved in tourism activities. In Botswana, the Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986 and the Tourism Policy of 1990 led to the foundation of community based tourism and natural resource management programmes which increased opportunities for local residents hence improving their standards of living (Mbaiwa, 2005).

Improvement of Infrastructure and social services

Tourism development comes with improved and better infrastructure in a destination which enhances the quality of life of the local community (Cooper et al., 2008). This is evidenced by development of improved water supply and sewage treatment systems, airports, roads, and electricity supply. In most tourist areas, local residents also have the opportunity to access new restaurants and a better range of food and beverages. Inskeep (1994) argues that revenue from tourism helps to pay for improvements to community facilities and services. Tourism development also facilitates provision of improved security by the police and fire protection in a destination area (Ap & Crompton, 1998). Studies by Pizam (1978), Milman and Pizam (1988), Lankford (1994), and Tovar and Lockwood (2008) confirm that tourism development improves infrastructure and social services to people in a destination area.

Cultural Rejuvenation, renewal of cultural pride and conservation of cultural heritage

Tourism development promotes the rejuvenation and preservation of cultural products and practices as indicated by Mbaiwa (2005) that in Botswana, tourism has rejuvenated traditional villages providing services to tourists such as accommodation in traditional huts, traditional dishes, music and dance, use of dug-in-canoes for safaris, production of baskets and other traditional wooden – engraved products and beads. It should be noted that as part of tourism development the traditional villages in Botswana promote and preserve culture that would have died by now without tourism (Mbaiwa, 2005). Tourism puts new life into ceremonies, rituals, old skills and crafts through tourists and this inspires pride in a destination's heritage and culture as it is re-valued (Cooper et al., 2008). Inskeep (1991) also contends that tourists' appreciation of traditional

cultures brings a sense of pride to local people in their culture thereby maintaining cultural identity of even minority cultural groups in a society.

Tourism also stimulates the conservation of cultural heritage of an area and these elements of cultural heritage include archaeological and historical sites, traditional arts, handcrafts, dance, music, drama, customs, ceremonies and dress (Inskeep, 1991). Revenue realised from tourism also assists the development and maintenance of museums, theatres and other cultural heritage facilities (Inskeep, 1991; Inskeep, 1994; Tovar & Lockwood, 2008). It is also argued that tourism development coupled with good community tourism planning approaches can change peoples' negative attitudes to wildlife conservation for the better as socio-economic benefits start accruing to the local communities (Mbaiwa, 2005).

STUDY AREA

The study was conducted in Mangochi district which is situated in the Southern region of Malawi. Mangochi district covers the southern end of Lake Malawi and is one of Malawi's premier tourism destinations with a high concentration of tourist facilities and establishments along the shoreline of Lake Malawi. Lake Malawi is Malawi's iconic tourist attraction and the southern end of the lake is the major tourist hotspot on the lake. The lake is popular for snorkelling, kayaking, swimming and scuba diving. The southern end of the lake also forms the Lake Malawi National Park which is the world's first fresh water national park and was declared a World Heritage Site in 1984 to protect the diversity of marine life more especially various species of fish most of which are endemic (UNESCO, n.d). In addition to attracting international tourists, Mangochi is one of the most preferred lakeside tourism destinations for domestic tourism as it is easily accessible from two of Malawi's major cities of Blantyre and Lilongwe.

International tourist arrivals to Malawi have grown from 227,600 in 2000 to 804,912 in 2015 (Department of Tourism, 2016). The key regional source markets were South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. The major non-African tourist markets are the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, USA and China (Department of Tourism, 2016). The travel and tourism sector in Malawi continues to show signs of great potential growth. The WTTC (2017) estimated that in 2016, travel and tourism directly contributed 3.4% of Malawi total GDP and 217,500

jobs (2.9% of total employment). There are no specific tourism statistics for Mangochi as a tourist town.

The predominant ethnic group in the district is the Yao but the Nyanjas or Chewas have a significant presence in some of the villages within the study area (Mangochi District Assembly, 2009). Yao is the main language spoken in the district but Chichewa is widely spoken as well. The people of Mangochi have maintained most of their traditions and have a distinct culture which is evident in their initiation ceremonies, dress code, dances and chieftainships (Mangochi District Assembly, 2009).

STUDY METHOD

The study on which this paper is based used a mixed methods research approach. Data on residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Mangochi were collected using a questionnaire survey and key informant interviews with local people in the area between 2009 and 2012. Creswell (2009) indicates that mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms whereby the qualitative and quantitative data can be merged into one large database or the results can be used side by side to reinforce each other where the qualitative material supports the quantitative results. The three general strategies used in mixed methods research are sequential, concurrent and transformative mixed methods. In this study a concurrent triangulation strategy was used where the two databases were compared "to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combination" (Creswell, 2009: 213).

Questionnaires provide a means to gather and record information on the incidence of attitudes, meanings and perceptions in a population and they are also a good means of capturing a complete picture of a person's patterns of participation in tourism activities (Veal, 2006). The villages in which this research was carried out have a population of about 5, 939 (National Statistics Office, 2008). In the survey, 200 interviewer completed questionnaires were administered to households in Mangochi, resulting in 196 usable questionnaires, representing a 98% response rate. Out of all the questionnaire survey respondents, 133 (67.9%) were male and 63 (32.1%) were female. This is a reflection of Malawian culture which is dominated by paternal authority. Most of the respondents were aged between 25 and 34 representing 42.8%. Only 42.9% of the respondents work or one of their family members works in the tourism industry while

57.1% of the respondents do not economically depend on tourism. The local residents in the study area have low levels of formal education as 70.41% of the respondents had only gone as far as primary school with their education and only 2.55% of the respondents had college qualifications. The researcher adopted a quasi-random sampling method. In quasi-random sampling, the first item is selected at random and the subsequent selections are systematically related to the first (Clark, Riley, Wilkie, & Wood, 1998). After the random selection of the first household, the questionnaires were administered at every seventh household in the study area. At each household, family members were responsible for selecting the respondent to the survey.

The questionnaire included 15 items on both positive and negative impacts drawn from the existing socio-cultural impacts of tourism literature (e.g. Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005; Ap & Crompton, 1998; Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Cohen, 2004; Dogan, 1989; Gu & Wong, 2006; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Mbaiwa, 2005; Milman & Pizam, 1988; Northcote & Macbeth, 2006; Ryan et al., 2011; Shaw & Williams, 2002; Tovar & Lockwood, 2008). The impact variables for this study were measured using a five-point Likert scale. As observed by Maddox (1985), impacts of tourism have mostly been measured using five-point scales.

Due to their flexibility, ten key informant semi-structured interviews were carried out to complement the survey as they provided an avenue for more probing on various topics or issues under study (Briggs, 1986). The interview participants included five males and five females and all the interviews were digitally recorded. The participants included tourism officials (2), local traditional leaders (5), and hotel managers (3). Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select the participants for the interviews. The qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The analysis involved transcription of all the interviews, generation of codes, searching for themes, reviewing of themes, defining and naming of themes and production of a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the quantitative data, after checking all the completed questionnaires, all the questions were coded in readiness for data entry. The data was then analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The local residents have a very positive attitude towards the existing tourism development and the presence of tourists in the area. 84% of the respondents favoured tourism development in the area. Similarly, 78.5% of the respondents favoured the presence of tourists in the area. This supports Ryan et al.'s (2011) recognition that in most developing tourist destinations where tourism development is still in its early stages local residents are mostly in support of tourism development. Within the overall positive view of tourism, the respondents identified specific positive and negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism in their community as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: *Residents' perceptions of socio-cultural impacts of tourism development*

Positive Impacts	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tourism provides jobs for local residents	4.01	0.871
Tourism activities have improved personal income of the local people	4.05	0.812
Tourism is good because the money spent by tourists stimulates the local economy and is good for the local businesses	4.01	0.723
Tourism promotes development and better maintenance of public facilities	3.19	1.305
Tourism has improved security in the area	3.48	1.200
Tourism has rejuvenated the local culture	3.34	1.022
Tourism is conserving your cultural heritage which could have died	3.09	1.140
Negative Impacts		
Tourism has increased crime in the area	1.53	0.761
Tourism has increased prostitution and sex permissiveness in the area	2.83	1.536
Tourism denies local people access to beaches	3.14	1.414
Tourism developments have forced local people to be relocated from their traditional settlements	2.14	1.018
Tourism leads to increases in the local prices of some goods and services including land	3.07	1.342
Tourism has stimulated migration of people to the area in search for jobs and related tourism opportunities	3.86	1.065
Tourism has changed the way of life of people by following the western culture in their dress, behaviour, food	3.52	1.390
Tourism has led to loss of objectivity of local traditions	2.55	1.241
Mean scores Interpretation		
1 – 1.8 = Strongly disagree		
1.81 – 2.6 = Disagree		
2.61 – 3.4 = Unsure		
3.41 – 4.2 = Agree		
4.21 – 5.0 = Strongly agree.		

Positive Socio-cultural Impacts

Out of the seven positive impacts of tourism development, the respondents agreed with four statements. The residents agreed that tourism provides jobs for the local residents (Mean = 4.01), tourism improves personal income of the local people (Mean = 4.05), tourism stimulates the local economy (Mean = 4.01) and that tourism improves security in a tourist area (Mean = 3.48). These results conform to the findings highlighted by Inskeep (1991) and Cooper et al (2008). The survey findings were also corroborated by one villager who said:

"...Mangochi has been transformed because of tourism. There are a lot of tourism investments in Mangochi employing a lot of people from across the country. We are the primary beneficiaries of the employment opportunities around here, whatever jobs we get from these tourism establishments...... The people now have some improvement on their personal incomes........ I can say that people's lives have been transformed for the better because of tourism development."

The tourism industry's ability to create job opportunities for local people around Mangochi emerged as one of the most important positive impacts of tourism development. The local people value the employment opportunities which have been created by the tourism industry. It was observed that the tourism industry provides employment opportunities for the local people and others from across the country. As noted by Snyman (2012: 395); income from tourism employment in Southern African countries such as Malawi enables "households to invest in assets, education and 'luxury' goods" and improves "financial security and social welfare" in local communities around tourism establishments.

Most participants explained that most of the local people within the study area are mainly dependent on either fishing or subsistence farming and the tourism activities are playing a greater role in stimulating the local economy. The tourism industry has led to the development of hotels, restaurants and other related businesses which provide a ready market for fish and most of the other local agricultural produce such as maize, rice and vegetables. The increasing number of tourists visiting the area has also resulted in high demand for curios and other artworks such as paintings and handcrafts such that there is an increasing number of stalls

owned by local people selling curios and artworks. This supports findings by Gursoy and Rutherford (2004), Dyer et al. (2007), and Ryan et al. (2011) who indicate that tourism development brings in more business opportunities for local people.

The findings from both the survey and interviews have claimed that tourism has improved security in the area. In one location within the study area, Cape Maclear, local residents indicated that the increased security was a result of tourism operators request to government which led to the opening of a police unit in the area. It was observed that without tourism development, the area which is an enclave within Lake Malawi National Park could not have its own police unit due to its relatively low population. This confirms Lankford and Howard (1994) and Ap and Crompton's (1998) findings that the presence of tourists and tourism development in an area improves security as local authorities find it necessary to provide a secure environment for tourism businesses and tourists.

As seen in Table 1, the respondents were not sure (Mean = 2.61 – 3.4) about three of the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism development. It was noted by one local community respondent that as a community they could not attribute the maintenance of public facilities in the area to tourism development because local people *expect the government to keep all public facilities in the area in good working order with or without tourism development*. On cultural rejuvenation and conservation, the result (unsure) in this research can be attributed to the fact that local residents in the study area still have high regard for their traditional ceremonies and dances which continue to be performed outside of a tourism context. Consequently, respondents could not attribute cultural rejuvenation and conservation to tourism.

Negative Socio-cultural Impacts

The second part of the survey encompassed eight statements on the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism development. The local residents only agreed with two of the negative socio-cultural impacts. They agreed that tourism has changed the way of life of people by following the Western culture in their dress, behaviour and food (Mean = 3.52). The local residents are of the view that the most affected are the youth and local tour guides as indicated by one villager:

"…the only problem is the behaviour of our young boys, mainly tour guides and vendors of arts and crafts at Cape Maclear. The behaviour of these boys is not in line with our culture, their dressing and language has totally changed due to the western tourists' influence."

This is consistent with Mathieson and Wall (1982) and Brunt and Courtney (1999) who indicate that a demonstration effect can accompany tourism development whereby local residents imitate the way of life of tourists. The local population's aspirations to the material standards and values of tourists lead to copying of tourists' consumption patterns and the young members of the community are more susceptible to this demonstration effect (Mbaiwa, 2005). The demonstration effect can be viewed to be beneficial if the local residents are motivated to get better education to improve their living standards (Shaw & Williams, 2002).

The local residents agreed that tourism stimulates migration of people to a tourist area in search of jobs and other tourism related opportunities (Mean = 3.86). It was explained by one local resident that a good number of workers in tourist facilities and establishments in Mangochi come from other districts as most local residents do not have the minimum qualifications to secure most of the jobs on offer in the tourism industry.

The local residents were unsure about three negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism in the study area. The findings of the research show that the local respondents were not sure whether tourism denies local people access to the beaches (Mean = 3.14); whether tourism has led to an increase in prices of goods and services (Mean = 3.07); and whether tourism has increased prostitution and sexual permissiveness in the area (Mean = 2.83). The study area being a lakeshore destination where the lake is central to the local people's livelihood, access to the lake is important for the local people. The respondents were unsure as to whether the tourism development in the area is hindering access to the beaches or the lake for them.

On prostitution, the results indicate that the local residents are not sure whether tourism has increased prostitution in the area. It was explained by the local residents that it would not be proper to attribute prostitution in the area only to tourism as the study area is in a district with a higher level of sexual permissiveness compared to other districts in the country. Such permissiveness is mainly blamed on the traditional

initiation ceremonies for both boys and girls where it is alleged the youth are told they have matured and are ready to engage in sexual activities. This tradition has been widely criticised for encouraging early and underage marriages in the district. It was however, indicated that prostitutes move to the area as there is conducive infrastructure supporting their trade and most of their clients are domestic tourists. These are usually people working in both the public and private sectors who mostly visit the area to attend meetings and conferences. As noted by Mbaiwa (2005) in most developing countries, prostitution is common in areas visited by tourists hence hotels, lodges and night clubs can be assumed to be contributing to prostitution.

The results of this research contradict Lankford and Howard (1994) and Mbaiwa (2005) who indicate that tourism can increase crime in a tourist area as the respondents disagreed with this negative impact of tourism. The respondents also disagreed that tourism developments force people to be relocated from their traditional settlements. As explained by one of the local leaders:

> *"...no traditional settlements have been relocated due to tourism developments. For example, here at Chembe Village (in Cape Maclear), we are an enclave village within the Lake Malawi National Park; we have not been moved by any tourism developments…..those selling their customary land to tourism entrepreneurs are doing so at their own will, nobody is forcing them…. And what you will see is that they only sell a portion of their land and continue living on the other part, they are not leaving the village at all."*

The respondents also disagreed that tourism development has led to a loss of objectivity of local traditions. It was explained by one local resident that although Mangochi has significant tourism development, the culture and traditions of the Yao people have not been affected in anyway. It was noted that the local people in the area have a strong belief in following their traditions as evidenced by the strict adherence to initiation ceremonies for both boys and girls. Although that is the case, traditional dance performances for tourists at various accommodation units in Mangochi are now becoming a common feature. One of the most commonly performed traditional dances for tourists is the 'Gule Wamkulu'. Gule Wamkulu is a ritual dance performed by members of the

Nyau brotherhood, a secret society of initiated men among the Chewa people. The fact that this traditional dance belongs to the Chewa people who are a minority in the district might explain the respondents' perception that tourism development has not led to any loss of objectivity of their local traditions.

Cohen (2004) defines commodification as a process by which things and activities are evaluated in monetary value in a trade context thereby becoming goods and services. Although tourism can improve cultural values and activities in a destination (Oviedo-Garcia, Castellanos, & Martin-Ruiz, 2008) it may have a corrupting effect on culture. Tourism can cheapen artistic values or commercialise local traditions and customs through activities such as the performance of religious, historical, or traditional ceremonies on demand, out of context and for monetary reward (Pearce, 1989). As a result, commoditisation leads to the organisation of pseudo-events which are planned, designed to be performed to order by tourists and have minimal relationship to the elements on which they are based (Mason, 2008). It was explained by one local community respondent that "*most of the people who perform GuleWamkulu are not initiated members of the Nyau brotherhood but only perform for tourists to get money*".

The other negative socio-cultural impact of tourism which emerged from the in-depth interviews could prove to be volatile for the sector and the area as it encompasses traces of racism and exploitation of local workers by foreign owners of tourism establishments. One villager explained that:

"*…the other problem emerging now is racism and exploitation of workers; there are conflicts here [Cape Maclear] between local people and foreign lodge owners with racist's remarks and practices being the major concern for us. These foreign lodge owners favour fellow foreigners in jobs which can ably be done by local people and those who are lucky to be employed are mostly treated unfairly and underpaid.*"

The emergence of racism and exploitation of local workers in the area supports the findings of Mbaiwa (2005) who noted racism among foreign tourism operators in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. Racism is among other things, characterised by foreign operators discriminating

against locals, unfair treatment and unfair dismissal of local workers by foreign employers and the unpleasant working conditions local people that they are subjected to by employers.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined local residents' perceptions towards socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Mangochi, a tourist destination in Malawi. The literature review identified several impacts of tourism as a result of tourism development and the tourist–host interrelationships. A concurrent triangulation strategy was used to determine the perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the local communities.

The local residents perceive that the tourism development is creating employment opportunities, improving local peoples' incomes, and stimulating the local economy. Residents in Mangochi also agreed that tourism has improved security in their local communities. However, the local residents agreed that tourism has changed their way of life, with some people, particularly the youth population, following western cultural norms and values in terms of their dress, food and behaviour. Tourism was also perceived to have stimulated migration of people to Mangochi in search for jobs and related tourism opportunities.

As noted by Jurowski and Gursoy's (2004) research on residents' perceptions towards tourism and its effects will continue to be of interest as the sustainability of tourism development is highly dependent on local people's goodwill. Therefore, the findings highlighted in this paper can assist tourism planners and local authorities in the planning and implementation of tourism development strategies for the area aiming at consolidating local residents' support for tourism. It is appropriate to know residents' perceptions on tourism impacts in order to incorporate community reaction into tourism planning and development. Therefore, future research could focus on examining the factors that affect local residents' participation in tourism.

The gradual development of tourism in Mangochi is highly commendable as the local communities have time to adapt to the development but there is great need for the local communities to be educated about tourism and learn how best to participate in its benefits. The Government tourism planners should introduce tourism awareness programmes for local residents to let them know about the concepts,

benefits and problems of local tourism development. Furthermore, the Government should start involving the local communities in Mangochi in the tourism planning process to ensure that the development is sensitive to its social and cultural impacts. It should be noted that given the opportunity local communities can organize and represent themselves effectively such that their contributions in the planning process could be vital (Brohman, 1996).

The Government through the Department of Tourism should have control of tourism developments in the area to ensure that only appropriate tourism facilities and establishments are constructed and opened in the area. There is currently no restriction or control on the type of tourism facilities being opened in the area as there are no tourism zoning regulations in place. There is need to preserve the local architectural styles and encourage new tourism developments to use similar styles as advocated by Inskeep (1994) as a way of conserving culture and traditions. In order to enhance tourism benefits for the local people, the Government should consider educating the local communities in Mangochi on home stays; a pilot project in one of the villages would be ideal for a start. The private sector operating in the tourism sector should also be encouraged to support the home stay concept. Further to this, the private sector and Government should collaborate to support the local communities by constructing some infrastructure (e.g. curio stalls or shops) for the local communities where they can be selling their arts and crafts to tourists. This would improve local people's access to tourists when they want to sell their products to them.

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