



## Contribution of Wildlife Tourism Industry to Livelihoods and Economy

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### Abstract

The aim of the study was to come up with contribution of tourism industry in Kariba District. The study was carried out in Kariba District and a descriptive survey design was employed. A total of 120 participants were interviewed, given questionnaire and they attended focus group discussions. The researcher administered questionnaire and held interviews to help in the validation and triangulation of data. The data gathered were systematically presented in the form of tables, bar graphs and box plots. Results were analysed for ANOVA using IBM SPSS 25 and to get graphs. The results show that 67% of the participants were females and 33% were males. This shows that more females are involved in income generating projects in the study area. All local community participants (100%) and other participants indicated that wildlife tourism is the major source of employment for local people in Kariba district. Only 97.1% of business participants indicated that wildlife tourism promotes educational research. The results show that there was no significant difference between contributions of wildlife tourism with  $P>0.05$ . The government is recommended to come up with new policies which can be used to improve wildlife tourism in Zimbabwe at large as wildlife can be a major source of income generating projects.

**Keywords:** Contribution, Wildlife Tourism, Livelihoods, Economy

**JEL Classification:** Q1, Q2, Q17, Q25

**Paper Classification:** Research Paper

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### Introduction

Wildlife tourism has contributed greatly towards human livelihoods and economy of many countries if well managed. Tourism is one of the fastest growing business if management is proper leading to creation of employment; increase in food resources such as meat, fruits, water and vegetables (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2012). Tourism in Uganda is an important generator of foreign exchange, employment, and investment, with developments in adventure tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism (Okello, 2015, p.44). Wildlife tourism greatly promoted the growth of infrastructure such as schools, hotels, safari lodges which all created employment and increase-d revenue through tax payments. Kariba town in Zimbabwe is one of the examples of a town which benefited from wildlife tourism through infrastructure development. In Kenya,

most hotels are found in Wildlife Tourism centres (Okello, 2015, p.47). Wildlife tourism industry also benefited most countries through educational research. Educational research was promoted through wildlife research by University students, high school students who visited the resorts to gain educational information about wildlife animals, plants and other organisms (Wolmer, 2004, p.65). Local communities benefited from products such as medicines, meat and reeds which they used to make baskets which they sell to tourists and get income. Wildlife tourism is one source of income generation for local people as most of them will be employed to explain how wildlife animals move, behave and give ethnobotanical evidences to researchers (Scott, 2012, p.292).

## Literature Review

### Contribution of wildlife to human livelihoods and economy

The wildlife tourism contributed greatly to the human livelihoods and economy of many countries if well managed. The tourism is one of the fastest growing businesses if managed properly leading to creation of employment; increased food resources such as meat, fruits, water and vegetables (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2012). The tourism in Uganda is an important generator of foreign exchange, employment, and investment, with developments in adventure tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism (Okello, 2015). The wildlife tourism greatly promoted the growth of infrastructure such as schools, hotels, safari lodges which created employment and increased revenue through tax payments. Kariba town in Zimbabwe is one of the examples of a town which benefited from the wildlife tourism through infrastructure development. In Kenya, most of the hotels are found in Wildlife Tourism centres. The wildlife tourism industry also impacted many countries through educational researches. The educational researches were promoted through wildlife researches by University students, high schools which visited the resorts gain educational information about wildlife animals, plants and other organisms (Wolmer 2004, p.25). The local communities benefited from various products such as medicines, meat and reeds which they use to make baskets and sell to tourists and get income. The wildlife tourism is one of the income generation opportunities for the local people as most of them will be employed as guides who can explain as to how the wild animals move, behave and also giving ethnobotanical evidences to researchers (Scott, 2012, p.292).

### Importance of wildlife tourism in educational research

The wildlife tourism contributed immensely to educational research through various ways such as accommodating researchers in hotels and safaris. The wildlife tourism allows researchers to have a look on how the business is going about, acquiring information about different groups of people who visit the area for different purposes. Researchers from different organisations such as health, education, agriculture and non-governmental organisations acquire information about how the wildlife tourism is being run and what products are being explored from it. Agricultural researchers acquire information about animal diversity, trees diversity and even going beyond to study different soils which are found in the national parks and game reserves. This information provides them with a knowledge of animals' species, grass and tree species found in the areas and their nutritive value to animals.

## Methodology

### Study Area

The study was carried out in Kariba District. The study area is closer to Matusadona

National Park and Charara Safari Areas. The location of the area is 16°19'60" S and 29°0'0" E. The population is approximately 61 800. The Elevation is 971m. Temperatures in Kariba District range from 16°C (minimum) to a maximum of 32°C. Kariba district is mainly characterised by the wildlife resources such as fish, animals and tourist resort areas. The location of the study area is on Fig 3.1 which shows the map of Kariba District.

## Data collection Instruments

### Questionnaires

The researcher used open ended questionnaire to obtain information from the manager. These questionnaire were mainly to collect data on the challenges faced by wildlife tourism industry. The researcher opted for the questionnaire because it enabled respondents to answer questions at their own pace and time and as such it allowed for more considered answers. The drop-and-pick method was also used in obtaining data as it gave respondents ample time to go through the questionnaire. This allowed community members to answer the questionnaire during their free time. The questionnaire used were an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents. Often, it is the only feasible way to reach several reviewers large enough to allow statistical analysis of the results. A well-designed questionnaire that was used effectively gathered information on the overall challenges faced by wildlife tourism industry. The researcher used the questionnaire to collect data because of its applicability to survey research design. Questionnaire were used because they can be administered to many people at the same time, thus, ensuring a wide geographic coverage. The questionnaire was also used because there is a higher possibility of obtaining a reliable and valid information as there is limited biases. One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaire were distributed and all of them were responded due to the strict management done. Sixty- five (65) questionnaires were distributed to local communities; thirty-five (35) to business people and twenty (20) to other people who visited the area.

### Interview

An interview is defined as a planned conversation employed usually between two parties, that is, the interviewer and interviewee, during which questions are asked and answered orally. The researcher also used interviews to collect data from teachers as they provided an in-depth information about the research issue or system. The researcher used structured interviews to obtain information from the manager. The structured interviews were used in obtaining data from the teachers because the interviewer went on to probe deeper into the response given by an interviewee and produced a higher response rate. The interviews provide the researcher with instant feedback from the questions posed. In some cases, the researcher could simplify or clarify statements in the interview to the interviewee. They were useful for untangling the complex topics within the research area for example questions about experience and qualifications. The researcher recorded the voice of the respondents during the interview using tape recorder. This helps the researcher to concentrate, listen and respond better to the interviewees.

## Data Analysis

Data was subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) using IBM SPSS version 25 and regression to see if there are any linear relationships between challenges faced in wildlife tourism. Least significant difference (LSD) will be used to identify means which are significantly different.

## Results and Discussion

### Contribution of wildlife tourism industry to livelihoods and economy

The results show that wildlife tourism contributes greatly -to employment creation as indicated by participant with 100% from local communities and other groups of participants. Business people who participated did not at all indicate that employment is as a result of wildlife tourism, only 62.9% supported employment creation by wildlife tourism. Most local participants (64.6%) and other participants (75%) indicated that wildlife tourism provides food to local people as a form of incentives but did not explain in detail. One of the local community participants indicated that tourists came with a lot of food when they move around in national parks so those locals who move together with them will be given food at the end of the session as an incentives after receiving their payments. The results are represented in Table 4.2 . From the results 92.3% of local community participants indicated that wildlife tourism promotes locals through the creation of employment and this improves the standard of living as indicated by 93.8% of local communities. The results show that there were no significant differences ( $P>0.05$ ) between contributions of wildlife tourism to human livelihood and economy.

These results concurred with Okello (2015) in Uganda who found out that wildlife tourism is an important generator of foreign exchange, employment and investment for promoting local communities. Muchapondwa, Carlsson &Köhlin (2008, p.688) also found that wildlife tourism has great potential for the local people as this improves the standard of living, promotes entrepreneurship skills where local people produce products such as animal sculpture and sell it to tourists. On an average, 68.6% of the participants indicated that wildlife tourism improves the standard of living by reducing poverty. This concurred with Muchapondwa (2002, p.120) who also found that the wildlife tourism reduces poverty leading to improved standard of living of local people at large. Participants also indicated that the wildlife tourism industry promotes education through educational research done by the lecturers and students of tertiary institutions. The local communities participate in these educational researches through information sharing which helps local participants positively. This coincides with results of Rodger, Smith, Newsome & Moore (2011, p.152) who also indicated that if the wildlife tourism is well managed it can lead to sustainable education to both locals and researchers, students from colleges, schools and universities.

**Table 1: Contribution of Wildlife Tourism to Human Livelihoods and Economy**

Contribution	Business people N=35 (%)	Local communities N=65 (%)	Other participants N=20 (%)
<b>Employment</b>	62.9	100	100
<b>Food as incentives from tourists</b>	37.1	64.6	75.0
<b>Medicine</b>	42.9	18.5	15.0
<b>Entrepreneurship skills</b>	94.3	83.1	40.0
<b>Promote locals</b>	60.0	92.3	90.0
<b>Improves standard of living</b>	51.4	93.8	60.0
<b>Educational research promotion</b>	97.1	61.5	35.0

The results are also represented on Fig. 1 which shows that many contributions indicated by the participants have means which are in the same range except for medicine which has a lower mean but there is no significant difference from others ( $P>0.05$ ). In Fig. 1, creation of employment was indicated as themajor contribution brought by wildlife tourism as this boosts economic

growth of the country through tax collection. Muchapondwa (2002, p.154); Venter, Naiman, Biggs & Pienaar (2008, p.175) and Marunda, Marunda & Munyanyiwa (2014, p.127) indicated that there is a need for sustainable management of wildlife resources so that the contributions of wildlife tourism can be enjoyed by most of the people. Marunda *et al.* (2014, p. 130) also indicated that the involvement of local people has a great impact on contributions of wildlife tourism. Proper management of wildlife resources leads to more contributions being received in the country as indicated by Venter *et al.* (2008, p.176).

**Fig. 1: Contribution of wildlife tourism to human livelihood and economy**

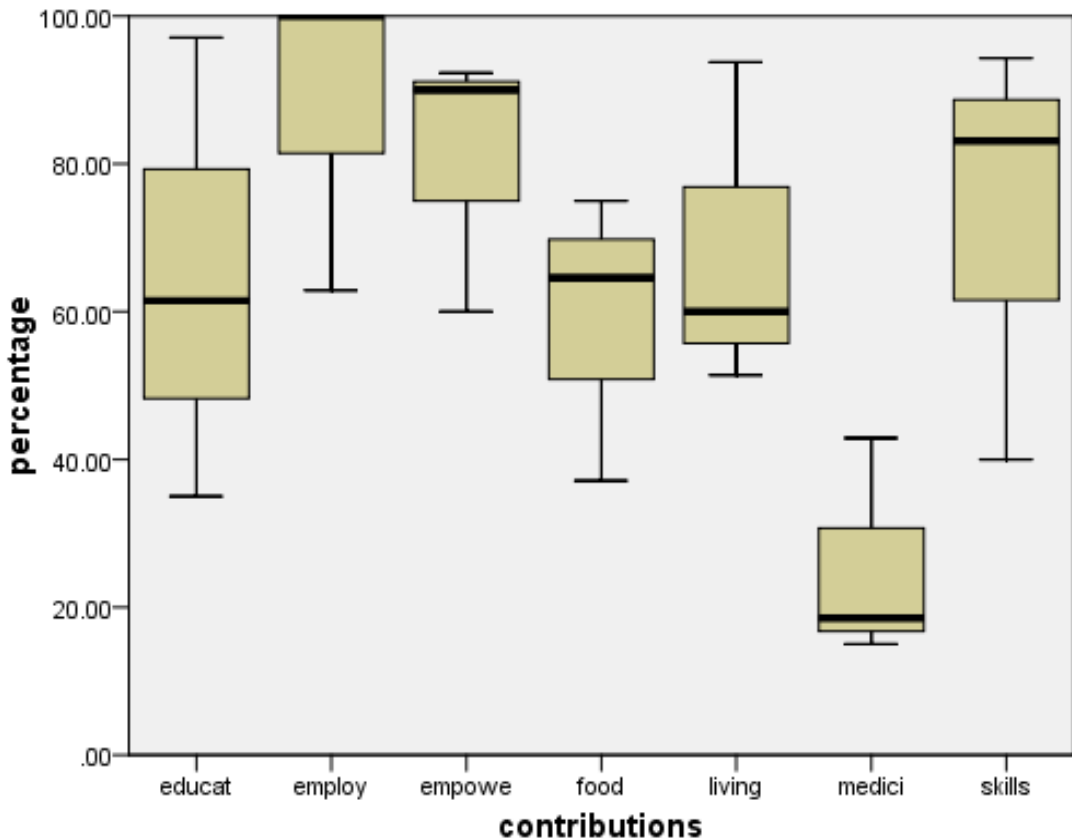
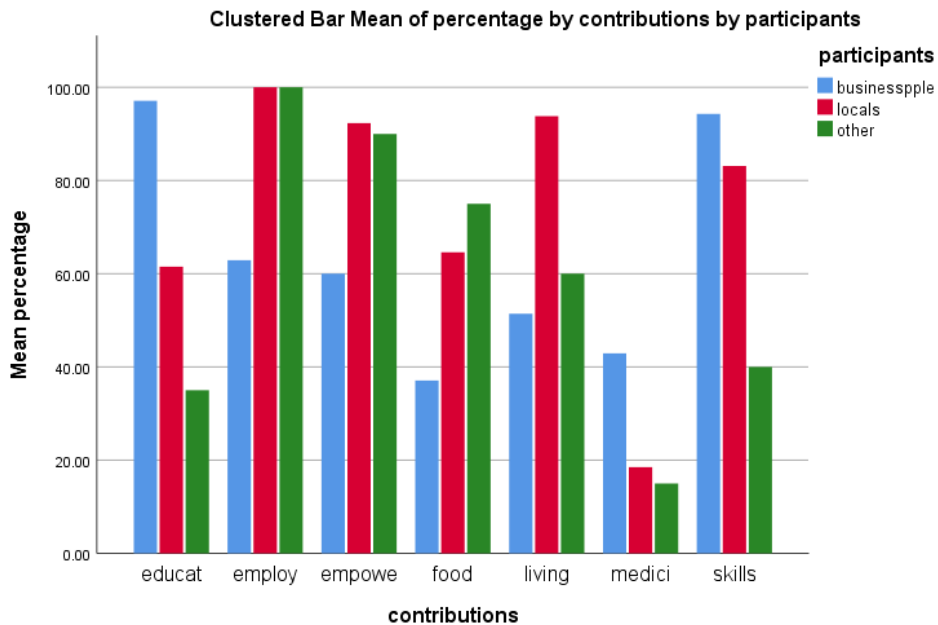


Fig. 2 shows that the local community participants indicated that they benefited more as compared to the other groups of participants. Businesspeople indicated that promotion of entrepreneurship and educational research were the main contributions to human livelihood and the economy of the country as this promotes skill development which leads to generation of income. They indicated that contribution of entrepreneurship skills bring in foreign currency and encourages more youths to be occupied and reducing crime rates in the country. Entrepreneurship skills such as sculpture, basket weaving and making of traditional food encourages youth to form small business projects which earn them a better living at low costs. This was also supported by Dikgang and Muchapondwa (2014, p.309).

**Fig 2: Contribution of wildlife tourism to human livelihood and economy**

## Conclusion

The participants also indicated that the wildlife tourism industry has contributions to the human livelihood such as creation of employment, improving the standards of living together with promoting entrepreneurship skills. The participants also revealed that promotion of entrepreneurship skills have a great impact on the economy of the country as many youths will be employed through the creation of small businesses such as basket weaving and sculpturing and earning foreign currency through the export of their products. Most of the participants indicated that the creation of employment was a major contribution from the wildlife tourism which directly/indirectly affects standard of living, increases the economic growth of the country and promote locals at large. Infrastructure development such as building of hotels, roads and clinics are other contributions brought by the wildlife tourism industry.

## Recommendations

There is a need for the government to support the wildlife tourism as this improves the livelihoods of the local people and the living standard of the country in general. Upgrading of the wildlife tourism industry also needs to be improved as this will attract more foreign tourists. The local people in Kariba must form some groups and come up with community-based wildlife tourism to improve the rural economy and livelihoods.

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