

Full Length Research Paper

Economic benefits of the world soccer showcase to Zimbabwe hotels and Lodging Sectors

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This study sought to investigate the economic benefits from the 2010 FIFA World Cup. To do this, a key component of Zimbabwe's tourism sector, the hotel and lodging sector, was isolated. The economic benefits were proxied by the number of foreign tourist arrivals around the mega event. Data for the study was gathered through questionnaires and interviews, and the study units comprised a sample of 87 hotels and lodges in the country's prime tourist destinations. The study established that despite efforts made to host the anticipated visitors, players in Zimbabwe's hotel and lodging sector did not benefit. The policy recommendations drawn are that though the short term benefits can be negligible, there are potentially sustainable long term benefits.

Key words: 2010 FIFA World Cup, economic benefits, tourism sector, Zimbabwe.

INTRODUCTION

Following the announcement by the world soccer governing board (FIFA) in 2004 of the decision to have the 2010 world cup held in South Africa, frantic efforts were exerted by tourism players in southern Africa to try and capitalize on this rare opportunity. African media became flooded with this glad tiding and everybody's attention was switched to finding ways of benefiting from this event (Chari, 2010). The situation was heightened by the subsequent announcement by Zimbabwe's tourism regulatory body, Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) that the country was expecting more tourists during that time than it could accommodate.

The excitement of the opportunity to host the 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa was more pronounced in South Africa's closest neighbours: Zimbabwe, Botswana and Mozambique, and each of these countries became busy trying to find ways of reaping maximum benefits from the golden opportunity that had befallen motherland. In Zimbabwe, the situation was even more exciting given the strong social, economic and political relations that exist between the country and South Africa and the proximity between the two. The economic situation obtaining in Zimbabwe during that time further increased the country's expectations from the soccer

showcase. It was during this time that the inflation rate in Zimbabwe was mounting to unprecedented heights, even reaching an official record of over 230 million percent (Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 2008).

Any means of getting the much 'hunted for' foreign currency was more than welcome, at least to cushion the ailing economy. One tourism official categorically stated that Zimbabwe was requested to provide 40,000 beds to cover for the expected overflow from South Africa during the soccer extravaganza. The official lamented at the state of affairs in Zimbabwe's lodging sector where only 12,000 beds were available countrywide, of which only 10,000 were in the 3-5 star categories. A call was even made by the relevant authorities for low density suburb residents who were willing to convert their houses into lodges and guesthouses to register with the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority in a bid to increase the number of beds. The then Zimbabwean Ambassador to South Africa, Simon Khaya Moyo, was quoted saying:

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“The fact that the world cup will be hosted by South Africa is a meaningful statement for Zimbabwe. This means big business for Zimbabwe in the tourism sector and indeed foreign currency earnings as well as entertainment for our soccer loving nation. We must therefore celebrate this moment and ready ourselves for the challenges ahead of us. This gives us a chance to exclusively market our country as Africa’s paradise” (The Sunday Mail, May 16, 2004).

While most political and economic analysts were very optimistic about the envisaged spin offs from South Africa, some sections of the media were more prudent and conservative raising concerns of inadequate preparations on the part of government due to shortage of funds to spruce up the deplorable infrastructure and superstructure in the country. Others even regarded it as misguided over-excitement that was not grounded on facts and figures. However, the private sector did not sit back on its laurels but made every necessary effort to invest for the historical event. The aforementioned media hype catalyzed heavy investments in the hotel and lodging sector in Zimbabwe, especially in the country’s prime tourist destinations and ports of entry (Zhou, 2011). The question is, did these hotels and lodges benefit from the investments, or were the pessimists right? This research sought to answer that important question.

Historically, world mega events, particularly the soccer world cup have been known to leave host countries miles better economically than they were before the event. This is fully supported by statistics from the hosting of the soccer world cup in Germany in 2006 where monetary benefits in excess of 2.86 billion Euro were realized and in Korea and Japan where close to US\$25 billion and \$13 billion respectively was recorded in 2002 when the two countries co-hosted the mega event (Zhou, 2011). It was the aim of this research to report the economic benefits of the world soccer showcase to Zimbabwe.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Literature points to the tourism sector as a potential driver of economic growth, especially in emerging markets struggling to cope with competition from industrialised nations in markets for manufactured exports. It is argued that most developing economies are well-endowed with natural and wildlife resources which, if carefully managed, have the potential to significantly contribute to foreign currency earnings and ultimately to the economic potential of these nations (Sinclair, 1998; Kweka et al., 2003; Ashley et al., 2007; Mshenga and Owour, 2009; Fayissa et al., 2009). Tourism’s economic potential is buttressed by the presence of forward and backward linkages with other sectors of an economy. The sector is a supplier of inputs/services to other sectors and at the same time it demands other sectors’ output/services for its efficient operation. This interdependency among

sectors provides room for significant income and employment gains in an economy via the multiplier processes.

Figure 1 summarises the interdependency between the tourism industry and some selected sectors and the ultimate effects on the economy. A key component of the tourism sector (tourist arrivals) is isolated to examine the impact this has on other tourism segments (accommodation, catering, tour operators, arts and crafts industry), as well as on selected key sectors of the economy. As portrayed in the figure, an increase in the number of tourists boosts the business of such tourism segments as accommodation, tour operators, catering services, and arts and crafts. However, this is not the end of the story - increased demand for these services has knock-on effects on industries supplying inputs to the segments. For example, increased demand for transport services leads to demand for sound infrastructure (roads and airports), leading to an increase in demand for manufactured inputs such as tar, steel and cement. Similarly, a rise in tourist arrivals causes the demand for catering services to rise, and this leads to a rise in the business of food-processing firms and eventually on agricultural production. The ultimate impact of the maize is a rise in national income, foreign currency inflows, output, employment and government tax revenue. This eventually feeds back into the economy through a rise in expenditure and an improvement in tourist services which acts as a catalyst for further expansion in tourism.

RELATED LITERATURE

In investigating the economic impact of the tourism sector, various approaches were adopted. These include input-output analyses/multipliers approaches (Frechtling and Horvath, 1999; Kweka et al., 2003; Mabugu and Mahomed, 2010), causality studies (Ozturk and Acaravic, 2009; Brida et al., 2010), impact analyses (Idowu, 2008; Fayissa et al., 2009), and cost-benefit analyses (Wolfgang and Du, 2007; Nooij et al., 2010).

Frechtling and Horvath (1999) estimated the multiplier effects of tourism expenditures in Washington D.C. through an input-output model. The study examined various types of economic multipliers suitable for estimating the effect of tourist spending on employment, earnings and output. It also recognised that tourism’s impact on an economy is initiated by the expenditure made by a visitor during their trip or stay at a certain destination. Such expenditures include accommodation, food, and transportation. The study established that ratio multipliers were significant in explaining the impact of tourist expenditures on earnings and employment in the city. The study suggested two possible reasons for the findings. Either the tourism sector was highly linked to local suppliers than the average industry in the city, or its employees tended to spend more of their earnings within the city, or a combination of the two forces.

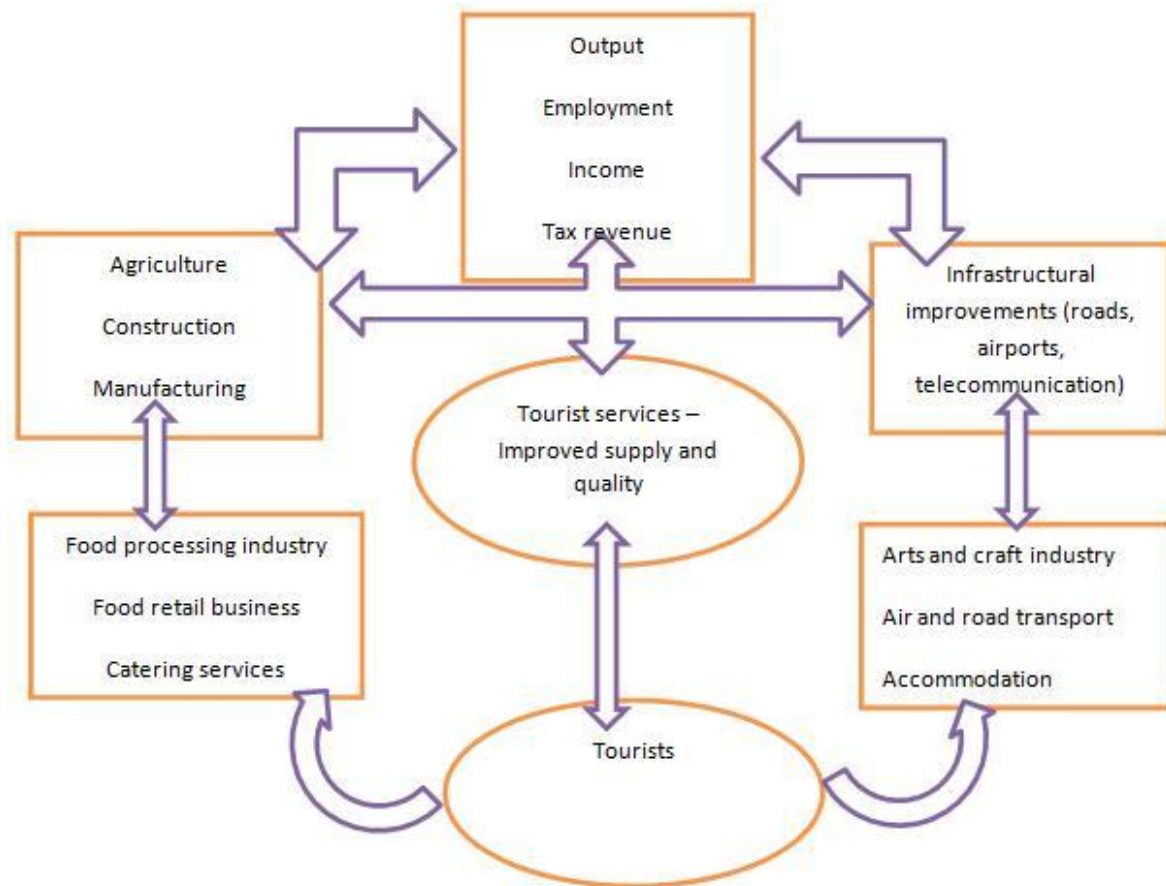


Figure 1. Economic effects of tourism.

Using input-output analysis, Kweka et al. (2003) investigated the economic impact of the tourism sector on output, employment, income, and government tax revenue in Tanzania with a base year of 1992. The study also applied linkage analysis to examine the interdependence between tourism and other sectors. Findings from the study revealed that the tourism sector contributed significantly to the foreign currency inflows, output, tax revenue, and to overall economic output. It was also established that through backward and forward linkages, the tourism sector had a positive impact on the output of other sectors such as food and beverages, fishing and hunting, and retail trade.

Fayissa et al. (2009) analysed the impact of the tourism sector on the economic growth and development of a panel of 17 Latin American countries for the period of 1995 - 2004. The relationship was analysed within the framework of the conventional neoclassical growth model. Findings from the study revealed that tourism sector revenues positively contributed to the current level of GDP and economic growth of the countries as do investments in physical and human capital.

Various studies have also analysed the impact of mega sporting events on the tourism industry and the economy

at large (Baade and Matheson, 2004; Swantje and Wolfgang, 2009; Mabugu and Mahomed, 2008; Nooij et al., 2010). The general conclusion drawn from these studies is that *ex ante* studies tend to over-estimate the benefits. Findings from *ex post* studies are mixed – the mega events do not yield positive results for some nations while in other countries they yield some positive benefits.

Mabugu and Mahomed (2008) estimated the economic impact of government financing the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup by South Africa *ex ante*. The study made use of a fiscal social accounting matrix, and the results indicated that the event had a positive impact on the GDP of South Africa. Moreover, the study observed that although the average citizen was better off with the hosting of the cup, the socioeconomic impacts were regressive. In other words, benefits that accrued to households were positively related to income groups. Thus, the wealthy households were expected to benefit most, with worse off households who derive most of their income from unskilled labour, mainly in the construction industry, benefiting least. The study also predicted an increase in revenue for government and local authorities.

Swantje and Wolfgang (2009) analysed the impact of

the World Cup in France (1998) and Germany (2006) on overnight stays at hotels, national income from tourism, and retail sales in these countries. The study also offered some prediction of the impact of the cup on South Africa (2010). Findings from the study revealed that short run tourism, income, and employment benefits from such mega events may be negligible. While the event impacted positively on hotel bookings in Germany, in France, it was a different story – there were no significant increases in overnight stays around the mega event. Low visitor turnout and the associated hotel occupancy have been attributed to the crowding out effects on mega events present on the host country's normal tourist flows. It is argued that traditional visitors to destinations hosting such events on average postpone their visits for fear of higher prices, congestion and compromised security.

In summary, empirical literature on the benefits from hosting mega events has produced mixed findings. The tendency has been for *ex ante* studies to over-estimate the benefits accruing from such events (Nooij et al., 2010). The general conclusion has been that national pride and pleasure from hosting such tournaments come at a price. Nooij et al. (2010) further note that a major portion of the proceeds from the World Cup goes to the organising sports federation, with the host nation facing the burden of the costs of organising the event.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design

The study adopted an exploratory research design mainly due to the fact that it was the first of its kind in Zimbabwe and very little secondary data were available. As suggested by the name, exploratory research design involved getting a feel of the situation in as far as the economic benefits of the 2010 FIFA World Cup are concerned. Emphasis was on discovering ideas and possible insights that may help in identifying areas that would need attention in future events of that sort. The study was rather new and the researchers wanted to have those insights into the benefits that the world cup brought and the possible reasons for that (Creswell, 2009).

Sampling methods

The research population consisted of all the hotels and lodges in Zimbabwe's prime tourist destinations (Victoria Falls, Nyanga, Masvingo) and the country's major cities (Harare and Bulawayo). These resorts were chosen due to their status as the country's major draw cards and any tourist who visits Zimbabwe usually visit these places. In other words, judgemental sampling was used to choose the resorts and cities. Victoria Falls and Masvingo are home to UNESCO World Heritage sights (The Victoria Falls and Great Zimbabwe Monuments) and one of the

world's seven wonders. Nyanga has the best scenic views in the country due to its naturally attractive and undulating landscape.

The cities were selected for the mere reason that they harbour the headquarters of most hotels. Apart from the fact that they are usually packaged together with resorts in order to increase length of stay, these cities are also used as stopover points by tourists on a tour of the country. Lastly, Harare and Bulawayo have some of the country's best hotels, those that have an international flair.

A list of all registered hotels and lodges was supplied by Zimbabwe Tourism Authority for this research and the researchers purposively selected those hotels and lodges that are more prominent and had a higher likelihood of having invested towards the 2010 FIFA World Cup. This was done with the assistance from the Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe (HAZ), a representative body of all hotels, lodges and restaurants in Zimbabwe. Out of the sample frame of 163 units that were considered to have the highest likelihood to invest for 2010 World Cup, 87 units were selected using stratified random sampling. The units were put in strata according to their type (hotel or lodge) and 52 lodges and 35 hotels were selected. Star ratings were also used to place these units into strata (Table 2). The difference in the number selected was based on the fact that 60% of the sample frame was made up of lodges while the remainder was hotels; hence the researchers selected the units proportionally. At the establishment, the researchers used the key informant technique to obtain data. The key informants in this case were the marketing managers, front office managers and accountants. Any one of these people would be in a position to comment on the performance of the organisation in terms of room occupancy and the related income in relation to the World Cup. The targeted person was the marketing manager but in his/her absence, the other two would be useful.

Data collection methods

Data were collected using three methods: questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Questionnaire and interviews

A two-paged questionnaire was used to get data from the respondents. The questions on the questionnaire varied from multiple choices to open ended questions with the majority being structured. The researchers travelled together as they gathered data. The questionnaire was completed by one, while the other asked questions. This was done to ensure that all details are captured in the process. The method also ensured that response errors are minimised and chances of lost questionnaires were reduced to zero. The approach was also efficient in terms of time since the person completing the questionnaire

Table 1. Sampled hotels and lodges by location and nature of business.

Location	Hotel	Lodge	Total
Harare	14	12	26
Bulawayo	8	15	23
Masvingo	3	9	12
Nyanga	3	4	7
Victoria Falls	7	12	19
Total	35	52	87

Table 2. Star rating of the sampled hotels and lodges (Lodges are classified into standard, comfortable, and luxury and these take the values 1, 2, and 3, respectively).

Business	Star rating						Total
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Hotel	12	1	2	13	5	2	35
Lodge	0	21	22	9	0	0	52

was not asking questions. This method of data collection proved to be very effective and less complicated. In very few cases where the managers were not readily available, questionnaires were left but telephone follow-ups were made to ensure that the questionnaires were completed and collected.

Observation

The researchers also took time to observe what was on the establishment. At times they would be given the opportunity to see the refurbished rooms and the new equipment. This made the research more interesting since one would easily compare what has been said and what was on the ground. An observation check list was prepared and it helped the researchers to focus on things like branded new vehicles, new painting, renovations and extensions as well as new machinery.

Data analysis

The study isolates a key component of Zimbabwe's tourism sector, the hotel and lodging sector, in assessing the economic benefits derived from the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The main concerns of the study are the direct effects in the form of foreign tourist arrivals around the mega event. Accordingly, the data analysis for the study is mainly descriptive statistics in the form of percentages. In addition, bivariate analyses between location of hotel/lodge and key variables such as investment for the event, marketing for the event, and tourist arrivals were performed. The software used for the analysis is STATA 11.

FINDINGS

Tables 1 and 2 provide summaries of the background

characteristics of the sampled hotels and lodges.

Data were successfully collected from 87 units. Of these, about 60% were lodges and the remainder was hotels. Except for Harare, the study covered more lodges than hotels and this is partly due to the fact that in most of the country's resort areas, lodges are more frequent than hotels. As shown in Table 1, the cities alone (Harare and Bulawayo) contributed 56% of the sample units while the country's tourism hub, Victoria Falls, contributed 22%. The cities are an entry point and at times transitory points for tourists and at the same time provide a number of services that tourists demand.

Table 2 shows the rating of the sampled hotels and lodges. Hotels in the country are rated from zero to five star while lodges fall into one of three categories: standard, comfortable, and luxury. For convenience, numbers have been assigned for lodge ratings as reported in Table 2. The majority of the hotels covered fall in the 3-star category (37%), and a significant number (34%) did not qualify to be rated one-star. Of the 52 sampled lodges, about 17% were in the luxury category, while standard and comfortable lodges constituted about 40 and 42%, respectively.

Statistics presented in Table 3 indicate that the country's hotel and lodging sector made commendable efforts in preparation for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The majority of the players in the hotel and lodging sector (71%) reported that they undertook some form of investment in preparing for the mega event. Of the 71% that invested, 41% had more than two types of investments. The investments ranged from expansion of workforce, renovations, construction of new facilities, and acquisition of new assets (beds, vehicles, television sets). Expenditure on investment ranged from \$1,001 for lodges and small hotels to over \$20,000 for big hotels.

Besides investing for the event, hotels and lodges

Table 3. Univariate analyses for selected attributes.

Attribute	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Whether entity invested for the 2010 World Cup	No	25	28.74
	Yes	62	71.26
Type of investment	No investment	25	28.74
	One type	26	29.89
	More than one	36	41.38
Whether entity marketed for the 2010 World Cup	No	13	14.94
	Yes	74	85.06
Whether entity witnessed an increase in tourist arrivals around the event	No	64	73.56
	Yes	23	26.44
Whether arrivals were due to the 2010 World Cup	No	82	94.25
	Yes	5	5.75
Whether anticipated arrivals were witnessed	No	79	90.80
	Yes	8	9.20
Opinion on whether or not it was worthy to invest for the event	No	62	71.26
	Yes	25	28.74

around the country embarked on marketing campaigns to lure visitors. About 85% of the units reported that they engaged in some form of marketing or advertising. Most of the small hotels and lodges prepared some leaflets and floated adverts on the internet. The average advertising expenditure for small players ranged between \$1,001 and \$5,000. For big hotels, advertising was mainly handled at the headquarters on behalf of the hotel group, and on average they spent between \$10,000 and \$20,000 on marketing/advertising.

Despite the investment and marketing efforts made, the majority of the hotels and lodges covered in the study (74%) did not realise a rise in tourist arrivals around the 2010 World Cup. For the few that witnessed an increase in arrivals, the rise was not a result of the mega event. Some hotels, for example, were fully booked because of local events such as the Constitution Select Committee (COPAC) outreach programme. Thus, expectations for most of the hotels and lodges (91%) were not met. Nonetheless, some players in the industry (29%) felt that in spite of the low visitor turn out, efforts made to host the event were worthwhile.

Bivariate comparisons for selected attributes

In addition to the descriptive analyses, bivariate analyses were carried out in order to add meaning to the research findings. For this purpose, a popular statistical test, the chi-square test (χ^2), is performed to find out if there are

differences in various attributes between groups. Results for selected key variables are shown in Table 4.

To determine whether or not there were variations in investment, marketing, tourist arrivals, and opinion across locations, Pearson’s chi-square test was used. As can be seen from Table 4, the null hypothesis for no significant differences across locations is rejected for three attributes – investment, marketing and increase in tourist arrivals around the event¹. Thus, the earlier conclusions on most of the hotels and lodges investing and marketing for the event are not binding across all the locations. It follows that there were variations in investment and marketing efforts from one location to the other. At the same time, some locations witnessed an increase in arrivals relative to others around the mega event. However, on whether the increase in tourist arrivals was attributed to the 2010 World Cup or not, and whether it was worthwhile to invest for the event or not, responses are consistent across locations². Players in the hotel and lodging sector from the five locations covered generally concurred that tourist arrivals around the 2010 FIFA World Cup were independent from the mega event. It was also generally argued that the country did not reap benefits despite the event being hosted by neighbouring

¹ P-value<0.05 denotes significance at the 5 per cent level of significance.

² If P>0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected at the 5% significance level.

Table 4. Variations in investment, marketing, tourist arrivals and opinion across locations.

Attribute	Location	No	Yes	Pearson's chi square	P-value
Whether entity invested for the 2010 World Cup	Harare	9	17	19.3120	0.001
	Bulawayo	7	16		
	Masvingo	3	9		
	Nyanga	6	1		
	Victoria Falls	0	19		
Whether entity marketed for the 2010 World Cup	Harare	4	22	13.6711	0.008
	Bulawayo	4	19		
	Masvingo	1	11		
	Nyanga	4	3		
	Victoria Falls	0	19		
Whether entity witnessed an increase in tourist arrivals around the event	Harare	20	6	24.3373	0.000
	Bulawayo	20	3		
	Masvingo	12	0		
	Nyanga	6	1		
	Victoria Falls	6	13		
Whether anticipated arrivals were witnessed	Harare	23	3	4.3281	0.363
	Bulawayo	22	1		
	Masvingo	11	1		
	Nyanga	5	2		
	Victoria Falls	18	1		
Opinion on whether or not it was worthy to invest for the event	Harare	18	8	2.2316	0.693
	Bulawayo	19	4		
	Masvingo	8	4		
	Nyanga	5	2		
	Victoria Falls	12	7		

South Africa.

DISCUSSION

Findings from this study indicated that despite the investment and marketing efforts made, overall, the hotel and lodging sector did not witness an increase in tourist arrivals around the event. Among the main reasons for the lower than anticipated turn-out are the effects of the global economic recession, travel agencies' caution,

South Africa being greedy, and unreasonable increases in rates towards the major event. The global financial crisis impacted negatively on people's travel propensity, hence the low tourist arrivals. A notable observation was that even for the host country, South Africa, arrivals were lower than anticipated.

Some respondents cited political risk as a contributing factor. Despite the positive developments on Zimbabwe's political landscape following the inauguration of the Government of National Unity (GNU), some travel

agencies continued to caution travellers. However, long term spillover effects were expected as visitors gave positive report of the country after the event.

Respondents also felt that the host country, South Africa, did not encourage visitors to visit neighbouring countries. One respondent argued that the South African health department warned visitors on visiting certain areas that were considered to be malaria endemic regions. Such areas included the entire Zimbabwean border with South Africa.

For some of the hotels covered, traditional markets such as Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand actually dried up around the 2010 World Cup. Tour operators and hotels and lodges in the country generally hiked fares towards the event. It has been observed that during mega events, traditional tourists tend to post-pone visits for fear of congestion, a rise in prices and compromised security (Swantje and Wolfgang, 2009).

From the bivariate comparisons, it emerged that there were variations in investments, marketing and tourist

arrivals across locations. In general, lodges and hotels in Victoria Falls and Bulawayo made some investments and tried to market themselves for the event when compared to hotels and lodges in the other areas. Moreover, hotels and lodges in Victoria Falls witnessed a moderate rise in arrivals, though it was below expectations. This could be partly attributed to the marketing efforts by hotels and lodges in the area and to the state of the Victoria Falls being one of the World's natural wonders. Other reasons for better arrivals in the area could be that tour operators in South Africa included the Victoria Falls as one of the destinations in their packages and the sound air transport between Victoria Falls and South Africa. Views gathered from players in the hotel and lodging sector point to coming up with a common marketing approach as a country. In this regards, some respondents suggested that for such mega events, the ZTA should advertise on behalf of hoteliers.

Conclusion

This study sought to evaluate the economic benefits from the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It looked at the direct benefits accruing to the country's hotel and lodging sector in the form of tourist arrivals. Consistent with research findings from other studies (Swantje and Wolfgang, 2009; Nooij et al., 2010), Zimbabwe had over-estimated the benefits accruing from the mega event. Players in the hotel and lodging sector had high expectations on occupancy, but the hopes were shattered. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the mega event acted as a springboard for infrastructural improvements and thus serving as a catalyst for the development of the tourism industry. Moreover, the warm hospitality offered to the few visitors who came would go a long way in clearing the scepticism surrounding the country's political environment and the country stands to benefit from long term spill-over effects.

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