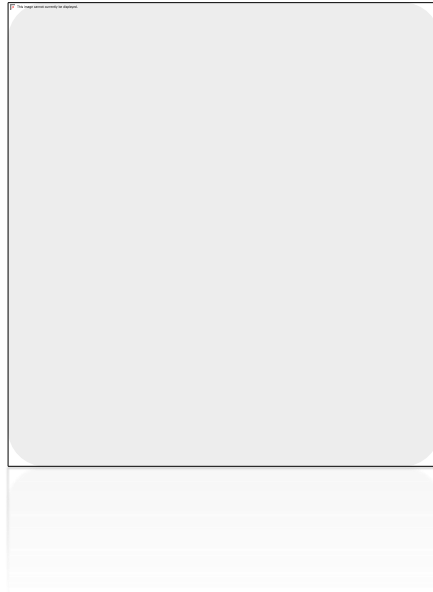




**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**CULTURE AND HERITAGE TOURISM IN ZIMBABWE A CASE STUDY OF HWANGE**

By

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Culture and Heritage Studies in partial fulfilment  
for the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honors in Culture and Heritage Studies Degree.

Faculty of Social Sciences

Supervisor: Dr Mavesera

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## DECLARATION FORM

I, Dylan Tanaka Chinhoi B210095B declare that dissertation titled ‘’Culture and Heritage Tourism in Zimbabwe: Case study of Hwange’ ’is my original work. All sources have been properly cited for acknowledgements.

.....

Signed

.....

Date

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother Mrs. Phillipa Chinhoi whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my foundation. To all those committed to preserving our heritage for future generations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Dr M Mavesera for her invaluable guidance and support throughout this research. I extend my appreciation to Bindura University of Science Education for providing the resources and environment necessary for my studies. I am deeply thankful to my family especially my mother Phillipa Mwazvita Chinhoi my siblings Munashe Chinhoi, Thabile Chinhoi, Fidelis Chinhoi for their unwavering encouragement and belief in my work. I extend my gratitude to my friends, Lovemore Makaza, Munyaradzi Zimuto, Shingai Mushapaidze and Keneshell Siwempi who would often give me encouragement to keep on going during the research. Additionally, I appreciate the individuals and organizations who shared their insights and experiences related to Culture and Heritage Tourism. Your contributions have been instrumental in shaping this dissertation.

## ABSTRACT

*This dissertation explores the development and impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe with a specific focus on community perceptions, cultural practices, site management and socio-economic outcomes. Motivated by the growing global recognition of cultural heritage as both a driver of identity and a tool for sustainable development, the research aims to understand how local communities engage with heritage tourism and how it influences their livelihoods and cultural preservation. A mixed methods research design was employed. Quantitative data was collected through structured questionnaires focus group discussions and interviews with local leaders, cultural practitioners and tourism operators. Findings reveal that culture and heritage tourism in Hwange is significantly appreciated for its role in preserving traditions, promoting community pride, and generating income. Key cultural practices such as traditional ceremonies, herbal medicine preparation, storytelling and drumming have gained renewed interest, especially amongst youths. The study concludes that culture and heritage tourism hold transformative potential for Hwange's socio-economic development and cultural sustainability. It recommends increased stakeholder collaboration, targeted investment and policy support to strengthen tourism infrastructure, heritage tourism and community participation, and heritage education. Future research should explore tourist perspectives, gender dynamics, and the long-term sustainability of cultural tourism in the region.*

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Hwange is a small town located in western Zimbabwe, approximately 200km northwest of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city. Hwange has a small population of 35 000 residents. It is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant tourism industry. The region is home to Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe's largest national park, which attracts tourists from around the world. However, beyond its wildlife, Hwange offers a unique cultural and heritage tourism experience that is deeply rooted in the traditions and history of local communities. Hwange's economy is primarily driven by local mining, agriculture and tourism. Its cultural and economic significance is immense.

Hwange National Park is in the western part of the country; it is renowned for its natural beauty and wildlife. Hwange serves as a critical habitat and a site of cultural and historical importance, (UNESCO1989). However, its cultural and heritage resources remain underexplored. Culture and Heritage tourism can contribute significantly to local economic development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.

Hwange is a district renowned for its breath-taking natural beauty, rich cultural heritage and complex history. The area's unique blend of human and environmental factors has shaped its development, making Hwange an important hub for cultural and ecological significance vast savannas, teak forests, and rugged hills characterize Hwange's landscape according to G.T.M Kadada (2015). The district is situated near the Hwange national park; one of Africa's largest game reserves covering over 14 000 square kilometers. The cultural heritage of Hwange is primarily shaped by the Nambya and Tonga people, who have inhabited the region for centuries. These communities have preserved their traditional customs, languages and practices, which are integral to the cultural identity of Hwange.

The area is home to various ethnic groups, including the Nambya and Batonga people, who have lived in harmony with the environment for centuries (Beach, 1994; Bourdillon, 1976). With its unique cultural and natural attractions, Hwange has the potential to become a thriving culture and heritage tourism destination. This thesis outlines the research objectives and significance of exploring culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. The primary objective of this study is to identify and document the cultural and heritage tourism resources available in Hwange. This involves examining the area's cultural and historical significance, including its archaeological sites, traditional architecture and cultural festivals (Garlake, 1982; Huffman, 2007). By documenting these resources, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Hwange's cultural and heritage tourism potential.

The study examines the impact of culture and heritage tourism on local communities and economies in Hwange. This involves investigating how tourism development can contribute to local economic growth ,poverty reduction ,and cultural preservation (Butler,1999;Weaver(2006).This involves analyzing the current tourism infrastructure ,policies and practices in place ,as well as identifying potential objectives to tourism development ,such as limited funding ,inadequate infrastructure, and environmental degradation (Mamdani,1996;Palmer 1977).By examining these challenges and opportunities ,this study aims to provide recommendations for stakeholders to promote sustainable and responsible tourism practices. This research aims to address sustainable development goals such as no poverty. Cultural heritage tourism has the potential to alleviate poverty in Hwange by generating income opportunities for locals, (United Nations, 2015).

This research aims to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating the potential of cultural heritage tourism to drive sustainable development in Hwange, Zimbabwe(United Nations, 2015).The study also aims to contribute to the development of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe by identifying and documenting cultural and heritage tourism resources, examining the economies, assessing challenges and opportunities and developing strategies for sustainable and responsible tourism development ,by achieving these objectives, this study seeks to provide recommendations for stakeholders to promote sustainable and responsible tourism practices, ultimately contributing to the preservation of Hwange's unique cultural and natural heritage.

## **Study Area Description**

The study area provides the geographical and contextual backdrop for the research, describing the specific location being studied which is crucial for understanding the scope and relevance of the research. The study area significantly helps in formulating a research design through contextual relevance, target population, data collection methods, and analytical framework.

Hwange located in northwestern region of Zimbabwe, is a district of significant cultural, historical and ecological importance. The area falls within Matabeleland North province and is situated approximately 100 kilometers from the world-renowned Victoria Falls, making it strategically positioned within one of the country's most vibrant tourism corridors. Hwange is best known for the expansive Hwange National Park the largest in Zimbabwe which attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists annually due to its rich biodiversity and wildlife experiences. However, beyond its ecological appeal, Hwange is also home to a rich tapestry of cultural and heritage assets that remain underexplored in the broader tourism narrative. The district is predominantly inhabited by the Nambya and Tonga people, whose customs, languages, rituals and traditional knowledge systems constitute a vital part of the area's intangible cultural heritage. Historic sites such as rock art, ancient settlements, and sacred groves, further enrich the cultural landscape. The legacy of coal mining in Hwange also contributes to the district's industrial heritage, shaping the identity and socio-economic conditions of the local communities over the past centuries.

Understanding Hwange as the focal point of this study is crucial for assessing the potential and challenges for developing sustainable culture and heritage tourism in rural Zimbabwe. The district offers a unique intersection of natural and cultural attractions, making it an ideal case for evaluating how local heritage can be preserved and promoted alongside mainstream tourism development. By focusing on Hwange this study aims to highlight the relevance cultural heritage tourism. The map below on figure 1 provides a geographical location of Hwange.

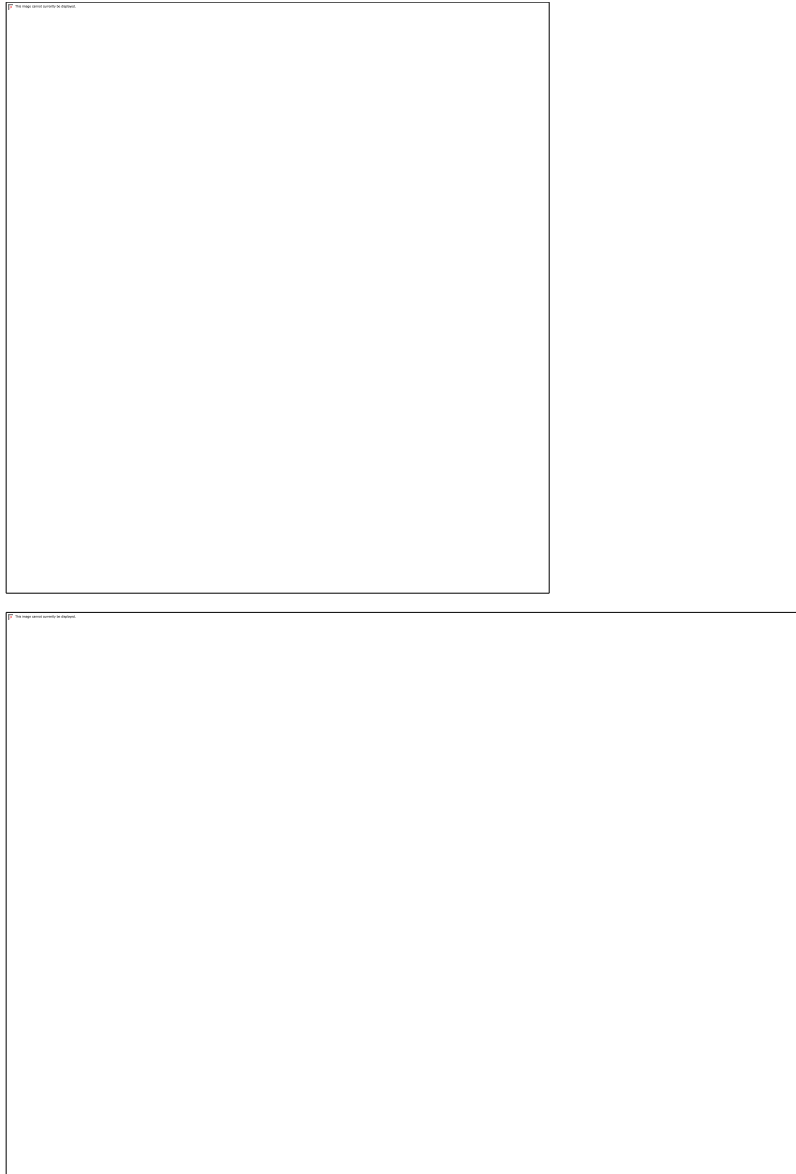


Figure 1.2

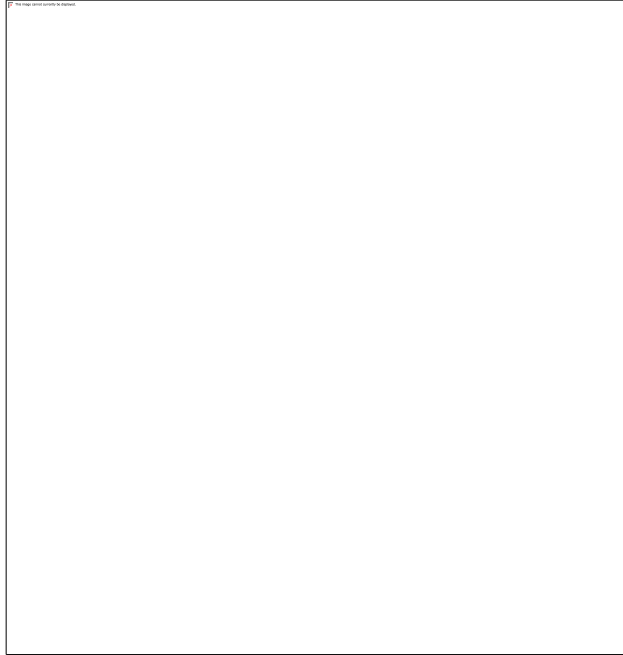


Figure 1.3

**Figure 1 shows Hwange Geographical Map**

**Source: Research Gate**

### **1.3 Research Problem**

Despite its rich cultural and natural heritage, Hwange, Zimbabwe, faces significant challenges in developing its tourism industry, resulting in limited economic benefits for local communities, inadequate preservation of cultural heritage sites, and insufficient promotion of the region's unique attractions. There are many specific research problems such as lack of effective management and marketing strategies for cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange, insufficient community engagement and participation in tourism development, limited infrastructure and resources to support tourism growth, inadequate preservation and protection of cultural heritage sites and limited understanding of tourist preferences and behaviors.

## **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The study aims to investigate the potential of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, and explore strategies for sustainable development that benefit local communities. To investigate challenges facing cultural and heritage tourism development in Hwange, to empower local communities through tourism benefits, to examine local community perceptions towards cultural and heritage tourism development, to propose strategies for sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development and develop a comprehensive framework for sustainable cultural and heritage tourism development in Hwange.

### **1.4.1 Statement of the problem**

Despite its rich cultural and natural heritage, Hwange, Zimbabwe, faces significant challenges in developing its tourism industry in limited economic benefits for local communities, inadequate preservation of cultural heritage sites, insufficient promotion of the region's unique attractions, lack of community engagement and participation in tourism development, ineffective management and marketing strategies and limited infrastructure and resources to support tourism growth. The development of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, faces significant challenges, hindering the region's potential to leverage its rich cultural and natural heritage for sustainable economic growth and community empowerment.

## **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

**Objective 1:** To assess the economic benefits of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange

**Objective 2:** To document and preserve Hwange's cultural heritage and history

**Objective 3:** To identify challenges facing culture and tourism development in Hwange

**Objective 4:** To evaluate the impact of tourism on Hwange's cultural heritage and community

## **1.6 Research questions**

1: What are the cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange?

2: How does culture and heritage tourism contribute to Hwange's economy?

3: What are the impacts of tourism on Hwange's cultural heritage and community?

4: What challenges hinder culture and Heritage tourism development in Hwange?

5: How can culture and heritage tourism be developed sustainably in Hwange?

### **1.7 Assumptions of the study**

Culture and Heritage tourism can contribute significantly to local economic development. This assumption is grounded in the notion that tourism can generate revenue, create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Cultural heritage attractions can be preserved and protected through responsible tourism practices. This assumption acknowledges that tourism can support conservation efforts and promote cultural heritage preservation.

#### **1.7 .1 Significance of the study**

This study on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, holds significant importance for various stakeholders, including local communities, policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and researchers. This study contributes to the body of knowledge on culture and heritage tourism, particularly, Hwange, Zimbabwe. The research enhances understanding of sustainable tourism practices and their impact on local communities. The research will provide valuable insights for tourism stakeholders to develop effective marketing strategies and improve tourism infrastructure. The study will highlight the importance of preserving cultural heritage sites and promoting cultural sensitivity among tourists. The research also aims to foster community participation in tourism development, ensuring that local voices are heard. This study on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange holds significant theoretical, practical, social, economic, and methodological importance. Its findings will contribute to the development of sustainable tourism practices, empower local communities, and inform policy decisions.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the study**

The study aims to investigate the impact of culture and heritage tourism on the local community in Hwange, Zimbabwe. However, the study's scope and focus had to be narrowed down due to various constraints and limitations. The study focuses exclusively on Hwange, Zimbabwe, and its

surrounding areas. This geographical delimitation allows for an in-depth examination of the local culture and heritage tourism industry. This population delimitation ensures that the study's findings accurately represent the perspectives and experiences of those most impacted by tourism. The study collects data over a six-month period, from January to June. This timeframe delimitation enables the collection of relevant data during peak tourist season. This study employs a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The delimitations of the study provide a clear focus and scope for investigating the impact of culture and heritage tourism on the local community in Hwange, Zimbabwe.

### **1.8.1 Limitations of the study**

This study aims to investigate the impact of culture and heritage tourism on the local community in Hwange, Zimbabwe. Despite its contributions to the field, the study had several limitations that must be acknowledged. The study's sample size was restricted due to time and resource constraints, which may not be representative of the entire population. The use of purposive and convenience sampling techniques may introduce biases and limit generalizability. The study relied on self-reported data from surveys and interviews, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Mixed methods approach whilst providing a comprehensive understanding, the mixed methods approach may have introduced complexities in data analysis. The study focused primarily on cultural heritage tourism neglecting other forms of tourism. The study focused on Hwange limiting generalizability to other regions. The study's timeframe limited the depth of data collection and analysis. The study's budget constraints limited data collection and analysis.

### **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

**Cultural heritage tourism:** Travel to experience and learn about the cultural heritage of a destination, including its history traditions, art, architecture and natural environment (Smith, J. (2020)

**Heritage Resources:** Natural and cultural assets of historical significance that are valued for their environmental, aesthetic, cultural, or educational contributions. This includes landscapes, monuments, artifacts, and traditional practices that reflect a community's identity and history Hilary du Cross and Bob Mckercher (2020).

**Heritage site:** A location of cultural historical, or natural significance, preserved for future generations, George S. Smith (2023).

**Stakeholders:** Individuals, groups, or organizations that have an interest or concern in a particular issue or area, such as local communities, government authorities, NGOs, and tourism operators. Stakeholders play a crucial role in heritage conservation and management, Karan Khurana (2020).

**Sustainability:** The capacity to endure and maintain ecological balance, social equity, and economic viability over the long term. In the context of heritage conservation, sustainability involves practices that protect heritage resources while supporting community development and environmental health, George S. Smith (2023).

### **1.9.1 Dissertation outline**

#### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Content: This chapter introduces Hwange, Zimbabwe, and its cultural and natural heritage. This chapter in the dissertation provides an overview of the tourism industry in Zimbabwe and Hwange and also highlight the significance of culture and heritage.

Chapter 2: This chapter delves into culture and heritage tourism. It explores and defines culture heritage tourism. It explores the general effects of both economic and social effects of tourism on natural and cultural heritage sites. Case studies from other heritage sites are referenced to provide a comparative perspective.

#### **Chapter 3: Hwange: A heritage resource**

This chapter focuses specifically on Hwange detailing its geographical, ecological and cultural significance. It examines the historical context of Hwange, including indigenous communities and their relationship with the area. The chapter also highlights the unique biodiversity and geological features that contribute to its status as a heritage resource.

#### **Chapter 4: Impacts of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange**

This chapter analyzes and explores potential impacts of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, including economic benefits, cultural preservation, community empowerment, infrastructure

development and cross-cultural understanding also with an emphasis on negative impacts such as cultural exploitation, environmental degradation and over tourism.

## **Chapter 5: Innovative Strategies for Mitigation and Adaptation**

Content: This chapter outlines potential innovative strategies to mitigate the impacts of tourism in Hwange both negative and positive impacts. It discusses sustainable tourism practices, community engagement, restoration projects, cross cultural understanding and educational initiatives. The chapter emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts among stakeholders and recommends actionable steps to enhance resilience and conservation of heritage resources.

### **Framework for the outline**

| Activity                                                                       | Expected Completion Date |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Chapter 1: Introduction<br>Conduct background research                         | Month 1, Week 1          |
| Draft Chapter 1                                                                | Month 1, Week 3          |
| Revise Chapter 1 based on feedback                                             | Month 1, Week 4          |
| Chapter 2: Literature Review<br>Conduct literature search                      | Month 2, Week 1          |
| Review and analyze literature                                                  | Month 2, Week 2          |
| Draft Chapter 2                                                                | Month 2, Week 4          |
| Revise Chapter 2 based on feedback                                             | Month 3, Week 1          |
| Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology<br>Develop research design          | Month 3, Week 2          |
| Draft Chapter 3                                                                | Month 3, Week 4          |
| Revise Chapter 3 based on feedback                                             | Month 4, Week 1          |
| Chapter 4: Results and Discussion<br>Collect quantitative and qualitative data | Month 4, Weeks 2-4       |

|                                                               |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Analyze data                                                  | Month 5, Weeks 1-2 |
| Draft Chapter 4                                               | Month 5, Week 3    |
| Revise Chapter 4 based on feedback                            | Month 5, Week 4    |
| Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations<br>Draft Chapter 5 | Month 6, Week 1    |
| Revise Chapter 5 based on feedback                            | Month 6, Week 2    |
| Final revision and submission<br>Compile all chapters         | Month 6, Week 3    |
| Final proofreading and formatting                             | Month 6, Week 4    |
| Submit dissertation                                           | End of Month 6     |

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter 1 sets the stage by focusing on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, examining how cultural heritage is represented, promoted, and experienced by both local communities and visitors. It investigates the potential of heritage tourism to contribute to sustainable development, cultural preservation, and community empowerment, while also identifying the challenges that hinder its growth. The chapter outlines the background to the study, the research problem, aims and objectives, and the significance of the research. It sets the stage for the literature review by establishing the context and rationale for exploring culture and heritage tourism within this specific geographical and cultural setting. This chapter is reviewing related literature on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, highlighting key findings from various scholars. The literature review aims to identify the gaps in the existing literature in the study under review.

### **2.2 The Concept of Culture and Heritage Tourism**

Culture and heritage tourism involves traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present (Timothy, 2011). It includes visiting historic sites, cultural landmarks, museums, and engaging in traditional activities. This

form of tourism is crucial for preserving cultural identities and promoting cross-cultural understanding (Richards, 2007). The study supports Richard's (2007) assertion that culture and heritage tourism have the potential to contribute significantly to economic development, cultural preservation and community empowerment of destinations (Richards, 2018). This notion resonates deeply, as it highlights the transformative power of tourism in promoting sustainable development and preserving cultural heritage.

The economic benefits of culture and tourism are undeniable. By attracting tourists to cultural heritage sites and events, local economies can experience a significant boost, creating jobs and stimulating growth McKercher and du Cros (,2002). Moreover, the revenue generated from tourism can be reinvested in the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage sites, ensuring their longevity for future generations. Beyond its economic benefits, culture and heritage tourism also play a pivotal role in preserving cultural heritage. By promoting cultural exchange and understanding, tourism can help to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, such as traditional music, dance and crafts (UNESCO, 2003). Furthermore, the revenue generated from tourism can be used to support cultural heritage preservation projects, such as the restoration of historic buildings and the development of cultural festivals.

At its core, culture and heritage tourism involves the interaction between tourists and the cultural heritage of a destination Poria et al., (2003). This interaction can take various forms, including visits to cultural heritage sites, participation in cultural events, and engagement with local communities McKercher and du Cros, (2002). According to Social Exchange Theory, this interaction can be seen as a form of social exchange between hosts and guests, where both parties benefit from the interaction (Emerson, 1976). The study concurs with the notion that the interaction between tourists and the cultural heritage of a destination constitutes a reciprocal exchange where both parties derive benefits from the encounter. This perspective resonates deeply with the study as it acknowledges the inherent value of cultural heritage as a resource that can be shared and appreciated by diverse stakeholders. In this exchange, tourists gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage, while the host community benefits economically and socially. The tourist's experiences and interaction with cultural heritage can foster a sense of connection and empathy, promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect, Manyara and Jones, (2007). The Cultural Heritage Tourism Model is a framework that highlights the importance of preserving and

promoting cultural heritage sites and experiences for tourism development. This model emphasizes the need to balance tourism development with cultural heritage conservation. The cultural heritage tourism model (CHTM) provides a useful framework for understanding the concept of culture and heritage tourism McKercher and du Cros, (2002). The Cultural Heritage Tourism Model highlights the importance of cultural heritage in tourism development and the need for sustainable tourism practices. Similarly, the Community-Based Tourism Model (CBTM) emphasizes the role of local communities in tourism development and the need for equitable distribution of benefits Manyara and Jones, (2007).

Sustainable Tourism Theory also provides a useful perspective on culture and heritage tourism (Butler, 1999). According to this theory, sustainable tourism practices should minimize environmental impacts and maximize economic benefits for local communities. This perspective is particularly relevant for culture and heritage tourism, as it highlights the need to balance the economic benefits of tourism with the need to preserve cultural heritage and protect the environment. The suggests that Sustainable Tourism Theory offers a valuable framework for culturally sensitive and environmentally conscious heritage tourism. Building on Richard Butler's seminal work (1999), the study supports sustainable tourism practices that not only minimize environmental degradation but also prioritize economic benefits for local people. By embracing this approach, we can ensure that heritage tourism contributes to the wellbeing of local populations, supports the conservation of cultural and natural resources, and fosters a deeper appreciation for our shared cultural heritage.

The potential of culture and heritage tourism to contribute to economic development, cultural preservation and community empowerment is vast and multifaceted. As Richards (2018) so astutely observes, culture and heritage tourism have the power to transform destinations, promoting sustainable development and preserving cultural heritage for generations to come.

### **2.3 Overview of Hwange as a Tourism Destination**

Hwange, known for its national park and rich cultural heritage, is a prime destination for culture and heritage tourism. The region's unique blend of natural and cultural assets makes it an attractive location for tourists seeking immersive experience Gandiwa & Zisadza-Gandiwa, (2015). Hwange, located in western Zimbabwe is one of Africa's largest and most iconic national parks. As a tourist destination, Hwange offers a unique and unforgettable experience, showcasing the continent's incredible wildlife, natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. From a global perspective, Hwange is recognized for its exceptional conservation efforts and biodiversity. The Park is home to over 100 species of mammals, including the big five (Lion, Leopard, Rhinoceros, Elephant and Cape Buffalo), as well as an impressive array of birdlife, with over 400 recorded species, Gandiwa & Zisadza-Gandiwa, (2015). This rich wildlife population makes Hwange a prime destination for Safari goers and nature enthusiasts from around the world.

One of the park's most notable attractions is its elephant population. Hwange is home to one of the largest elephant populations in Africa, with over 40 000 individuals. This has led to the park being recognized as a crucial habitat for these majestic creatures, and conversational efforts are in place to protect and manage the population. Hwange National Park, (2020). In addition to its incredible wildlife, Hwange also boasts stunning natural scenery. The park's diverse landscapes, which include forests, grasslands and rocky outcrops, provides a unique and breathtaking backdrop for game drives, walking safaris, and other outdoor activities. From a global perspective, Hwange's tourism industry plays a pivotal role in supporting local communities and promoting sustainable development. Many tour operators and lodges within the park are owned and operated by local Zimbabweans, providing employment opportunities and generating income for local communities.

In addition to its wildlife, Hwange is also rich in cultural heritage. Hwange is home to several archaeological sites, including the famous Bumbusi National Monument, which dates to the Stone Age National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe, (2020). Visitors can explore these sites and learn about the history and traditions of the local communities. Hwange's natural beauty is another major draw for tourists. This town's diverse landscape includes forests, grasslands, and rocky outcrops, providing a unique and breathtaking backdrop for game viewing and exploration (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2020). Visitors can enjoy scenic drives, hiking trails and picnic

sites, taking in the stunning views and tranquility of the park. To cater to the growing number of tourists, Hwange has developed a range of infrastructure and facilities. Despite its many attractions and facilities, Hwange faces several challenges, including poaching, habitat degradation and climate change IUCN, (2020). To address these challenges, the Zimbabwean government and conservation organizations have implemented several initiatives, including anti-poaching patrols, habitat restoration, and community-based conservation projects Hwange National Park, (2020).

Hwange is a premier tourism destination in Zimbabwe, offering an unforgettable wildlife experience, rich cultural heritage, and breathtaking natural beauty. With its range of infrastructure and facilities, Hwange is an ideal destination for tourists, from budget-friendly options to luxury safari lodges. However, the park faces several challenges, and it is essential that tourists, tour operators and conservation organizations work together to protect and conserve this incredible destination for future generations.

## **2.4 Development of Culture and Heritage Tourism in Hwange**

### **2.4.1 Historical Background**

Hwange a district in western Zimbabwe, has a rich cultural and natural heritage that dates back thousands of years. The area has been inhabited by various ethnic groups, including the Ndebele, Kalanga, and Nambya, each with their own unique cultural practices and traditions. Prior to the arrival of European colonizers, the area now known as Hwange was a major hub for trade and cultural exchange between various ethnic groups. The Ndebele kingdom, which was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, played a significant role in shaping the cultural and economic landscape of the region (Cobbing,1976). As noted by Historian Terrence ranger, the pre-colonial era in Zimbabwe was marked by a complex web of cultural and economic relationships between different ethnic groups (Ranger,1985). These relationships laid the foundation for the development of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. During the colonial era the development of tourism in Hwange was largely focused on big game hunting and wildlife conservation. The establishment of Hwange National Park in 1929 marked the beginning of tourism development in the area Taylor, (1994). However, the benefits of tourism were largely confined to the white settler community, with limited opportunities for local African communities.

As argued by scholar Robert Mugabe, the colonial era was marked by the exploitation of Zimbabwe's natural resources, including its wildlife and tourism potential (Mugabe,1979). The study findings concur with Robert Mugabe's assertion that the colonial era was marked by exploitation of Zimbabwe's Natural resources resonates deeply with the historical context. The Berlin conference of 1884-85 also known as the scramble for Africa conference was a pivotal moment when European capitalist countries partitioned the African continent to exploit their markets and exploits its resources, (Cobbing, 1976). This study acknowledges the ongoing impact of colonialism on Zimbabwe's natural resources, including its wildlife and tourism potential. The country's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty are still being exploited, with many communities struggling to benefit from tourism development. Mugabe's stance on land redistribution and his efforts to reclaim stolen land for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were rooted in this historical context. His radical land redistribution program which allowed war veterans to take back their stolen lands was a direct response to the colonial legacy of exploitation and dispossession.

Following Zimbabwe's independence in 1980,the government recognized the potential of tourism as a tool for economic development and cultural preservation in the 1990s ,the government launched several initiatives aimed at promoting cultural tourism in Hwange ,including the development of cultural villages and Heritage trails Kamwi,(2007).However the development of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange has faced several challenges ,including limited funding, inadequate infrastructure ,and a lack of community involvement (Saarinen,2007).Despite these challenges ,there are ongoing efforts to promote sustainable tourism practices and ensure that local communities benefit from tourism development.

#### **2.4.2 Cultural Significance**

The cultural significance of Hwange lies in its diverse heritage, including the historical sites, traditional dances, and crafts of the Nambya and Tonga people. These cultural elements have been integrated into tourism offerings, providing visitors with a holistic experience of Hwange's heritage (Chirisa, 2015). However, scholars have noted that more effort is needed to document and preserve these cultural assets systematically (Ndoro, 2001). Hwange is home to a diverse array of flora and fauna, including the Big Five. However, beyond its natural beauty, Hwange holds

profound cultural significance, with a rich tapestry of history, tradition and community that makes it an ideal destination for culture and heritage tourism. One of the primary cultural attractions of Hwange is its rich history, which dates to the pre-colonial era. The town is home to numerous archaeological sites, including rock art and stone tools, which provide valuable insights into the lives and cultures of the region's early inhabitants (Garlake,1987). Visitors can explore these sites, gaining a deeper understanding of the region's complex history and cultural heritage.

One of the primary cultural attractions of Hwange is its colonial history which dates to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The town was established as a coal mining center, and its architecture, infrastructure, and cultural landscape still reflect this industrial heritage (Range,1999). Visitors can explore the town historic buildings, museums, and cultural centers, gaining a deeper understanding of the region's complex history and cultural development. In addition to its colonial history, Hwange is also home to several traditional communities, including the Ndebele and Kalanga people. These communities have lived in harmony with the land for generations, developing unique cultural practices and traditions that are deeply connected to the natural environment (Moyo,2015). Visitors can engage with these communities, learning about their customs, traditions, and ways of life. This not only provides a unique cultural experience but also supports the local economy and promotes cross-cultural understanding.

Hwange is also an important center for traditional arts and crafts, with numerous local artisans selling their wares in the town's market and shops. Visitors can purchase unique, handmade crafts, including woodcarvings, basketry and textiles, which not only support the local economy but also provide a tangible connection to the region's rich cultural heritage. Furthermore, Hwange hosts a number of cultural festivals and events throughout the year, including the annual Hwange cultural festival. This festival celebrates the region's rich cultural diversity, featuring traditional music, dance and theater performances as well as traditional crafts and cuisine (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority 2020). Visitors can attend the festival, immersing themselves in the region's vibrant cultural scene and gaining a deeper understanding of the local community.

In recent years ,Hwange has also become a hub for community based tourism initiatives, which provides visitors with a unique and authentic cultural experience .These initiatives ,which provides visitors with a unique and authentic cultural experience .These initiatives ,such as homestays and

cultural tours, allow visitors to engage with local communities ,learn about their customs and traditions, and contribute to the local economy(Manyara and Jones, 2007).Hwange is a town with a rich cultural heritage that offers a unique and enriching experience for culture and heritage tourists. Its colonial history, traditional communities, cultural festivals, and community based tourism initiatives make it an ideal destination for those seeking to engage with the region's vibrant cultural scene.

### **2.4.3 Tourism Infrastructure**

Hwange, a district in western Zimbabwe is renowned for its cultural heritage and natural beauty ,attracting tourists from around the world .Significant investments in tourism infrastructure have been made in Hwange, including the development of lodges, safari camps, and heritage centers (Mbaiwa, 2017).While these facilities have improved the tourist experience, some researchers argue that there is still a need for more community-based tourism projects that involve local populations in tourism activities (Zhou, 2012). This study supports the notion by Zhou,2012 the study argues further and say the development of tourism infrastructure in Hwange has been slow and uneven hindering the growth of the tourism sector. Several challenges have hindered the development of tourism infrastructure in Hwange.

The lack of financial resources has been a major constraint to the development of tourism in Hwange. Insufficient funding has limited the construction and maintenance of tourism facilities, such as roads, accommodation, and amenities Butler, (1999). The road network in Hwange is poorly developed, making it difficult for tourists to access the area. The lack of paved roads and poor road maintenance has hindered the growth of tourism in the district (Harrison,2008). The study argues that for the tourism sector to improve in Hwange, the government should increase its support for tourism infrastructure development in Hwange, providing funding and resources for the construction and maintenance of tourism facilities. The private sector should be encouraged to partner with local communities and government agencies to develop tourism infrastructure in Hwange.

## **2.5 Economic Benefits**

Tourism in Hwange has provided substantial economic benefits to the local communities, including job creation and income generation (Spenceley & Goodwin, 2007). The revenue from tourism has also supported conservation and infrastructure development projects (D'Amore & Kalinowski, 1999). The study concurs with the notion by Spenceley and Goodwin, 2007 that tourism in Hwange has provided substantial economic benefits to the local communities including job creation and income generation due to the fact that the notion by Spenceley and Goodwin (2007) highlights the significant economic benefits of tourism in Hwange. Culture and Heritage tourism has created employment opportunities for local communities in Hwange, including jobs in Hospitality, tour guiding and conservation. Culture and Heritage tourism has generated income for local communities through various channels, such as tourism related businesses, craft sales, and tourism levies. These economic benefits have contributed significantly to the livelihoods of local communities in Hwange, improving their overall wellbeing and standard of living.

However, there is a gap in understanding the long-term sustainability of these economic benefits, particularly in the face of changing tourism trends (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010). While community based tourism initiatives have shown promise in generating economic benefits for local communities, there is a gap in understanding the long term sustainability of these benefits Manyara&Jones, (2007). This gap is particularly concerning in the face of changing tourism trends ,which can impact the viability of community based tourism initiatives. The study concurs with the notion by Manyara and Jones (2007) that since the tourism industry is inherently dynamic, with changing trends and patterns affecting the demand for tourism products. In the context of community-based tourism, these changes can have significant implications for the long-term sustainability of economic benefits. For instance, shifts in tourist preferences or the emergence of new destinations can lead to a decline in tourist arrivals, compromising the economic viability of community-based tourism initiatives.

### **2.5.1 Social Benefits**

Cultural tourism has increased awareness and appreciation of local traditions and customs, fostering a sense of pride among the local communities (Richards, 2007). It has also facilitated cultural exchanges between tourists and locals, promoting mutual understanding and respect (Muboko et al., 2014). The study concurs with the fact that culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe has been widely recognized for its economic benefits, including job creation and income generation. However, the social benefits of tourism in Hwange highlighting its impact on local communities, cultural heritage and social cohesion. One of the most significant social benefits of tourism in Hwange is its impact on local communities. Tourism has provided economic opportunities for local communities, improving their socio-economic status and enhancing their self-esteem. Community based tourism initiatives have been established in Hwange, allowing local communities to take ownership of tourism development and management.

These initiatives have not only generated income for local communities but also promoted cultural exchange and understanding between tourists and local communities. Tourism has also played a crucial role in preserving the cultural heritage of Hwange. The promotion of cultural tourism has helped to conserve cultural sites, traditions, and practices, which are an integral part of Hwange's identity. Cultural festivals and events have been organized in Hwange, showcasing the local culture and traditions and promoting cultural exchange between tourists and local communities. These events have helped to raise awareness about the importance of cultural heritage and the need to preserve it for future generations. The study wants to point out that culture and heritage tourism have promoted social cohesion among local communities in Hwange. The development of tourism infrastructure, such as roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, has benefited both tourists and local communities, fostering a sense of unity and cooperation. Richards, (2007) Tourism related training programs have been implemented in Hwange, providing local communities with skills and knowledge in areas such as hospitality, tour guiding, and conservation. These programs have helped to build capacity among local communities, enabling them to participate fully in the tourism industry.

Despite these benefits, there is limited research on the social dynamics within local communities and how tourism affects these relationships (Timothy, 2011). Despite the growing body of research

on community-based tourism, there is a notable gap in understanding the social dynamics within local communities and how tourism affects these relationships (Mowforth&Munt,2003). This gap is significant, as the social dynamics of local communities play a crucial role in shaping the impacts of tourism. Research has shown that tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on social relationships within local communities (Cohen,1988). On the one hand, tourism can bring new opportunities, create jobs, and foster community development (Manyara&Jones, E, 2007). The study argues that even though tourism can bring new opportunities, tourism can also lead to social conflicts, cultural degradation, and the displacement of local communities. The social dynamics of tourism are complex and multifaceted, involving power relationships, cultural exchange, and economic interactions between local communities and tourists. The study adds further and argues that by addressing these research gaps, we can gain a deeper understanding of the social dynamics of tourism and how they affect local communities. This knowledge can provide strategies to promote sustainable tourism development that benefits local communities and respects their social and cultural relationships.

### **2.5.2 Environmental Benefits**

Tourism in Hwange has contributed to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage by generating funds for conservation programs and promoting sustainable practices (Eagles et al., 2002). The researcher wants to point out that the environmental benefits of tourism in Hwange are equally significant and far-reaching. One of the most significant environmental benefits of tourism in Hwange is its impact on conservation. Tourism has provided a financial incentive for conservation efforts, with tourism revenue being used to support conservation initiatives. For example, the Hwange National Park has established a conservation fund, which is supported by tourism revenue and used to fund conservations projects, such as habitat restoration and wildlife monitoring. Tourism has also played a crucial role in wildlife management in Hwange. The revenue generated from tourism has been used to support wildlife management initiatives, such as anti-poaching patrols and wildlife monitoring (Lindberg,2001). For example, Hwange National Park has established an anti-poaching unit which is supported by tourism revenue and works to protect the park's wildlife from poaching (Hwange National Park,2020).

However, the impact of tourism on the environment needs further exploration, particularly concerning the carrying capacity of Hwange National Park and the surrounding areas (Mbaiwa, 2017). The study points out that one of the main environmental concerns associated with tourism in Hwange National Park is the issue of the carrying capacity. If the carrying capacity is exceeded, it can lead to problems such as social erosion, vegetation degradation and wildlife disturbance Hwange National Park, (2020). Studies have shown that Hwange National Park is already experiencing high levels of tourism pressure, with many areas of the park exceeding their carrying capacity (Mbaiwa, 2005). For example, the park's main camp, Sinamatella has been found to be experiencing high levels of environmental degradation due to over tourism (Mbaiwa, 2005).

## 2.6 Challenges in Culture and Heritage Tourism in Hwange

Hwange, a district in western Zimbabwe, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty attracting tourists from around the world (Butler, 1999). However, the growth of culture and heritage in Hwange has also brought to the fore several challenges that threaten the authenticity and sustainability of this sector. There are several challenges associated with culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. These include inadequate funding for conservation projects, limited involvement of local communities in tourism planning, and the risk of cultural commodification (Chirisa, 2015). As noted by Manyara and Jones (2007), community-based tourism initiatives can help address these challenges by promoting community involvement and ensuring that local community's benefit from tourism activities. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that involves stakeholders at all levels, from local communities to government authorities (Zhou, 2012).

### 2.6.1 Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding for conservation projects poses a significant challenge to the preservation of Hwange's cultural heritage. Limited financial resources hinder the maintenance and restoration of cultural sites, as well as the development of new tourism products (Ngoro, 2001). Increasing investment from both public and private sectors is essential to address this issue. Inadequate funding restricts the preservation and restoration of cultural and heritage sites in Hwange.

According to Pei-Lin Yu (2023) sustainable conservation of cultural heritage requires consistent financial investment to address degradation caused by neglect, erosion or lack of maintenance. Hwange's indigenous traditions, historical landmarks, and artifacts face similar threats, and without adequate funding, these cultural treasures risk being lost. Proper funding would enable the establishment of restoration programs and sustainable conservation practices. The study concurs with the notion that inadequate funding also affects community involvement in culture and heritage tourism. Salazar (2004) notes that empowering local communities through financial support enhances their role in preserving traditions and guiding tourists. This study concurs with the notion by Salazar (2004) that without resources for training programs or incentives, communities may struggle to actively participate in tourism initiatives. Increased funding would enable local residents to contribute meaningfully to Hwange's cultural heritage sector.

#### 2.6.2 Community Involvement

Community involvement is a crucial aspect of culture and heritage tourism, as it ensures that local community benefit from tourism activities and that their cultural heritage is preserved and respected. The limited involvement of local communities in tourism planning and decision-making processes is another challenge. Engaging the Nambya and Tonga communities in tourism initiatives can ensure that their cultural heritage is accurately represented and preserved (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Community-based tourism projects that empower locals can lead to more sustainable and inclusive tourism development. The study suggests that community involvement ensures that local communities have ownership and control over their cultural heritage, allowing them to make decisions about how it is presented and managed. Community involvement helps to ensure that cultural heritage is presented in an authentic and respectful manner, avoiding cultural appropriation and misrepresentation. Butler, (1999). states that community involvement is a critical aspect of culture and heritage tourism, but it can also be a significant challenge. Addressing the challenges of community involvement requires commitment to participatory approaches, capacity building and power sharing arrangements. The study concurs with the notion by Butler, R.W. (1999) due to the fact that local communities may lack the capacity and resources to participate effectively in tourism development management.

### 2.6.3 Risk of Cultural Commodification

Cultural commodification, the process of transforming cultural practices ,traditions, and artifacts into marketable products ,poses a significant risk to the authenticity and sustainability of cultural heritage (Cohen,1988).As cultural tourism continues to grow, the commodification of culture has become a pressing concerns ,threatening the very essence of cultural heritage .Cultural commodification involves the transformation of cultural practices, traditions, and artifacts into products that can be bought and sold (Harrison, 2008).This process often involves the simplification and standardization of complex cultural practices, reducing them to easily consumable products (Greenwood, 1989). The resulting products are often devoid of their original cultural context and meaning, serving only to satisfy the demands of the tourists. The risk of cultural commodification arises when cultural elements are commercialized and stripped of their original significance to appeal to tourists (Greenwood, 1989). This can lead to the erosion of cultural identities and traditions. To mitigate this risk, tourism practices should prioritize the authenticity and integrity of cultural experiences (Timothy, 2011). The study concurs with the notion by Timothy, (2011) cultural commodification poses a significant risk to the authenticity and sustainability of cultural heritage. To mitigate these risks, it is essential to support community-based tourism initiatives, promote cultural sensitivity, and develop and enforce regulations and policies.

## 2.7 Gaps in the Literature

While substantial research has been conducted on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, several gaps remain. These include. The need for more comprehensive documentation and preservation of cultural heritage (Ndoro, 2001). Long-term studies on the sustainability of economic benefits from tourism (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010). Further exploration of the environmental impact of tourism on Hwange National Park. (Mbaiwa, 2017).

## Chapter Summary

This study aims to address these gaps by providing new insights into the preservation and promotion of Hwange's cultural heritage, evaluating the long-term sustainability of tourism

benefits, and exploring the social and environmental dynamics of tourism in the region. This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature on culture and heritage tourism, with a focus on the challenges and opportunities facing the development of tourism infrastructure in Hwange, Zimbabwe. This chapter examines key concepts and theories related to culture and heritage tourism, including the importance of community involvement, the risk of cultural commodification and the need for sustainable tourism practices. The chapter is reviewing related literature on culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. The chapter is identifying the gaps in the existing literature. The literature review provides a foundation for the empirical research presented in subsequent chapters and informs the development of the research questions and objectives. The chapter concludes by summarizing the key findings of the literature review and highlighting the contributions of the study to the existing body of knowledge on culture and heritage tourism.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In chapter 2 we presented a comprehensive review of existing literature and theoretical perspectives relevant to culture and heritage tourism. The chapter began by defining the core concepts underpinning cultural and heritage tourism, establishing a conceptual framework for understanding their role within the broader tourism industry. A contextual overview of Hwange as a tourism destination was provided, highlighting its cultural significance and historical background. The chapter further examined the evolution and development of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange, with particular attention to existing infrastructure and the socio-economic benefits derived by local communities. This literature review offers critical insight into the dynamics of tourism in Hwange and serves as a basis of heritage tourism in Hwange.

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology employed in the study of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. This chapter provides a detailed overview of the research methodology employed to examine the development, challenges, and impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe. The aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research process, including the chosen research design, data collection methods, analytical approaches, ethical considerations, limitations, ensuring transparency and robustness in the study and the rationale behind these choices. The selection of the research design is critical as it directly impacts the validity and reliability of the study's findings. The chosen methodologies aim to

explore how cultural and heritage tourism is contributing to the socio-economic and cultural dynamics of Hwange while addressing gaps in existing knowledge.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is the overall strategy that integrates the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, ensuring that the research problem is effectively addressed (Creswell, 2014). The research design includes the study type (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), the data collection methods, and the analysis plan. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then merged during interpretation. The rationale for this approach was to validate and enrich qualitative findings with quantitative insights, enabling a more nuanced analysis of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. The study uses a mixed research design combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative research uses surveys to collect numerical data, helping to measure things like how many people are involved or what patterns exist (Creswell, 2014). Quantitative research design relies on structured tools like surveys, experiments, or statistical analysis to ensure precision. The qualitative research includes interviews and focus group discussions to understand people's thoughts and feelings and experiences in more detail (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative allows for the exploration of intangible aspects like traditions, beliefs, and cultural values.

The study has chosen to use a mixed methods research design to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of this topic. Culture and Heritage tourism encompasses both tangible and intangible heritage, ranging from historical sites and traditional practices to community perceptions and economic impacts that require both quantitative and qualitative exploration. The decision to use mixed methods as a research tool in this study is guided by the need to obtain a well-rounded and contextually grounded understanding of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. Given the interdisciplinary and community-based nature of the subject, relying on a single methodological approach would limit the depth or breadth of insight. Mixed methods enable the use of both qualitative tools such as interviews and focus group discussions and quantitative instruments such as a survey and statistical analysis to explore the same research questions from multiple angles (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This integration helps to validate findings through triangulation and ensures that the voices of local stakeholders

are meaningfully capture alongside numerical data and on participation and economic impact. It allows us to explore how and why local communities engage with cultural tourism, not just how much they do so. According to Greene (2007), mixed methods serve as a powerful tool for addressing social issues by complementary insights that would not emerge from either qualitative and mixed methods alone.

Mixed methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. This design is advantageous for its ability to validate findings through triangulation and to address both the depth and breadth of the research problem. (Cresswell&Plano Clark,2018). This design is widely used in various fields, including social sciences, education, healthcare, and business to name a few. According to Tashakkori, A., Teddlie, (2010) the primary objective of mixed methods research design is to provide a more complete and nuanced understanding of research problems or phenomena by integrating the breadth and generalizability of quantitative data with the depth and contextualization of qualitative data. Mixed methods research design is a powerful approach to investigating complex phenomena, offering a comprehensive understanding of research problems or phenomena by integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Bryman, .2016). While it has several advantages, including increased validity and reliability, flexibility, and adaptability, it also has limitations, such as increased complexity, requiring multiple skill sets, and being resource intensive. By understanding the characteristics, types, and methods of mixed methods research design, researchers can design and conduct studies that contribute meaningfully to their field of study.

### **3.3 Research Methodology**

Research methodology refers to the systematic and structured approach used to investigate research questions or hypotheses, it involves the use of various techniques, procedures, and tools to collect, analyze and interpret data (Creswell, J.W., 2014). The primary objective of research methodology is to ensure that research studies are conducted in rigorous, systematic and unbiased manner, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of findings. The research methodology details the specific procedures and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It encompasses the selection of data collection methods, sampling techniques, and data analysis strategies. (Bryman, 2016). Research methodology is a critical component of any research study, providing a systematic

and structured approach to investigating research questions or hypotheses. By understanding the components, types, and characteristics of good research methodology, researchers can design and conduct studies that contribute meaningfully to their field of study. According to Creswell, (2014) research methodology ensures that research studies are conducted in a rigorous and systematic manner. The methodology increases the validity and reliability of findings by minimizing bias and error. Research methodology provides a framework for data collection and analysis, ensuring that data are collected and analyzed in a consistent and systematic manner.

### **3.4 Population and Sample**

The target population for this study comprised residents of Hwange District in Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe, particularly individuals involved in or affected by culture and heritage tourism. This included local community members, traditional leaders, custodians of heritage sites, tourism operators, and officials from both the Hwange Rural District council and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority. Hwange was selected as a case study due to its diverse cultural heritage, including sites such as the Bumbusi National Monument and Makwa Rock Paintings, as well as the custodians of the indigenous Nambya and Tonga communities. According to Chirikure et al. (2010), such cultural assets are central to identity and community cohesion in Zimbabwean Heritage landscapes, making Hwange a pertinent context for examining cultural tourism. Furthermore, the district's proximity to Hwange National Park creates opportunities for integrated cultural and natural tourism experiences, as noted by Ndoro and Pwiti (2001), who argue for the synergy between heritage conservation and tourism development in Southern Africa.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling Methods**

Purposive sampling was used for the qualitative component to select participants with relevant knowledge and experience in cultural tourism (Palinkas et al., 2015). For quantitative data collection, systematic random sampling was applied to ensure a representative sample of tourists, enhancing generalizability (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This non probability sampling strategy involves the intentional selection of participants based on their knowledge expertise or involvement in the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2015). In this study purposive sampling was used to identify key informants who were directly engaged in or impacted by cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange. These include Traditional leaders, local tour guides and operators involved in cultural tours and officials from tourism and cultural heritage institutions. For the

quantitative component, systematic random sampling was applied to ensure a more representative and unbiased sample of the broader community. This probability sampling methods enhances generalizability by selecting participants at regular intervals from a predetermined list of sampling frame (Saunders et al.,2019). The combination of purposive and systematic sampling allowed for the inclusion of both informed perspectives and general community views, aligning with the study's goals of capturing a holistic understanding of cultural and heritage tourism in the area.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

This study adopted a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. This enabled both in depth insights and measurable data to support the study's objectives. A mixed methods approach allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange by combining in depth perspectives with measurable trends.

Semi structured interviews are a popular data collection method in qualitative research. This method involves conducting in depth interviews with participants, using a flexible and open-ended interview guide, semi structured interviews allow researchers to explore participants, experiences, perspectives and opinions in detail, while also maintaining some structure and consistency. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders, including local community members, tourism operators, and government officials. (Kvale &Brinkmann, 2015). Semi structured interviews provide rich and contextualized data, offering insights into participants experiences and perspectives. However, conducting semi structured interviews can be time consuming, requiring significant resources and effort. The quality of data collected through semi structured interviews depends on participants responses, which can be influenced by various factor. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders including local community leaders, tourism official, cultural practitioners, and business owners. Semi structured interviews allow flexibility and depth which are essential for understanding local experiences and perspectives (Kvale &Brinkmann,2015).

According to Krueger and Casey, (2015) focus group discussions encouraged interaction and collective reflection among community members, a method useful for exploring social norms and shared meanings. Participant observation at cultural sites and events enabled the researcher to experience the setting firsthand, supporting the collection of rich contextual data

(DeWalt,2011).According to Casey (2015)focus group discussions were employed as part of the qualitative data collection strategy to generate in depth insights into community perspectives, stakeholder experiences, and collective attitudes toward cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange.FDGs are particularly useful for exploring shared local meanings and generating discussion on topics that are deeply embedded in cultural practices and group dynamics(Krueger &Casey,2011

A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of tourist visiting Hwange. Structured surveys are effective for capturing standardized responses across a larger population (Bryman, 2016). Data from local tourism authorities and government sources supplemented the primary data, offering statistical insights on tourism flows and economic contributions. Structured surveys are effective for capturing standardized responses across a larger population (Bryman, 2016). Data from local tourism authorities and government sources supplemented the primary data, offering statistical insights on tourism flows and economic contributions.

Surveys are self-report measures used to collect data from a large sample of participants. This method involves distributing standardized questionnaires or surveys to participants, who respond to questions and provide demographic information. Surveys will be administered to tourists visiting Hwange to gather quantitative data on their experiences, motivations, and perceptions of culture and heritage tourism. Surveys enable researchers to collect data efficiently, as participants respond to standardized questions. Surveys allow researchers to collect data from large sample sizes, increasing the generalizability of findings. Surveys are cost effective as they eliminate the need for face-to-face interactions. Bryman, (2016). However, surveys provide limited depth as participants respond to standardized questions without the opportunity for elaboration. Surveys are susceptible to social desirability bias, as participants may respond in a way that is socially acceptable.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability**

According to Yin (2018), validity and reliability are essential concepts in research that assess the quality and trustworthiness of data and findings. Validity refers to the extent to which a study accurately measures what it intends to measure, encompassing types such as content validity (coverage of the concept), construct validity (alignment with theoretical constructs), criterion validity (predictive power), internal validity (accuracy of cause-and-effect conclusions), and

external validity (generalizability to other contexts). Yin, (2018). Reliability, on the other hand, focuses on the consistency and stability of a measure over time, including test-retest reliability (stability over time), inter-rater reliability (agreement between observers), internal consistency (uniformity of responses across items), and parallel-forms reliability (equivalence of different test versions). Together, high validity and reliability enhance the credibility of research findings, ensuring they are both accurate and dependable. To ensure validity, the study will employ triangulation by cross-referencing data from interviews, focus groups, observations, and literature (Patton, 2002). Reliability will be enhanced through meticulous data collection procedures, including verbatim transcription of interviews and focus group discussions (Flick, 2018). Triangulation of data sources such as combining interviews and focus groups will further strengthen the consistency of findings. Additionally, a pilot study will be conducted to refine research instruments and ensure clarity and reliability before full scale data collection.

### **3.6.1 Data Presentation and Analysis**

Data analysis methods in this study followed the mixed methods approach, aligning with the use of both qualitative and quantitative data. This allowed for a comprehensive interpretation of findings by integrating thematic insights from interviews and focus groups with statistical patterns derived from survey data. Each data type was analyzed using appropriate techniques to ensure reliability and depth in addressing the research objectives. Each data type was analyzed using appropriate rigorous techniques to ensure both reliability and depth in addressing the research objectives. Quantitative data gathered through structure questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, and the socio-economic impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. Qualitative data, obtained through interviews and focus group discussions, were analyzed thematically. This method allowed an in depth understanding of the lived experiences and cultural values of the local community.

### **3.6.2 Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research methodology for identifying, coding and categorizing patterns in data. This approach involves a systematic and flexible process of analyzing data to identify themes, concepts and meanings. Thematic analysis is commonly used in various fields, including psychology, education, healthcare, and social sciences. Thematic analysis will be

used to analyze qualitative data from interviews and document analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006). This method involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. Thematic analysis is a flexible and systematic approach to identifying patterns in qualitative data. It offers several advantages, including flexibility, rich and contextualized data, and a systematic and a transparent process. However thematic analysis also has several limitations, including subjective interpretation, time consuming analysis, and difficulty in establishing causality by understanding the characteristics, steps, and advantages and limitations of thematic analysis, researchers can use this methodology to gain valuable insights into qualitative data (Braun &Clarke, 2006).

### **3.7 Pilot testing**

Prior to the full-scale data collection, a pilot test was conducted to evaluate the clarity, reliability, and effectiveness of the research instruments, pilot testing the interview guide. Pilot testing is an essential step in research design, especially in mixed methods studies, as it enables the researcher to identify ambiguities in questions, detect potential biases, and assess the overall structure and flow of the instruments (Van Teijlingen&Hundley, 2001). In this study, the pilot testing involved a small sample of five participants, two local community leaders and three cultural tourism operators, who were not included in the main study. Their feedback helped refine the wording of questions and ensure cultural relevance, especially given the localized context of Hwange's cultural and heritage landscape. Pilot testing also contributed to enhancing the validity and reliability of the instruments. According to Johanson and Brooks (2010), conducting a pilot study ensures that questions are interpreted as intended by the target population, which is particularly crucial in cross cultural and community-based research settings. Adjustments made following the pilot included simplifying technical terms, reordering some questions to improve logical flow, and adding culturally sensitive examples to clarify key concepts. This process ultimately strengthened the overall quality of the data collection tools and ensured they were well suited to capturing nuanced insights on community perceptions, heritage site identification, and socio-economic impacts within the Hwange district.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

All participants are provided with a detailed information sheet explaining the purpose of the study, their expected role, the voluntary nature of participation and how the data would be used. Consent

was obtained in writing before data collection began. For participants with limited literacy, information and consent was documented in line with ethical recommendations by Babbie (2020) and the Belmont Report (1979). Ethical clearance was obtained before fieldwork. In line with principles outlined by Babbie (2020), informed consent was sought from all participants, anonymity and confidentiality were ensured, and participants had the right to withdraw at any point. The study was designed to avoid psychological, social or cultural harm. In line with the ethical standards outlined by Babbie (2020) and the Belmont report (1979), informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in this study. For participants with limited literacy, the consent process was conducted orally in the local language, and their consent was documented through verbal affirmation or signature. Babbie (2020) emphasizes the ethical obligation of researchers to ensure voluntary participation, comprehension, and the protection of participants from harm, principles are upheld throughout the research process.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter detailed the mixed methods approach employed to explore culture and heritage in Hwange. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques provided a comprehensive and balanced methodology to support the study's objectives. This chapter has outlined the research design and methodology for the study of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. The chosen mixed methods research design, combined with the specified data collection and analysis methods, provides a robust framework for addressing the research problem and achieving the study's objectives. The integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches ensures a thorough examination of the research topic, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

## **CHAPTER 4: Data presentation, Analysis and Research Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 3 outlined the research methodology adopted for this study, which employed a mixed methods approach to explore culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of community perceptions, key cultural heritage sites, and the socio-economic impact of cultural tourism. Data

was gathered through interviews with local leaders and tourism operators, alongside surveys administered to community members. The chapter also detailed sampling strategies, data collection tools, and procedures used to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. This chapter 4 presents and analyzes the findings from the mixed methods research conducted in Hwange, focusing on the perceptions, engagement, management, and socio-economic impact of culture and heritage tourism. Data is collected through interviews with local leaders and community tourism operators, as well as surveys distributed among community members. Chapter 4 builds on the methodology detailed in chapter 3 by presenting the actual data collected and analyzing it in relation to the research questions.

## **4.2 Data presentation**

The chapter presents the findings of the study based on data collected through a mixed methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques. This aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe, in line with the study's three main objectives, to understand local community perceptions and engagement with culture and heritage tourism, to identify key cultural heritage sites in Hwange and assess their management, and to evaluate the socio-economic impact of cultural heritage tourism on the local community. The qualitative insights were obtained through in-depth interviews with local leaders, community tourism operators, and custodians of cultural heritage. The results are organized thematically, corresponding to each research objective. Where applicable data is supported by tables to enhance clarity and provide deeper context.

### **4.2.1 Background Information**

This section presents the findings from an in-depth interview guide conducted with key stakeholders in Hwange, exploring the dynamics of cultural and heritage tourism in the area. The interviews aimed to gather insights into challenges, opportunities, and perceptions surrounding cultural and heritage tourism development in Hwange with a focus on its potential impact on local communities and the tourism industry. The data collected provides a nuanced understanding of the current state of cultural heritage tourism in Hwange, highlighting the complexities and opportunities that exist in this sector.

**Table 4.1: Participants Age Range**

*Table 4.1*

| Age Range    | Number Of Participants |
|--------------|------------------------|
| 20-30+       | 7                      |
| 30-40        | 6                      |
| 40-50        | 8                      |
| 50-60        | 9                      |
| 60-70        | 5                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>35</b>              |

**Table 4.1 shows the number of participants in both interviews and focus group discussions**

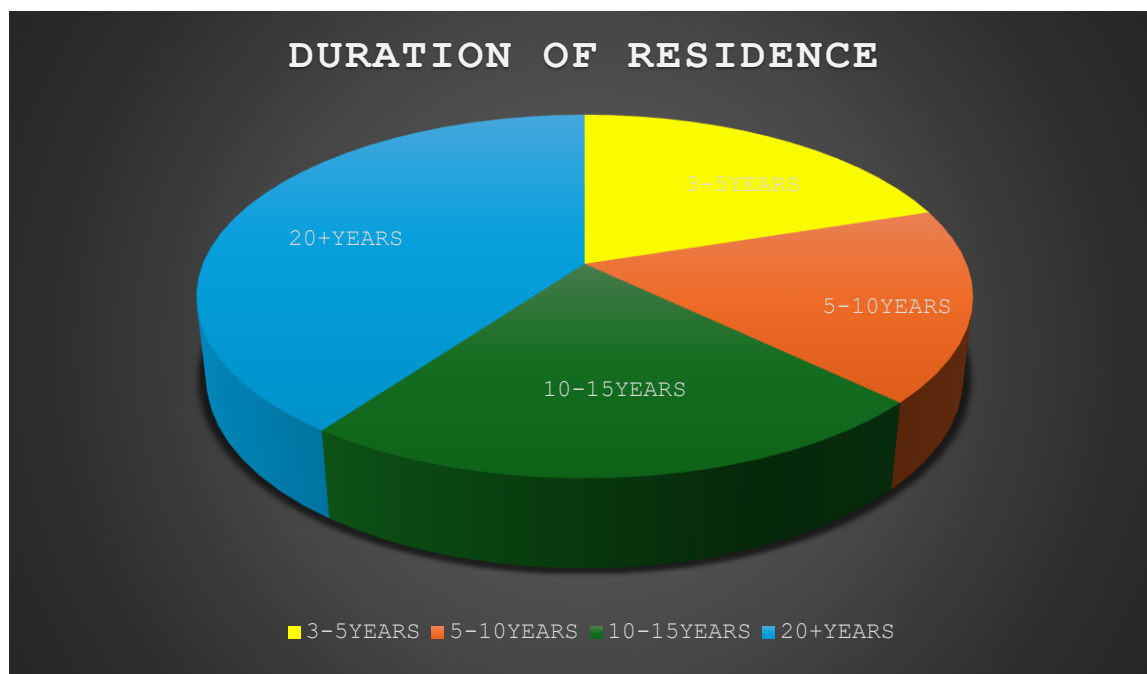
*Table 4.1* shows the ages of the interviewees ranged from 20 to 70 years, with a majority (about 60%) being between 40 and 60 years. Interviews were conducted with a total of 10 informants, with 5 male and 5 female participants.

**Table 4.2 Occupation of participants**

Table 4.2 presents a breakdown of various occupations of the participants involved in the study.

*Table 4.2*

|                   |                 |                         |               |                |                          |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Heritage Managers | Museum Curators | Local Community leaders | Self-Employed | Civil Servants | Environmental scientists |
| 4                 | 2               | 2                       | 1             | 1              | 2                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      |                 |                         |               |                | <b>10</b>                |



*Figure 4.3*

**Figure 4.3: Distribution by Duration of Residency.**

Figure 4.3 shows the duration or frequency of visits of involved participants in the study. It is divided into four segments representing different time periods. Each segment corresponds to the proportion of residents who have lived in the area for the specified duration. This visually conveys how long the residents have been part of the community.

**Table 4.4 Gender distribution of participants**

*Table 4.4*

| Gender       | Number of Participants |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Male         | 16                     |
| Female       | 19                     |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>35</b>              |

The table presents a gender distribution of participants, showcasing the number of males and females involved in the study.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 key informants. The interviews consisted of 10 individuals with 5 male and 5 female participants. A total of 3 focus group discussions were conducted, involving 25 individuals from the local community. The first group consisted of 8 individuals with 4 male and 4 female participants. The second group consisted of 7 individuals with 2 male and 5 female participants. The last group had 10 individuals with 5 male and 5 female participants.

The researcher used an interview guide which had five key questions. All the interviews were held in English with the verbal consent of interviewees, interviews were recorded and later on transcribed for further analysis. As part of data analysis, the researcher listened to the recorded interviews several times, taking notes of similar and diverging perspectives of the research participants. This process was also done for the interview transcripts. The following section presents the views and perspectives of the research participants.

In the following section, the researcher presented the background of the participants. The researcher used pseudonyms to help maintain participants privacy and confidentiality allowing them to share information freely without fear of being identified.

This study engaged 10 key stakeholders in Hwange's cultural and Heritage tourism sector comprising 2 Museum curators with expertise in preserving and showcasing Hwange's cultural and historical heritage,<sup>2</sup> Heritage Managers responsible for managing and conserving cultural and historical sites,<sup>2</sup> Self Employed individuals involved in tourism related activities ,providing insights into the local tourism industry,<sup>2</sup> Civil Servants working in government departments related to tourism ,culture, and heritage, offering perspectives on policy and implementation,<sup>2</sup> Environmental Scientists with knowledge of Hwange's natural environment and its intersection with cultural and heritage tourism.

#### **4.2.3 Responses from interviewees**

The following section presents the findings from in depth interviews conducted with 10 key stakeholders in Hwange's cultural and heritage tourism sector. The interviews provided rich

insights into the participants experiences, perceptions, and opinions on the challenges, opportunities and implications of cultural and heritage tourism development in Hwange.

Participant's response to question 1: *How can culture and heritage tourism be developed sustainably in Hwange?*

Participant A responded, *'To develop culture and heritage tourism sustainably in Hwange, we need community-led initiatives, effective site conservation, responsible tourism practices, and infrastructure development that prioritizes environmental sustainability.'*

Participant B responded, *'For sustainable culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, I think we should focus on authentic cultural experiences community and empowerment and collaborative management. This can be achieved by partnering with local communities to develop tourism products, providing training and capacity building programs, and ensuring that tourism revenue benefits the local community.'*

Participant C responded, *'Sustainable culture and heritage tourism in Hwange demands a balance between conservation and commercialization. We need to protect our heritage sites while generating revenue. This can be achieved through responsible tourism practices, effective site management and community engagement.'*

Participant D,' responded *'To develop sustainable tourism in Hwange, we must prioritize heritage preservation, community involvement, and involvement and innovative product development. This includes showcasing Hwange's unique cultural and natural heritage through storytelling, festivals and experimental tourism.'*

Participant E responded, *'Sustainability in Hwange's tourism industry requires a strong focus on environment conservation, cultural sensitivity, and economic viability. We need to adopt ecofriendly practices, respect local customs, and ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits to local communities.'*

Participant's response to question 2: *What are the cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange?*

Participant A responded, *'key attractions include Ngamo village, which showcases traditional huts and vibrant community life, offering insights into the local Ndebele culture. Hwange National Park also has a rich history initially inhabited by the San people and later by European explorers. The park's history and diverse ecosystems make it a unique cultural and natural heritage site.'*

Participant B responded, *‘Visitors love exploring Hwange’s cultural landscape through activities like traditional storytelling and crafts at Ngamo village. Hwange’s National Park’s massive elephant population and unique landscapes are also major draws. Additionally, Sinamatella Camp and Robins Camp offer authentic wilderness experiences with guided game drives and walking safaris.’*

Participant C responded, *‘Hwange offers attractions like Kennedy Vlei, a picturesque wetland with rich biodiversity and opportunities for birdwatching and photography. Hwange’s Main Camp and Safari Lodges also provide insights into the region’s heritage.’*

Participant D responded, *‘Heritage sites in Hwange include ancient rock art in Chizarira National Park, reflecting the San people’s cultural legacy. Hwange National Park’s history as a royal hunting ground for the Ndebele tribe and its establishment as a game reserve in 1928 are also significant.’*

Participant E responded, *‘I run a cultural village tour where we introduce tourists to traditional cooking, drumming, and storytelling. The key attractions is the homestead setup that reflects pre-colonial lifestyles. Tourists are fascinated by our dances and how they relate to life events like birth and rainmaking.’*

Participant’s response to question 3: *How does culture and heritage tourism contribute to Hwange’s economy?*

Participant A responded, *‘It generates income through entry fees, which supports museum operations and creates jobs for local guides.’*

Participant B responded, *‘It reduces over dependence on natural resources by offering alternative income from cultural experiences.’*

Participant C responded *‘It gives me a steady income from selling traditional crafts to tourists, which helps me support my family.’*

Participant D responded, *‘It creates employment, increases local business activity, and contributes to local government revenue through tourism taxes and licenses.’*

Participant E responded, *‘It diversifies the economy beyond mining by supporting local hospitality, transport, and cultural services.’*

Participant’s response to question 4: *What are the impacts of tourism on Hwange’s cultural heritage and community?*

Participant A responded, *‘Tourism has helped revive interest in traditional Nambya artifacts and oral history. More visitors mean we now conduct more cultural exhibitions and storytelling events.’*

Participant B responded, *‘There is better documentation of cultural heritage now because tourism demands interpretation, but unfortunately, limited funding means we often prioritize popular displays for tourists rather than comprehensive heritage preservation.’*

Participant C responded, *‘Tourism has brought income through selling traditional crafts. I’ve been able to support my family by making items that reflect our culture. Tourism gives us a platform to share our culture.’*

Participant D responded, *‘Tourism has stimulated rural development in areas near heritage sites. We have seen improved infrastructure. Tourism has encouraged the documentation and conservation of under recognized cultural sites.’*

Participant E responded, *‘Tourism has revived public interest in local history. We have seen increased attendance at cultural exhibitions and school programs. We have been able to create multilingual exhibits due to international tourist demand, which enhances knowledge sharing.’*

Participants to response to question 5: *What challenges hinder culture and heritage tourism development in Hwange?*

Participant A responded, *‘One of the major challenges is underfunding. Our museum lacks adequate resources for proper preservation, exhibitions, and outreach. Without strong institutional support, we struggle to attract both local and international visitors who might be interested in Hwange’s rich cultural heritage.’*

Participant B responded, *‘Marketing is a big problem. There’s little to no promotion of our cultural sites. Most tourists come for the wildlife in the national park and have no idea there’s a rich*

*heritage right here. We need stronger collaboration between local entrepreneurs and tourism boards.’’*

Participant C responded *‘Climate change is another factor. Some traditional practices and sites are affected by droughts and changing weather patterns. This alters the landscape and can even erode the authenticity of heritage tourism experiences.*

Participant D responded, *‘There’s limited community involvement in heritage management. When communities are sideline, they lose interest in protecting or promoting their own cultural assets. Engagement and benefit sharing are key.’’*

Participant E responded, *‘Illegal mining and land use conflicts threaten some of our heritage sites. These activities damage sites physically and also affect their cultural significance. Protection laws exist but are poorly enforced. ‘’*

#### **4.3 Data Analysis**

This section presents the responses of the participants to the interview guide. Five themes were identified from the interview guide and the responses of the participants are presented according to the 5 themes, and how the individual responses touched on these themes in their responses to the questions.

##### **4.3.1 How can culture and heritage tourism be developed sustainably in Hwange?**

**Theme 1:** Community centred and Resource conscious Development of cultural and heritage tourism

One of the research objectives of this study is to understand local community perceptions and engagement with culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe. On that note, a question was posed to all the key informants, how can culture and heritage tourism be developed sustainably in Hwange. The interviewees gave varying responses. For interviewee A, He said;

Participant A responded *‘To develop culture and heritage tourism sustainably in Hwange, we need community-led initiatives, effective site conservation, responsible tourism practices, and infrastructure development that prioritizes environmental sustainability.*

Interviewee A mentions that to Sustainable development of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange requires active community involvement, capacity building, and preservation of cultural and natural resources. Scholars like Timothy, D.J. Boyd, S.W. (2003) concur with this notion that local community involvement is vital for the success and sustainability of heritage tourism. Community involvement was also mentioned by other Four (4) interviewees. However, interviewee E argued ‘Sustainability in Hwange’s tourism industry requires a strong focus on environment conservation, cultural sensitivity, and economic viability. We need to adopt ecofriendly practices, respect local customs, and ensure fair distribution of tourism benefits to local communities.

*Interview E argued that sustainability in Hwange’s tourism industry depends  
On active community engagement, alongside environmental conservation, cultural  
Sensitivity and economic viability.*

Interviewee E’s point emphasized that achieving sustainability in Hwange’s tourism industry necessitates a holistic approach that includes active community engagement, environmental conservation, cultural sensitivity and economic viability. This point reflects the ideas of Butler (1999) who emphasized that for tourism to be sustainable, it must consider environmental limits, community well-being, cultural respect.

The responses from research participants reveals a well informed and holistic perspective on sustainable cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange. Their emphasis on active community involvement highlights the importance of local ownership and participation in planning and decision-making processes. This suggests a desire for empowerment and self-determination among community members. The mention of capacity building reflects a long-term vision, recognizing the need to equip locals with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage and benefit from tourism initiatives.

#### **4.3.2. What are the cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange?**

##### **Theme 2: Cultural Practices and Traditions**

This study also sought to understand what are cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange. What are the cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange? This question was asked to the research

participants. One of the respondents view culture and heritage attractions in Hwange positively, recognizing their value for both cultural preservation and economic development. He noted that:

Traditional sites, such as ancestral shrines, historical ruins, and village cultural centres, serve as important spaces for educating younger generations and maintaining a sense of belonging. Furthermore, culture and heritage tourism were widely acknowledged as a valuable source of income, with community members benefiting activities like traditional dance performances, craft sales, and local guiding services.

On Cultural Practices and Traditions, respondent B, gave a more detailed perspective, He emphasized that:

*Hwange is very rich in cultural heritage, although most people only think of the national park. For us local the real wealth lies in our traditions, customs, and sites that hold deep meaning. Our cultural heritage attractions are not just physical sites that hold deep meaning. Our cultural heritage attractions are not just physical sites they are lived experiences, the stories passed down, and the practices we still uphold today. One key attraction is the Bumbusi ruins. This is an ancient stone walled site located within Hwange National Park. It is very significant to our history as it connects us to early civilizations that existed in this area long before colonial times. The ruins are sacred to many of us, and elders often speak of them with reverence but beyond that I would say our cultural practices and traditions are the strongest part of our heritage.*

This more elaborate response quoted above is rich, insightful and authentic, it reflects a deep sense of pride and identity tied to cultural practices and traditions in Hwange. The respondent emphasizes that traditions are not just historical but ongoing and lived. This shows that people view culture as something active and evolving, not static or confined to museums. Respondent notion that traditions are not just historical but ongoing and lived aligns with UNESCO (2003), that living heritage consists of practices and knowledge passed down from generation to generation. It is dynamic, constantly recreated, and central to a community's cultural identity. Respondent as assertion also aligns with Graham, Ashworth, & Tunbridge, (2000), that heritage is simply not about the past, it is about using the past in the present to shape identities and futures.

This study concurs with the scholarly notion that heritage is not solely concerned with the preservation of the past but rather, it involves the active use of the past in shaping present identities and envisioning future trajectories. As Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000) argue, heritage is a process rather than a fixed product, one that communities continually reinterpret to make sense of their current realities.

#### **4.3.3: How does culture and heritage tourism contribute to Hwange's economy?**

##### **Theme 3: Employment and Livelihood opportunities**

In heritage studies Scholars such as Scheyvens (1999) and Ashley & Roe (2002) have argued that tourism can empower local communities economically when it results in increased income levels, job creation, and support for local enterprises. Tourism can make a stronger contribution to poverty reduction by boosting local employment, procurement, and small enterprise opportunities. In that sense, this study posed a question to research participants, how does culture and heritage tourism contribute to Hwange's economy? The research participants made different comments, for example, interviewee D is of the view that:

*Cultural heritage tourism has become very important to our economy here in Hwange most people thought that only wildlife and national park could bring tourists. But now people are coming to see our way of life our dances, our stories, our crafts, and our sacred places like Bumbusi ruins. This is helping many families earn a living. For examples when they're cultural festivals or when tourists visit traditional homesteads, local people are hired to perform traditional music and dances. Some women make and sell crafts like baskets, beads and traditional clothing. Young people also work as cultural guides, sharing our history and explaining our customs. Even elders are consulted to perform rituals, and they receive something in return. I have seen how this has created jobs for those who used to have nothing especially women and youth.*

The response from the respondents is insightful, authentic, and thematically rich. It effectively communicates both the economic and cultural value of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. The respondent used concrete, everyday examples, crafts, performances, guiding and cooking to show how local people benefit economically. The responses from the participants aligns with

Regina Scheyvens (1999) that tourism can empower local communities economically when it results in increased income levels, job creation and support for local enterprises. Scheyvens argues that when communities control their own tourism narratives and benefit financially, tourism becomes a tool for empowerment.

One of the other respondents view on job creation she said:

*Tourism has made many young people interested in learning from elders again. They now ask how to drum, how to folktale, how to prepare traditional herbs, Tourism gives them a direct income source and a stronger social voice”.*

Respondent D view that tourism has made young people interested in learning from elders again aligns with Chirikure and Pwiti (2008), that when communities participate in heritage management, traditional knowledge is not only preserved but passed on through meaningful activities that create income and employment. The respondent E view on job creation was based on the fact youth who once migrated to urban areas in search of work are now finding local employment as cultural performers, guides, translators and artisans. A striking observation was that tourism has renewed youth interest in traditional knowledge systems such as drumming, herbal medicine, storytelling and craft making.

#### **4.3.4 What are the impacts of tourism on Hwange’s cultural heritage and community?**

##### **Theme4: Cultural Transformation and Community Development through Tourism**

Tourism in Hwange has been a powerful for both cultural transformation and community development. Respondents noted that increased tourist interest in local customs has led to revival of cultural practices that was previously neglected or fading, such as traditional dances, drumming, storytelling, and herbal medicine. The interviewees who participated in this study were asked about the impacts of tourism on Hwange’s cultural heritage community. The interview question was what are the impacts of tourism on Hwange’s cultural heritage and the local community?

One of the respondent’s argued Tourism has had both good and challenging effects on our culture and community here in Hwange. On the positive side, it has helped us realize the values of our

traditions. People now take pride in performing traditional dances, making crafts, and sharing stories with visitors. But at the same time, there's pressure to perform 'culture in a way that pleases tourists, some rituals are shortened or altered, which sometimes lose the deeper meaning. still, I believe benefits are more than the negatives because tourism has brought income, pride, and attention to our heritage. The other respondents also shared similar sentiments, for example interviewee F responded saying that:

*If tourists hadn't come, I think many of our cultural practices would have completely disappeared. Our traditional songs, dances, even our language they are now performed regularly because people know there's an audience and some income from it. Elders are now respected again because young people are learning from them. So, tourism has helped us to hold on to who we are.*

The participant's notion that cultural heritage tourism in Hwange plays a dual role in preserving traditional practices while stimulating socio economic development and youth engagement within the community. This notion reflects how respondents view tourism as not just an economic driver, but as a force that revives cultural identity, transmits knowledge to younger generations, and bring tangible improvements to livelihoods while also presenting risks of cultural distortion his insights aligns with Chirikure and Pwiti(2008)who argues that heritage is not only about the past it is a resource that can be actively used in the present to shape local development, identity and futures. They support the idea that tourism helps preserve culture while contributing to development. All research participants agree that tourism in Hwange has played a key role in reviving cultural practices, create local employment opportunities, and increasing community pride.

#### **4.3.5: What challenges hinder culture and heritage tourism development in Hwange?**

##### **Theme 5: Lack of infrastructure and investment**

Scholars like Timothy, D.J&Nyaupane G.P. (2009) have argued that in developing countries heritage tourism is significantly hindered by poor infrastructure (roads, communication, electricity) and lack of private /public sector investment. Without proper investment in physical and institutional infrastructure, heritage destinations remain underutilized and disconnected from tourism flows. The study posed a research question to research participants, what challenges hinder

culture and heritage tourism development in Hwange? The research participants made different opinions for example they're of the view that:

*We have beautiful places and cultural sites, but tourists can't reach them. The roads are bad, and there are no proper facilities like toilets even shade. There is no funding from government or NGOs to support cultural events, we end up using our own money and sometimes we just cancel. Some respondents also noted that we are told how we perform rituals or dances to suit tourists and young people are no longer interested in traditional things unless there's money.*

The responses from participants regarding challenges hindering culture and heritage tourism in Hwange resonated with arguments made by Timothy & Nyaupane (2009) argue that poor transport, communication, and visitor infrastructure in rural areas discourage tourist's access to cultural sites. Chirikure & Pwiti (2008) add that African heritage sites are often physically disconnected due to underdeveloped roads and lack of amenities.

Many respondents emphasized about the lack of infrastructure and investments. He said:

*Lack of infrastructure and investment directly limits tourist access to cultural sites and hampers local economic benefits from tourism, 'we have cultural sites and stories to share but the roads are too bad and there are no proper facilities'. Respondents noted that despite having rich cultural heritage, Hwange communities struggle to attract tourists due to inadequate infrastructure. The absence of investment in road signage, visitor facilities, and marketing platforms was repeatedly mentioned as a major barrier to both tourism growth and local economic empowerment.*

The respondents from Hwange emphasized that the lack of infrastructure and investment is a major hindrance to the growth of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. They highlighted issues such as poor road networks leading to heritage sites, absence of basic facilities like restrooms and signage, and the general neglect of cultural areas compared to more prominent wildlife tourism destinations. Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) argue that inadequate infrastructure such as transportation, accommodation and utilities is a critical barrier to tourism development in many parts of the developing world. Similarly, Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) assert that African heritage

sites are often neglected due to underinvestment, despite their potential to attract tourists and generate economic benefits. The participants' recognition of the importance of investment further supports the literature's focus on lack of infrastructure and investment as a key aspect of cultural preservation. Evident from the responses of the research participants is the important role that community members play in the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage. The local communities are the creators and custodians of heritage. The participants are also drawn from the community. This again shows the importance of local communities as outlined in the interviews conducted by the researcher.

#### **4.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter examined how culture and heritage shape and are shaped by the communities of Hwange. Findings show that tourism is a powerful catalyst for cultural revival and socio-economic development. Respondents consistently described renewed interest among youth in traditional drumming, dance, herbal medicine, and storytelling, elders have become valued cultural mentors, and once dormant practices now generate income through guiding, performances, craft sales, and food services. These benefits foster stronger community pride, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and diversified livelihoods, confirming scholarly arguments that living heritage can be “used in the present to shape identities and futures” (Graham et al.,2000) and that community led tourism empowers local people (Scheyvens,1999, Mbaiwa,2005). The chapter highlights structural constraints that hinder the full realization of Hwange's cultural tourism potential. Respondents pointed to poor road networks, inadequate visitor facilities, limited marketing, and scarce public or private investment conditions that mirror Timothy and Nyaupane's (2009) and Chirikure and Pwiti's (2008) critiques of infrastructure deficits across African heritage destinations. Concern over uneven benefit sharing and the commodification of rituals further underscore the need for inclusive planning, capacity building and policy support. Taken together, the findings portray a community that views tourism as both an engine for cultural vitality and economic growth, and a sector whose sustainability depends on strategic investment, equitable participations, and safeguarding of cultural authenticity.

## **Chapter 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the research, which explored local perceptions, participation, and the socio-economic impacts of cultural and heritage tourism in Hwange. Data was gathered using both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. Key themes such as cultural revival, economic empowerment, infrastructural limitations, and community participation emerged from the responses. Building on these insights, Chapter 5 discusses these findings in relation to existing literature. It begins with a summary of the research, outlines the key findings, identifies areas requiring further inquiry, and concludes with broader interpretations of the results. The chapter ends with practical recommendations aimed at enhancing the development of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange.

#### **5.2 Research Summary**

The study set out to examine the role and impact of culture and heritage tourism in promoting sustainable community development in Hwange District, Zimbabwe. The research was motivated by the increasing global and regional recognition of cultural tourism as a sustainable development tool, particularly in rural and marginalized communities where traditional livelihoods are under threat (UNESCO,2012, Richards,2007).

In Chapter 1, The background and context of the study was outlined .The chapter introduced Hwange's cultural landscape ,identifying its rich but underutilized cultural and heritage resources .The problem statement highlighted the need to assess whether and how these resources are being leveraged to benefit local communities through tourism .The research objectives focused on understanding community perceptions of cultural tourism, identifying and assessing key cultural sites and practices, and evaluating the socio economic outcomes of tourism. The central focus was on how communities engage with heritage tourism, the key cultural assets available, and how tourism affects local livelihoods. The chapter also outlined the significance of the study and also highlighted the increasing global interests in cultural tourism as a tool for both economic and cultural revitalization (Richards,2007).

Chapter 2 offered a comprehensive literature review focusing on themes such as cultural commodification, heritage interpretation, community participation, and tourism's socio-economic impacts. Scholars such as Cohen (1988) and Greenwood (1989) caution against the loss of authenticity when cultures are packaged for tourists, while Scheyvens (1999) and Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) advocate for community empowerment and heritage conservation through inclusive tourism models. Scholars like Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000) argue that heritage should not be seen merely as a relic of the past, but as a living tool that communities use to express identity and shape the future. The chapter also discussed the role of local participation, empowerment, and governance in ensuring the success and sustainability of cultural tourism (Scheyvens,1999, Chirikure&Pwiti,2008), Timothy &Nyaupane,2009).

Chapter 3 outlined the research methodology, which adopted a mixed methods design. This involved collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues. Qualitative data was gathered through in-depth interviews with local leaders, elders, tourism stakeholders, and youth involved in cultural tourism. The chapter detailed sampling techniques, data analysis strategies (thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative responses) and ethical protocols such as informed consent and confidentiality. The methodological approach allowed the study to capture both measurable trends and deeper community narratives.

Chapter 4 presented the research findings, organized around key themes. One of the major findings was that cultural tourism has contributed to the revival and preservation of traditional practices, including music, dance, drumming, storytelling, traditional medicine, and ceremonial events. These activities are now being taught to younger generations, driven in part by the income they generate from tourism. This aligns with the work of Munjeri (2004), who emphasizes the intergenerational transmission of intangible heritage as vital to cultural sustainability.

Another important finding was the economic empowerment of certain community members, particularly youth and women, through their participation in cultural performances, craft production, food vending, and tour guiding. Participants viewed tourism as a livelihood alternative in a region where formal employment opportunities are scarce. This supports the arguments of Mbaiwa (2005) and Scheyvens (1999), who note that cultural tourism can enhance local communities when communities are meaningfully engaged.

However, the study also found several challenges limiting the development of cultural tourism. Chief among these were poor infrastructure (bad roads, inadequate signage, lack of facilities), low levels of investment in cultural sites, and a general lack of government and private sector support. These findings echo the work of Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) and Timothy and Nyaupane (2009), who argue that without proper infrastructure and funding, heritage tourism cannot reach its full potential. Moreover, respondents raised concerns about inequality in benefit distribution, noting that some community members are more connected or better informed, thus benefiting disproportionately. The study demonstrated that while culture and heritage tourism in Hwange presents meaningful opportunities for cultural revitalization and community development, its impact is uneven and constrained by structural and institutional factors. The research contributes to broader debates on how to balance heritage conservation with development, authenticity with commodification, and tradition with modern tourism expectations.

### **5.3 Conclusions of key findings**

The research findings demonstrate that culture and heritage tourism in Hwange plays a vital role in shaping community development, economic empowerment, and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Based on data gathered from mixed methods data collected, several conclusions can be drawn.

#### **5.3.1 Cultural revitalization and Identity reconstruction**

One of the most significant findings is the resurgence of traditional cultural practices, which have been rejuvenated due to tourism demand. Respondents emphasized that traditional dances, drumming, storytelling, and herbal healing practices once on the decline due to globalization and western influence are now gaining renewed significance. These traditions are being shared with tourists and taught to younger generations, effectively reinforcing intergenerational knowledge transfer. This supports Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge's (2000) argument that heritage is not a fixed asset of the past but a constantly evolving resource used to construct identities in the present. In Hwange, culture is not only being preserved but is actively performed and reinvented in ways that reinforce community identity and pride. Furthermore, this transformation reflects a broader shift in community consciousness. As respondents noted, tourism has instilled a new appreciation for local heritage, with many residents recognizing the value of their traditions, not just for visitors but for themselves. This aligns with the concepts of

### **5.3.2 Economic Empowerment and Livelihood creation**

Heritagization, where communities begin to see their cultural practices as significant elements worth safeguarding (Harrison, 2010). Culture and heritage tourism has also emerged as important economic driver in Hwange. Respondents shared how tourism has created various employment opportunities, especially in informal and small-scale economic activities. These include traditional dance groups, cultural guiding, crafts production, traditional food preparation, and herbal medicine sales. For women and youth in particular, these opportunities provide alternative income sources in a district where formal employment is limited due to declining industrial sectors like mining. This supports Scheyvens (1999) empowerment framework, which suggests that tourism can never empower communities not only economically but also psychologically and socially when they are actively in its processes. These findings also align with Mbaiwa's (2005) research in Botswana, where cultural tourism contributed significantly to rural livelihoods and reduced reliance on natural resource exploitation.

Importantly, the respondents highlighted that cultural tourism does not just offer short term financial benefits, but can stimulate long term entrepreneurship and skill development. Skill in marketing, storytelling, performance, and cultural knowledge management are increasingly valued as communities formalize tourism activities. Thus, cultural tourism in Hwange is becoming a strategic avenue for diversifying livelihoods and building local capacity.

### **5.3.3. Infrastructural and investment barriers**

Despite its potential, culture and heritage tourism in Hwange is significantly constrained by inadequate infrastructure and minimal investment. Respondents consistently cited the poor state of roads, lack of signage to cultural sites, absence of visitor centers or museums, and the general neglect of public services. Many important cultural areas remain physically inaccessible to tourists, thereby limiting visibility, footfall and revenue generation. These challenges are not unique to Hwange and have been well documented in the literature. Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) argue that the success of cultural tourism initiatives in developing regions is closely tied to the availability of basic infrastructure such as transportation, accommodation, and site maintenance. Similarly, Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) stress that the sustainability of cultural heritage sites depends on both financial investment and long-term strategic planning. Without such support, even the most vibrant cultural resources remain underexploited.

Moreover, respondents pointed out that government support is inconsistent and largely inadequate. While there are national policies on tourism and heritage management, implementation at the local level is weak. The absence of funding mechanisms for community initiatives and poor public private partnerships have stalled many potentially viable tourism ventures. This reflects arguments by Ashley and Roe (2002), who emphasize the need for institutional support in realizing pro poor tourism outcomes.

#### **5.3.4 Inequality and Uneven benefit Distribution**

A critical conclusion is that although tourism provides opportunities, these are not equally accessible to all community members. Some respondents expressed frustration that benefits are often captured by a few individuals usually those with political influence, access to external markets, or proximity to tourism nodes. This unequal distribution of benefits contributes to social tensions and undermines community cohesion. This finding is consistent with Cole (2006), who warns that tourism can reinforce existing inequalities unless inclusive and participatory structures are put in place. The situation in Hwange underscores the need for transparent benefit sharing mechanisms, community led governance, and equitable access to training and resources to ensure that all members can participate meaningfully in the tourism economy.

#### **5.3.5 Tourism as a Catalyst for Cultural Education and Youth Empowerment**

Tourism has emerged as a catalyst for cultural education, especially among young people who are now increasingly interested in learning about their heritage. Respondents noted that youth are participating in traditional performances, learning the significance of rituals, engaging in herbal medicine training, and helping elders document oral histories. This marks a positive shift from prior disinterest in cultural matters, often attributed to Westernization and urban migration. Scholars like Munjeri (2004) and Smith (2009) affirm that cultural tourism can serve as a platform for educating youth about their heritage and ensuring the continuity of intangible cultural knowledge. The fact that cultural activities are now tied to economic opportunities has created an incentive for youth to embrace and uphold local traditions.

In conclusion, this study finds that culture and heritage tourism in Hwange is a powerful tool for cultural resilience, youth empowerment and economic development. However, these benefits are tempered by challenges such as infrastructure deficits, lack of investment, and social inequality.

Addressing these barriers will be critical for unlocking the full potential of heritage tourism as a driver of inclusive and sustainable community development.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations are made to improve the development, sustainability, and inclusivity of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange. These are directed at key stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, policy makers, private sectors investors, and cultural institutions.

One of the most urgent recommendations is the improvement of infrastructure in and around heritage sites. This includes the construction and maintenance of roads, signage, sanitation facilities and basic visitor amenities. Poor infrastructure discourages tourist arrivals and limits the income potential of communities. Local government and tourism authorities should prioritize infrastructure development in their regional planning. Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) stress that without supportive physical infrastructure, even the most culturally rich sites will fail to attract sustainable tourism flows.

There is need for more financial support both public and private to assist local communities in establishing and scaling up cultural tourism ventures. Grants, micro loans, and small business development programs should be made available to local entrepreneurs, especially youth and women involved in crafts, traditional performances, and cultural guiding. Such support can help formalize community enterprises, improve quality standards, and increase competitiveness. As Scheyvens (1999) argues, when communities are given access to capital and capacity building, they are better positioned to benefit from tourism economically and socially.

Capacity building a cornerstone of any heritage tourism development strategy. Training programs in hospitality, cultural interpretation, heritage site management, and business skills should be developed and offered regularly in the community. Special emphasis should be placed on youth and women, who are often underrepresented in formal training but are central to cultural expression and enterprise. According to Chirikure and Pwiti (2008), investing in human capital is essential for the sustainability of heritage initiatives, as it builds a sense of ownership and professionalizes cultural tourism delivery.

Efforts should be made to ensure that all segments of the community, including marginalized groups, are involved in the planning and decision-making processes related to cultural tourism. Community tourism committees or heritage boards should be informed with representatives from diverse sectors of society. Transparency in benefit sharing and equitable access to tourism opportunities should be guaranteed. Cole (2006) emphasizes that equitable participation is key to ensuring that tourism does not reproduce existing inequalities, but instead acts as a tool for empowerment.

Although there are national policies that support tourism and heritage, their implementation at the local level is inconsistent. The government needs to strengthen institutional frameworks, monitor policy execution, and ensure collaboration between ministries of tourism, culture, infrastructure and education. Greater alignment between national tourism strategies and local development plans is also essential. Ashley and Roe (2002) recommend that government actively facilitates pro-poor tourism by coordinating policy and investing in rural tourism infrastructure and promotion.

To sustain cultural practices over time, it is vital to create platforms where elders can teach younger generations traditional knowledge, such as medicinal practices, drumming, oral storytelling, and dance. Schools, community centers, and local tourism initiatives can all host such programs. Integrating cultural education into the school curriculum can also support this objective. Munjeri (2004) and UNESCO (2012) argue that intangible heritage can only survive if it remains relevant to younger generations through active transmission.

These recommendations, if adopted will not only enhance the sustainability and inclusiveness of cultural heritage tourism in Hwange but will also contribute to long term community empowerment and economic development. Strategic collaboration between stakeholders is essential to turn these recommendations into actionable programs.

## **5.5 Areas for Further Research**

Whilst this study has provided meaningful insights into the development and impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, it has also revealed areas where further research would be valuable. The following recommendations for future inquiry aim to build on the current study and address its limitations.

### **1. In depth Analysis of Tourist Perspectives**

This study focused primarily on local community members, leaders and tourism operators. Future research should explore the perceptions, motivations, and satisfaction levels of domestic and international tourists visiting Hwange's cultural heritage sites. Understanding tourist expectations and experiences can help tailor cultural products more effectively and ensure repeat visits. According to McKercher and du Cros (2002) successful cultural tourism depends on aligning community offerings with tourists' cultural interests and preferences.

## 2. Economic Impact assessment Using Quantitative Models

While this study highlighted the socio-economic benefits of heritage tourism qualitatively, future studies could employ quantitative economic models to measure the exact contribution of culture and heritage tourism to Hwange's local economy. This may include job creation statistics, income levels, multiplier effects and tourism revenue distribution. According to Rogerson (2006) robust economic data on tourism helps governments and planners make informed investment and policy decisions.

## 3. Gender Dynamics in Cultural Tourism Participation

A more focused study on the role of gender in heritage tourism could provide valuable insights. Although this research showed that women are active in cultural tourism, it did not deeply explore the unique barriers and opportunities they face. Future research could assess how gender norms influence access to tourism related income, leadership roles, and knowledge transmission. Tucker and Boonabaana (2012) note that gender sensitive research is critical in understanding the unequal power dynamics within community-based tourism.

## 4. Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer and Youth Engagement

The study found that tourism encourages youth to engage with heritage practices. However, more research is needed to understand the depth, quality, and sustainability of this knowledge transfer. Longitudinal studies could examine how much youth involvement in cultural tourism impacts identity, education, and long-term community participation. As highlighted by UNESCO (2012), youth are essential stakeholders in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, but more empirical data is needed to assess their role.

## 5. Long term Sustainability and Climate Impacts

An emerging area for further research is the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in the face of environmental challenges, including climate change. Studies can explore how climatic events, resource depletion, or ecosystem degradation affect cultural landscapes and heritage practices that are closely tied to nature. According to Salazar and Graburn (2014), there is an urgent need to assess how climate and environmental pressures intersect with tourism development, particularly in rural and natural heritage contexts.

These proposed areas for further research are critical to deepening the understanding of how culture and heritage tourism can be made more sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to both community needs and global trends. Future research in these directions will contribute significantly to academic literature and policy disclosure in Zimbabwe and beyond.

#### 6. Comparative Studies with Other Heritage Tourism Sites

Future studies could compare Hwange with other cultural heritage destinations in Zimbabwe (e.g., Great Zimbabwe, Domboshava, and Matobo) or the Southern African region to identify best practices, common challenges, and transferable solutions. Such comparative analysis can guide policy development and encourage inter-district collaboration in promoting cultural tourism. Timothy and Boyd (2003) argue that comparative heritage studies help identify scalable models and culturally sensitive tourism frameworks.

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## **Appendix A**

### **1. Informed Consent**

#### **TITLE OF STUDY**

Culture and Heritage Tourism in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Hwange

#### **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

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#### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

*You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.*

The purpose of this study is to explore and critically analyze the role and impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe. Specifically, the research seeks to examine how cultural and heritage resources are developed, promoted, and experienced as tourism attractions, and to assess the socio economic and cultural benefits derived by local communities. The study also aims to evaluate the existing tourism infrastructure supporting cultural and heritage tourism and to identify challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism in the region.

#### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

*If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey and take part in an interview about your experiences and perceptions regarding climate change and its effects on heritage resources at Victoria Falls. The study will involve:*

1. Completing a questionnaire that will take approximately 30 minutes.

2. Participating in a follow-up interview (approximately 30 minutes) to discuss your responses in more detail.
3. The total duration of your participation will be approximately 1 hour.

Your responses will be recorded for analysis. If audio recording is used, it will only be to ensure accuracy in capturing your responses.

### **RISKS**

There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study. You may feel discomfort when discussing topics related to climate change and its impacts. You may decline to answer any or all questions, and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

### **BENEFITS**

There may be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained will contribute to a better understanding of the impacts of climate change on heritage resources and will inform conservation efforts and policy recommendations.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your responses to this survey will be anonymous. Please do not write any identifying information on your survey. All collected data will be assigned code names/numbers to ensure confidentiality. Notes and recordings will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher. Participant data will remain confidential except where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents, such as abuse or suicide risk.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions about this study, or if you experience any adverse effects as a result of participating, you may contact the researcher at the contact information provided above. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant or if problems arise that you do not feel you can discuss with the Principal Investigator, please contact the University, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities [ +263 271 6427, +263 721 842 720]

## **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect your relationship with the researcher. If you withdraw before data collection is completed, your data will be returned or destroyed.

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## **CONSENT**

I have read and understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and at no cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

## **Appendix B**

### **Interview Guide: Culture and Heritage Tourism in Zimbabwe: A Case study of Hwange**

#### **Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this study is to investigate the development, significance, and impact of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange, Zimbabwe. It aims to examine how cultural and heritage assets are utilized as tourism attractions. Assess the benefits and challenges associated with this form of tourism and explore its role in community development and cultural preservation. By employing a mixed methods approach, the study seeks to generate comprehensive insights that can inform sustainable tourism planning and policy in the region.

### **Confidentiality Assurance**

Your privacy is a top priority in this study. All information you provide during the interview will be kept confidential. We will not collect any personal identifying information, using unique code numbers instead. Recorded interviews and notes will be securely stored and accessible only to the research team. Any published results will present aggregated data without individual identifiers. You have the right to decline any questions and can withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. Your trust is essential, and we are committed to protecting your privacy throughout the research process.

### **Duration: 30 minutes**

*Consent Confirmation: Confirm that the participant has read and understood the consent form.*

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### **Section 1: Background Information**

Age   
Occupation   
Duration of stay / frequency of visits to Hwange.

Gender

**Question 1: How can culture and heritage tourism be developed sustainably in Hwange?**

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**Question 2: What are the cultural and heritage attractions in Hwange?**

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**Question 3: How does culture and heritage tourism contribute to Hwange's economy?**

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**Question 4: What are the impacts of tourism on Hwange's cultural heritage and community?**

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**Question 5: What challenges hinder culture and heritage tourism development in Hwange?**

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### **Conclusion**

13. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding culture and heritage tourism and its impacts on heritage resources in Hwange?

- Open floor for additional thoughts.

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### **Closing Remarks**

This interview guide is designed to elicit rich, qualitative data while allowing participants to express their thoughts and experiences regarding the impacts of culture and heritage tourism in Hwange.