

Tourism and the Economic Challenges of Mahikeng: A Residents' Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Tourism, once it secured high-level deliberation, can be a mechanism of growth driving economic prosperity. The South African government maintains tourism's status as key strategic area and devised the National Tourism Sector Strategy aimed at increasing domestic tourism. Mahikeng is the provincial capital city and seat of the North West government who also proclaimed tourism as a strategic area for development. However, very little is known about Mahikeng's almost non-existing tourism industry and its developmental potential as contributor to the alleviation of the economic challenges faced by local stakeholders. A major stakeholder for generating the economic value of tourism is the active involvement of the local community, and the focus of this study is on residents. A synthesis of industry occurrences and literature led to the conceptualization of this study. A qualitative descriptive survey was undertaken and 303 residents participated in this survey to obtain an impression of residents' perspective of tourism and its development. Residents expressed that they are not really aware of tourism facilities (43%) but conveyed that support for tourism development is vital for success (74%). An overwhelming percentage of respondents, 80%, strongly agreed that they indeed would patronage the development of tourism, and this should spur public and private stakeholders to consider tourism as a means of addressing the economic challenges of Mahikeng.

KEYWORDS

Tourism, strategic development, residents,
destination marketing, marketing

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Introduction

Tourism is nothing new, however, it progressively captures increased attention and thus necessitates consideration, probably due to its escalating economic value. Tourism is a dynamic universal phenomenon and is undeniably a significant contributor towards the economic welfare of numerous (if not most or most likely all) countries. However, local communities must be receptive and active participants (World Bank, 2013:3) before tourism can be economically beneficial, because tourism is an activity that "affects the entire community" (Local Economic Development (LED); Steyns). This links up with what the Director General of the Department of Tourism in South Africa categorically said: "domestic tourism is the backbone of any economy" (Manyathi, 2012:27). The dynamic nature of tourism precipitates into perpetual change and this compels continual research.

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Tourism can be viewed from different perspectives and the focus of this paper is on the micro perspective – domestic (local) tourism as a mechanism that can make a substantial contribution towards devising strategies and plans for alleviating the economic challenges of Mahikeng as provincial capital city.

The magnitude of tourism (specifically local and domestic tourism), tourism development, and destination marketing are embracing themes that cannot be apportioned in one single paper or presentation. The focus of this study is on residents' perspective of the value of tourism for developmental purposes and the specific objectives are:

- To obtain an understanding of the composition of the research population in terms of specific demographic descriptors.
- To obtain an indication of residents' perspective of tourism's contribution towards alleviating the economic challenges of Mahikeng.
- To ascertain if there are any relationships between the composition descriptors of the residents and their perspective of tourism development.

This paper commenced with an introduction to the study topic and continues with a synoptic literature review. This is followed by an explanation of the research methods and data analysis techniques used. Succeeding is a presentation of the research results obtained and then a discussion of the main findings, the theoretical and managerial implications, and the recommendations emanating from this study. The paper terminates with a final conclusion.

Literature Review

Global travel and tourism is a formidable force and generated an astounding US\$7.6 trillion (10% of GDP) and accounted for 277 million jobs of the global economy in 2014 (World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), 2013, 2015). The WTTC analyses the economic value of industries on three levels (direct, indirect, and the induced) and the WTTC 2015 Annual Economic Report further indicates that the total contribution of travel and tourism in 2014 was ZAR357.0 billion (9.4% of the GDP) in South Africa and this is estimated to increase to 10.4% by 2025, whilst investment in tourism will increase from ZAR60.5 billion in 2014 to ZAR76.0 billion in 2025. The World Bank (2013) pronounced that tourism is: "a powerful vehicle for economic growth and job creation all over the world" and predicted that the tourism industry in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) alone could yield an additional 3.8 million jobs, and this includes 2.4 million indirect jobs, over the next ten years. The main advantage of tourism is its catalytic effect across the economy because of its multi-sectorial nature (influencing the development of small businesses across an array of industries). In addition to this, tourism "provides an economic base for a region whose only development options are its cultural and natural resources" (World Bank, 2013), such as South Africa, the North West, and/or Mahikeng.

Tourism should be acknowledged as a dynamic development option by all Sub-Saharan African countries (which includes most of the Southern African Developing Community (SADC) member-countries) because returns on investment in Africa are among the highest in the world and the SSA-region has been indicated by the World Bank as being on the edge of an economic take off.

Tourism statistics records an unceasing escalation in international tourism arrival figures since the political changes in South Africa in 1994 (Industrial

Development Corporation (IDC), 2014) and the largest source of tourism arrivals is still the African continent. Special attention is also afforded to building domestic tourism. The 2014 Annual Tourism Report (South Africa Tourism (SAT), 2015) provides the following insightful information. An 11% increase was recorded for domestic trips (28 million) for 2014 and the average trips per person increased from 2.1 in 2013 to 2.3 in 2014. The Domestic Direct Spend recorded was ZAR26.8 billion with a December high. The types of trips South Africans undertook domestically in 2014 amounted to 39% intra-provincial and 61% inter-provincial. South Africans travel domestically mostly for socializing purposes (83%) and this is followed by 33% who travel for shopping purposes. The mode of transport most often used is the mini-bus taxi. The North West as province generated 75% of its domestic tourism from Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) and 17% for holidaying purposes. When asked why citizens do not partake in domestic tourism, most respondents indicated that they cannot afford it and a concern is that this reason exhibits an increasing trend from 2013 to 2015.

National and provincial marketing campaigns contribute towards realizing projected domestic tourism figures. One outstanding initiative to foster a domestic tourism culture amongst formerly excluded black communities in South Africa was invented and coined 'Sho't Left, diva'. This is South African taxi lingo for: I want to jump off just around the corner (Southafric.info), a venture aimed at increasing the revenue and volumes of domestic tourism. However, there are provinces and destinations who do not gain by the elevated tourism figures and North West as province achieved only fifth place out of the nine South African provinces in 2014.

The mainstay of the economy of the North West is mining, which generates more than half of the province's GDP and provides jobs for a quarter of its workforce. The northern and western parts of the province have many sheep farms, and cattle and game ranches. The eastern and southern parts of the province are crop-growing regions that produce maize (corn), sunflower, tobacco, cotton and citrus fruits.

Provincial governments' reform and restructuring is now a common feature of many economies, influenced by the social and economic developments streaming from globalisation and neoliberalism. On 27 June 2014, the Premier of the North West, Mr Supra Mahumapelo, gave the State of the Province Address. The Premier, on the first session of the fifth legislature of the North West, gave special mention to the importance of tourism as an economic sector that could uplift the economy of the province. The purpose is to enhance focus, delivery and accountability and to turn the North West into a prime tourism destination in South Africa. The underdeveloped regions of the North West can greatly benefit from tourism development. Four of the regions contain areas of scenic beauty and cultural attractions, and these are the Bojanala (the eastern region), Ngaka Modiri Molema (in the north/central region where Mahikeng is located), Dr Kenneth Kaunda (the southern region), and Dr Ruth S. Mompati (the western region). These areas, if developed for tourism purposes, could bring abundant prosperity to the local people. Tourism development in these regions could be a significant contribution towards redressing regional imbalances in employment and income. Tourists' expenditure at a particular tourism area greatly helps the development of such an area, for example creating employment.



The North West has in certain areas a sophisticated tourism industry, being home to the Sun City complex that is next to the Pilanesburg National Park, attracting the bulk of the province's international tourists, as well as Hartbeespoort Dam with its adventure activities such as the Aerial Cableway and many more. Tourism growth and development are skewed towards Bojanala (the eastern side of the province) with its striking tourism components (hotels, infrastructure, leisure and business activities) and scenic landscape, attracting tourists from different segments. The development of tourism and infrastructure in other regions of the province will prolong tourism's product life cycle in the province and enhance the competitive position of the North West in comparison to the other provinces in South Africa. Destination managers could divert the development of tourism to other regions of the province, such as towards the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality in Mahikeng, the Capital City of the North West. This can be achieved by combining the resources of all tourism stakeholders, investing in the development of Mahikeng, and formulating marketing strategies that will build awareness, create interest, provide information, and stimulate demand and support firstly among local residents. The North West Tourism Board announced that stakeholder meetings with sector players are scheduled to start taking place as from May 2016 (Torera, 2016).

Sustainable tourism development rests on the premise that domestic tourism is of vital importance (Patuelli et al., 2013) and that the local community is a pivotal stakeholder in the sustainable tourism development process. It is the local community who must be receptive of intruding outsiders for tourism to be a beneficial contributor towards dealing with the economic problems of Mahikeng, its role-players, and the community at large. The potential of domestic tourism cannot be overlooked as doing so would be to discount the Manila Declaration on World Tourism where it was decided in 1980 that "the development of tourism from abroad should be accompanied by a similar effort to expand domestic tourism." (World Tourism Organisation (WTO), 1980). The importance of domestic tourism is reflected in the Domestic Tourism Strategy and the Rural Tourism Strategy of South Africa, which are direct results of the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) and the Tourism White Paper of 1996 (South Africa Tourism, 2016).

The developmental process of tourism includes the identification of stakeholders as part of the initial phases of the process as explained in the Australian Steps to Sustainable Tourism guide (2004) and Morrison (2013) indicates that the community is one of the indirect stakeholders in destination management. However, the community as in this study forms the primary target market because domestic tourism is the precursor to destination development for national/domestic and international tourists. This is in line with Ko and Stewart (2002) and Wang and Pfister (2008) who all profess that tourism planners should endeavor to earn residents' support and thus create a favourable attitude. This will then lead to residents supporting additional tourism development, accepting restrictions on tourism development, and supporting special tourism taxes. Tourism development, as explained by Andereck and Nyaupane (2010) furthermore influences individuals' Quality of Life (QoL) and residents can greatly benefit through festivals, restaurants, natural and cultural attractions, and outdoor recreation opportunities whilst experiencing a higher standard of living, increased job opportunities, as well as the economic benefits of increased tax revenues reinvested into further development.

Nevertheless, Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria (2011) specifically stated that not all destinations are equally able to attract or retain domestic tourists from other regions of a country and thus should plan its development and management strategically. The reason being that destinations will be successful “only if there is a high-quality product to sell that is competitive in value and not just in price”, according to the World Bank (2013) whom also stressed that sustainable tourism development rests on four pillars and the community focus of each pillar is: (1) financial – acceptance of tourism by the local population; (2) economic – tourism as catalyst for entrepreneurial activity; (3) environmental – protecting local natural assets from degradation; and lastly, (4) social – to extend the benefits of tourism to the poor and to local communities. Hou and Huang (2010) proposed that community involvement should be evaluated in terms of the entropy weight theory in terms of planning and decision-making; income apportionment; environmental protection; and lastly participation in tourism operations and management. This proposition calls for a transformation of the destination management systems in use, to be people-orientated, and this is in close relation to the four pillar-concept of the World Bank. Key and Pillai (2011) conducted research in Belize and recommend that ethnic identities should not be ignored when attempting to establish broad-based support for tourism as an economic activity, and this could be very applicable to Mahikeng with its different communities.

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was explored by Spencer (2010) in an experiment to involve American Indians in tourism planning and this proved to be successful and could be considered for the development of community involvement in Mahikeng. A study conducted by Eshliki and Kaboudi (2011) confirmed that tourism does influence the quality of life of local community members and their level of participation in tourism, and this can be used as a selling proposition to get the community of Mahikeng not only involved by active partners in tourism development.

Zhang and Lei (2012) recommend that the involvement of local communities should be spawned through appropriate management strategies aimed at increasing local people’s environmental knowledge, encouraging positive attitudes, and promoting residents’ affinity for local attractions. Another study undertaken by Lee (2013) assessed the support of community residents for sustainable tourism development using the latent variables of community attachment, community involvement, perceived benefits, perceived costs, and support for sustainable tourism development and suggests that community attachment and community involvement are critical factors affecting community attachment and involvement. A study undertaken in Mahikeng by Prinsloo and Pelser (2015) found that the local populace can be divided into two clusters, one exhibiting a highly positive attitude towards tourism and another group as neutral. What is reassuring is that no negative cluster surfaced and this converts in noteworthy news for the development of tourism.

However, Stynes (s.a.) specifically said that there is sometimes a “distorted and incomplete understanding of tourism’s economic effects” and provided a list of seven different types of economic analysis that should be conducted and these are: economic impact analysis, fiscal impact analysis, financial analysis, demand analysis, benefit cost analysis, feasibility analysis, and an environmental impact analysis. The purpose of this study was not to do any economic analysis but to



determine if tourism would be a viable instrument in dealing with the economic challenges of Mahikeng, as seen from the local community's perspective.

Following is a synopsis of the research methods followed for the purpose of this study.

Method of Research

This study is within the realms of the interpretive philosophy with a deductive approach to study respondents' perspective and the relationships between them and it is a mono method qualitative study. A descripto-explanatory research design, as described by Saunders et al. (2016), was followed to be able to draw conclusions from the data obtained and to establish if there are any causal relationships between variables. This study commenced with an intensive investigation of available and accessible secondary sources to obtain and extract relevant information needed and an extension of this was an exhaustive search of electronic databases on local/domestic tourism and residents' perspective on tourism's development. However, information deficiency necessitated primary empirical research. Thus, a quantitative survey was conducted in order to establish if residents are aware of tourism in Mahikeng and what their perspectives are.

The research population (N) targeted were all residents within the municipal boundaries of Mahikeng (of which 75% is classified as being rural) during the course of this survey. However, it was due to various limitations not possible to obtain or construct a sample frame and the ideal then is to follow a non-probability convenience sampling method and sample members were selected according to their convenient accessibility and close proximity to the researcher (Kumar, 2014). A total number of 365 questionnaires were distributed and 303 were incorporated after initial editing. To be able to facilitate the grouping of data for comparison purposes, the following parameters applied: respondents were to be fairly distributed among males and females, respondents must be over the age of 18 (for ethical purposes), and sample members ideally ranged from all age and income groups. Residents were the study subjects and sample drawing excluded tourists from other regions, provinces, and also international tourists in Mahikeng during the course of this survey.

A questionnaire was regarded as the most appropriate research instrument because of its potential to collect large amounts of data in a short period of time and in a relative cost effective way. The data obtained could also be analysed scientifically and objectively and the questionnaire was developed in an interactive style, as recommended by Kumar (2014:178). The questionnaires were edited before being coded and the data was then captured unto an electronic spreadsheet for statistical analysis.

Following is a presentation of the research results that emanated from the data analysis.

Research Results

The findings of this study are presented in the form of discussions and tables. It should be noted that responding to all the questions was not mandatory thus affecting 'n' to fluctuate in cases where respondents did not provide a response.

Description of Research Population

A description of the residents who participated in this study was obtained to better understand the study population and these descriptors also form the bases for comparative statistical analysis. Table 1 presents the descriptors and statistics of the residents who participated in this survey.

Table 1. Research population description

Descriptor	Frequency (%)	Statistics
Gender		Mode - 1
Male	58	
Female	42	
Age group		Median - 2.00
- 20	10.6	Observed minimum/maximum - ¼
21 - 40	51.8	
41 - 60	30.4	
60 - +	7.3	
Marital status		Mode - 1
Single	47.2	
Married	44.6	
Divorced	4.6	
Widow(er)	3.6	
Educational level		Median - 4.00
No schooling	0.7	Observed minimum/maximum - 1/5
Primary	0.3	
High school	20.1	
Post-school	77.2	
Other	1.7	
Occupational status		Mode - 2
Student	16.5	
Employed	47.5	
Own business	21.5	
Unemployed	8.6	
Retired	4.0	
Other	2.0	
Residing in Mafikeng		Median - 3.00
Up to 5 years	8.9	Observed minimum/maximum - 1/3
5 - 10 years	15.8	
10 years +	75.28	
Times visited tourism		Median - 3.00
None	18.8	Observed minimum/maximum - 1/4
1	30.4	
2	24.4	
3+	26.4	

The sample consisted of 177 males and 126 females and their median age ranged between 21 to 40 years and the age distribution is positively skewed ($G_1=0.343$) because only 37.7% of the respondents were 41 or more years of age. The standard deviation (SD) for age is 0.764, meaning that 68.3% of the occurrences falls within -1 to +1 of the Mean (M). Slightly more respondents are single (47.2%) than married (44.6%). Qualification level is negatively skewed ($G_1=-1.849$) as cumulatively only 21.1% of the respondents indicated a qualification at a lower level. Being employed accounted for the largest quantity of participants (47.5%) whilst the number of years respondents have been residing



in Mafikeng is negatively skewed ($G_1 = -0.034$) with a cumulative percentage of only 24.7 for up to 10 years. The SD recorded is .036 and this implies that 68.3% of the occurrences falls within -1 to +1 of M. The number of times a tourism destination has been visited over the last two years ranges from none (18.8%) to 3 or more times (26.4%) with once only as the most mentioned at 30.4%. M amounts to 2.58 and SD reported is 1.073 and this means that 95.4% of the occurrences falls between -2 and +2 SDs from M.

The above information provides a description of the research population, as well as the central tendency and variability (dispersion) of the participants. This provides an indication of who the residents as potential stakeholders in the development of tourism in Mahikeng are.

Residents' Perspective of Tourism and its Development

A set of 12 statements were used in a Likert scale format to determine residents' perspective of the value of tourism as a contributing alleviator to the economic challenges of Mahikeng. The Likert scale provided a response range from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). A four-point Likert rating scale was used to prevent respondents from simply selecting the mean (a neutral middle category) and thus 'compelled' respondents to select a certain tendency, either positive or negative. The results obtained are indicated in Table 2.

The statistics presented in Table 2 indicate that residents are of the opinion that tourism and its development will be beneficial to addressing the economic challenges of Mahikeng in terms of creating tourism awareness ($M = 1.18$), improving infrastructure ($M = 1.21$), cultivating residents' support ($M = 1.43$), tourism success is dependent on resident involvement ($M = 1.40$), tourism contributes toward the development of local business ($M = 1.34$), and realising the importance of partnerships in development initiatives ($M = 1.33$). Attention should be paid to developing tourism products which provide residents with value for money ($M = 2.09$) and building the image of Mahikeng as a tourism destination ($M = 2.98$) as this hinges on being negative. It is disquieting to note that residents have negative perspectives of the marketing and availability of tourism related information ($M = 3.09$ and 3.11 respectively, 3=Disagree).

Cross-tabulations between the research population descriptors and the listed statements as per Table 2 were conducted and the result of the Pearson Chi Square test of independence is an indication of if observed frequencies differ from expected frequencies where $p \leq 0.05$ indicates that the probability is less than 5% on any one test that the frequency is equally distributed across all categories by chance alone. Thus, the conclusion is that there is a significant difference and the following patterns emerged (see Annexure A). The pattern for the research population descriptors are: the highest number of significant differences reported are for the number of times residents have visited tourism facilities in Mahikeng (x7) and this is followed by educational status. The least number of significant differences are reported for occupation (x1) and how long respondents have been residing in Mahikeng (x2). Likewise, the pattern for the list of statements are: highest number of statistical differences are reported for ease of accessing tourism information and tourism is a tool for supporting the development of local businesses (both obtained 4 significant differences) and five of the statements each recorded only one significant difference and four of these is in terms of the number of times a tourism facility has been visited.

Table 2. Supporting tourism: a residents' perspective

Please evaluate the following reason for or not supporting tourism in Mahikeng	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	STD
1. Awareness of tourism facilities will lead to more support by residents.	84%	16%	0%	1%	1.18	0.44
2. There is adequate marketing or marketing strategy for tourism in Mahikeng.	3%	16%	50%	31%	3.09	0.77
3. Tourism information is easily accessible.	3%	16%	49%	33%	3.11	0.76
4. Sufficient information about tourism provided through social networks etc. to create awareness amongst residents.	6%	37%	34%	24%	2.76	0.88
5. There are various tourism activities in Mahikeng (safaris, casinos, picnic sites, clubbing, packaged tours).	18%	39%	26%	17%	2.41	0.97
6. Infrastructure, facilities, transport, entertainment centres, and level of service require major attention to enhance tourism satisfaction.	83%	14%	2%	1%	1.21	0.52
7. Mahikeng has a positive image as a tourism destination amongst residents.	3%	17%	58%	22%	2.98	0.72
8. The tourism products and services in Mahikeng provide value for money.	20%	54%	23%	3%	2.09	0.74
9. The development and support of tourism in Mahikeng needs support and involvement of the local residents.	59%	39%	1%	1%	1.43	0.56
10. The tourism industry is dependent on resident involvement (through the role as employees, local entrepreneurs, and on resident goodwill towards tourists).	63%	35%	2%	1%	1.40	0.56
11. Tourism is a tool to support the development of formal and informal sectors (agriculture and crafts).	69%	30%	1%	1%	1.34	0.53
12. Partnership and collaboration between all role players is critical in the development of sustainable tourism (public and private entities, tourism authorities, and local residents).	70%	29%	1%	1%	1.33	0.53

An independent group sample t-test at a 95% confidence level was conducted and the results obtained indicate that females are slightly more negative than their male counterparts in their responses to the entire list of statements, except for their perspective on the image of Mahikeng where equal means are reported ($M=2.98$). The standard deviation are in all cases below that of the mean and this implies that the results obtained is an accurate representation of the data.

Levine's test for equality of variances indicates that $p \leq .05$ for three of the statements and equal variances can thus not be assumed that awareness alone will result in more support for tourism; that tourism facilities do provide value for money; and that tourism is a developmental tool for business. The t-test for equality of means results further indicate that the probability is greater than 5% that the two groups do not differ for seven of the twelve statements because $p = n.s.$ (nonsignificant) and this is in congruence by the absence of 0 between the lower and upper limits. The t-test established that males are more positive towards tourism as a contributor in terms of the economic development and prosperity of Mahikeng. The reasons for this pattern needs to be further investigated.

The bivariate Pearson correlation 'r' was conducted to measure the strength and direction of possible linear relationships amongst the residents' descriptors



and their perspective of tourism as a contributor towards alleviating the economic challenges of Mahikeng (see Annexure B). The following two-tailed correlations at a 95% confidence level are reported for the research population descriptors: only one moderate to large ($.5 < |r|$) as per Adams and Lawrence (2015:234) and Saunders et al. (2016:545)) positive linear relationship ($r = .570$, $p = .001$) is reported for age and marital status and one small ($.0 < |r| < .3$) positive linear relationship between the length of time a resident has been staying in Mahikeng compared to the number of times tourism facilities have been visited ($r = .120$, $p = .038$). Two moderate ($.3 < |r| < .5$) positive linear relationships at a 99% confidence level is reported between occupation and age and marital status, and this is followed by four small positive linear relationships and one decreasing (negative) small linear relationship between educational level and occupation ($r = -.176$, $p = .002$).

In terms of residents' perspective as to the value and contribution of tourism towards the economy and prosperity of Mahikeng, the following linear relationships emerged. Three small decreasing (opposite) linear relationships are reported for age with all three of the statements dealing with information and this indicates that more importance is placed on information as a resident ages. The number of times tourism facilities has been visited reported the most occurrences of decreasing linear relationships for six of the statements, the three information statements plus the number of tourism facilities and the value derived from visiting these facilities. Pearson's r further revealed that the most occurrences of linear relationships surfaced for the following statements in descending order: six positive relationships (three large and three small) for the value of partnerships and collaboration; and this is followed by five positive relationships each for infrastructure, require more information and tourism is a tool for business development. It is interesting to note that only two small negative linear relationships emerged, one for adequate marketing and awareness ($r = -.155$, $p = .007$) and one for development requires major attention and adequate information ($r = -.223$, $p = .001$).

Conclusion

Tourism is an amalgamation of five different economic sectors and role players from all sectors collectively contribute towards the development of tourism as a tool to alleviate the economic challenges of a destination. Especially if tourism could make a substantial contribution towards the well-being and prosperity of the residents of a destination, as in Mahikeng. Subsequently is a presentation of the managerial implications of this study and this is tailed by recommendations emanating from the findings and the implications.

Management Implications

This study did not endeavor to do an all-encompassing analysis of the economic value of tourism to the residents of Mahikeng but set out to obtain an indication of residents' perspective in terms of how they regard and value tourism and its development. If residents are not in favour of developmental initiatives then it would be a major challenge to influence residents and change their attitude, thus the importance for researching the perspectives of residents.

This study purposively included mature respondents whom are regarded as the economically active consumers (82% between 21 and 60 years of age, 98% with a high school or higher level of education and this is in line with the results of the

Prinsloo and Pelser (2015) study, and 69% having a secure income and this is in line with the Prinsloo and Pelser finding of 73%) who mostly have been residing in Mahikeng for 10 years or more (75%) and whom have visited tourism facilities more than once (81%) over the last two years. This description of the research population thus provides evidence that the results obtained can be regarded as valid, reliable, and relevant to this study.

The varying mean of responses pertaining to the statements provided in the Likert scale indicates that respondents did consider their responses before answering and the results obtained are thus accepted as a true reflection of residents' perspective of tourism and its development as a contributor towards alleviating the economic challenges of Mahikeng. The overall impression is that residents are positively predisposed towards tourism and susceptible towards its development. There are, however, tourism-related areas and concerns requiring immediate high-level attention.

Recommendations

As a point of departure, an awareness campaign needs to be devised to inform residents of current and existing tourism facilities. This should ideally take place within the realms of a partnership between the role-players from the public and private sector. This should then be taken further by increasing the value-perspective of tourism facilities by improving the visual appeal and infrastructure to and at tourism facilities. Added to this is establishing channels of communication through which residents can obtain information and this links up with creating awareness. This should then be followed by establishing formal partnerships and involving the local community as a roll-player in the strategic and sustainable development of tourism as a tool to alleviate the economic challenges of Mahikeng. It is important for residents to regard themselves as a co-owner of tourism and the prosperity it will bring to Mahikeng. Then only will residents support tourism and contribute towards the development of the image of Mahikeng, which can then ultimate be exported to attract domestic tourists from other provinces, and an expected extension of this will be to progress to the international tourism arena.

The focus of this study was on residents in Mahikeng and was undertaken with the purpose to obtain an indication of residents' perspective of the role tourism can play in dealing with the economic challenges of Mahikeng. Ideally this study should be extended to include a larger sample over a larger geographical area, should time and finances not be an issue, as well as to expand research into exploring the economic value of tourism and its contribution towards dealing with the provincial economic challenges in the North West as a province.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

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Annexure A

Pearson's Chi Square: Research population versus residents' perspective of tourism participation ($X^2(df)$, $p=$)

Statement (see Table 2)	Gender	Age	Marital	Education	Occupation	How long	How many times
1.	5.958 (3), $p=.114$	7.298 (9), $p=.606$	13.107 (9), $p=.158$	4.360 (12), $p=.976$	14.878 (15), $p=.460$	7.481 (6), $p=.279$	17.515 (9), $p=.041$
2.	2.108 (3), $p=.550$	13.054 (9), $p=.160$	8.968 (9), $p=.440$	18.214 (12), $p=.109$	10.049 (15), $p=.817$	4.568 (6), $p=.600$	22.006 (9), $p=.009$
3.	6.451 (3), $p=.092$	17.658 (9), $p=.039$	10.468 (9), $p=.314$	10.129 (12), $p=.605$	17.346 (15), $p=.299$	3.132 (6), $p=.792$	15.788 (9), $p=.071$
4.	2.404 (3), $p=.493$	13.811 (9), $p=.129$	12.263 (9), $p=.199$	11.573 (12), $p=.481$	18.376 (15), $p=.243$	4.618 (6), $p=.594$	17.507 (9), $p=.041$
5.	10.208 (3), $p=.017$	14.803 (9), $p=.096$	7.441 (9), $p=.591$	23.566 (12), $p=.023$	27.071 (15), $p=.028$	7.300 (6), $p=.294$	19.856 (9), $p=.019$
6.	.410 (3), $p=.938$	8.077 (9), $p=.526$	12.881 (9), $p=.168$	5.068 (12), $p=.956$	11.716 (15), $p=.700$	3.052 (6), $p=.802$	23.325 (9), $p=.006$
7.	.594 (3), $p=.898$	6.665 (9), $p=.672$	4.240 (9), $p=.895$	26.508 (12), $p=.009$	16.557 (15), $p=.346$	6.561 (6), $p=.363$	19.339 (9), $p=.022$
8.	11.188 (3), $p=.011$	16.936 (9), $p=.050$	6.606 (9), $p=.687$	17.699 (12), $p=.125$	13.762 (15), $p=.544$	1.608 (6), $p=.952$	31.347 (9), $p=.000$
9.	4.418 (3), $p=.220$	6.198 (9), $p=.720=$	18.722 (9), $p=.028$	44.745 (12), $p=.000$	14.657 (15), $p=.476$	3.011 (6), $p=.807$	14.404 (9), $p=.109$
10.	6.468 (3), $p=.091$	5.293 (9), $p=.808$	16.853 (9), $p=.051$	49.924 (12), $p=.000$	19.800 (15), $p=.180$	4.798 (6), $p=.570$	12.724 (9), $p=.176$
11.	7.894 (3), $p=.048$	12.047 (9), $p=.211$	20.924 (9), $p=.013$	21.863 (12), $p=.039$	23.867 (15), $p=.067$	12/744 (6), $p=.047$	8.784 (9), $p=.457$
12.	1.485 (3), $p=.686$	8.083 (9), $p=.526$	11.224 (9), $p=.261$	3.617 (12), $p=.989$	9.766 (15), $p=.834$	13.396 (6), $p=.037$	13.318 (9), $p=.149$

Annexure B

Pearson's correlation coefficient (*r*): Research population versus residents' perspective of tourism participation (*r*=, *p*=), sig=two tailed, N=303

Variable	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Gender V1	<i>r</i> Sig.	1																	
Age V2	<i>r</i> Sig.	.007 .909	1																
Marital status V3	<i>r</i> Sig.	.087 .132	.570 [*] .000	1															
Education V4	<i>r</i> Sig.	.049 .397	-.035 .542	-.042 .469	1														
Occupation V5	<i>r</i> Sig.	-.011 .849	.483 ^{**} .000	.358 ^{**} .000	-.176 [*] .002	1													
How long resident V6	<i>r</i> Sig.	-.027 .636	.225 ^{**} .000	.149 ^{**} .009	-.027 .643	.150 ^{**} .009	1												
How many times visited V7	<i>r</i> Sig.	-.054 .351	.082 .156	-.044 .445	.158 ^{**} .006	-.081 .157	.120 [*] .038	1											
1 - more support	<i>r</i> Sig.	.123 [*] .032	.089 .120	.086 .136	.009 .872	.000 .995	-.112 .052	.034 .555	1										
2 - marketing	<i>r</i> Sig.	.033 .568	-.114 [*] .047	.003 .957	-.020 .730	.038 .513	-.020 .732	-.196 ^{**} .001	-.155 ^{**} .007	1									
3 - info easily	<i>r</i> Sig.	.131 [*] .023	-.123 [*] .032	-.018 .760	-.086 .137	.003 .959	-.052 .371	-.153 ^{**} .008	-.090 .118	.812 ^{**} .000	1								



Continued

Variable	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
4 - information	r	.087	-.113*	-.009	.012	.060	-.039	-.138*	-.083	.659**	.681**	1								
	Sig.	.132	.049	.874	.835	.299	.499	.016	.149	.000	.000									
5 - activities	r	.180**	.041	.079	.085	.088	.049	-.162**	.141*	.332**	.357**	.477**	1							
	Sig.	.002	.482	.168	.140	.126	.398	.005	.014	.000	.000	.000								
6 - more attention	r	.018	.017	.023	.020	-.005	.066	.159**	.252**	-.223**	-.102	.054	.136*	1						
	Sig.	.755	.767	.694	.734	.934	.251	.006	.000	.000	.075	.348	.018							
7 - positive image	r	.005	-.072	.043	.025	.010	.014	-.100	-.051	.366**	.430**	.394**	.271**	-.095	1					
	Sig.	.937	.214	.457	.662	.857	.804	.081	.378	.000	.000	.000	.000	.098						
8 - value	r	.140*	.014	.005	.081	.030	.003	-.148**	.233**	.056	.076	.157**	.363**	.175**	.277**	1				
	Sig.	.015	.807	.925	.161	.608	.958	.010	.000	.334	.188	.006	.000	.002	.000					
9 - local residents	r	.114*	.031	.099	.080	-.010	-.008	-.036	.338**	-.051	-.005	.058	.085	.233**	.054	.362**	1			
	Sig.	.047	.587	.086	.167	.859	.884	.532	.000	.373	.925	.317	.140	.000	.349	.000				
10 - involvement	r	.080	-.012	.070	.114*	-.031	-.049	-.053	.375**	-.106	-.059	-.019	.104	.326**	-.087	.336**	.663**	1		
	Sig.	.165	.837	.223	.048	.596	.395	.354	.000	.065	.309	.740	.071	.000	.132	.000	.000			
11 - development	r	.083	.016	.059	.057	-.032	-.153**	-.119*	.358**	-.098	-.085	-.003	.083	.198**	-.086	.258**	.644**	.802**	1	
	Sig.	.150	.779	.303	.324	.575	.007	.038	.000	.089	.140	.958	.151	.001	.136	.000	.000	.000		
12 - role players	r	.061	-.057	.034	.037	-.071	-.154**	-.057	.397**	-.112	-.050	.020	.110	.268**	-.035	.245**	.595**	.787**	.865**	1
	Sig.	.288	.322	.559	.525	.220	.007	.320	.000	.051	.386	.725	.055	.000	.545	.000	.000	.000	.000	

Note: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)