

Review of: "Tourists' Activities and their Impacts on Chinhoyi Caves Heritage Site, Zimbabwe"

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Dear authors, congratulations for choosing this topic. Heritage is a legacy that should be preserved and enjoyed anywhere in the world and research like your contributed to do so responsibly. In the case studied, I would recommend indicating from the start to which type of impact (environmental, cultural, social or even psychological) you are referring, especially because of the nature of the site (caves, hence, a mixed natural-cultural site). When comparing the impact of tourism on other UNESCO world heritage sites, it would be useful to refer to the UNESCO World Heritage in Danger site / documents. Also interesting could be mentioning the cases of overtourism in natural protected areas, which undoubtedly also exist in Africa.

You mention vandalism as one "tourism activity". In my view, this is indeed a risk, but certainly not common, especially when done on purpose. Most often it is done unwillingly and ignoring the consequences of one's actions (e.g., touching wall paintings, using flash when photographing sensitive objects). I would separate vandalism from the rest of typical tourist activities.

One of the most important waste-related impact of tourism is littering, not only on mountain routes, but everywhere. Wrappers, cans, empty bottles, cigarette butts, tissues... many of which fly away in the wind and spread.

Perhaps a brief description of the study site would be useful to the reader (location, size, number of visitors per year/seasonality, natural, cultural and intangible heritage values of the site, etc.).

From the methodological point of view, it should be indicated that the impact is assessed on a qualitative way, as it is based on interviews and field observations, possibly lacking representativity. It is a very useful initial approach to design future, perhaps quantitative, studies. Although this has been mentioned in the conclusions, it should also be indicated in the methodology section.

Please take into consideration that non consumptive activities such as sightseeing or nature observation may affect the carrying capacity of the site (both physical as psychosocial).

The section on positive impacts is well argued, it's good to hear opinions from staff (I assume these are the informants cited). However, the section with the suggestions for improvement is weakly developed. It is clear that more efforts should be devoted to awareness raising, perhaps better signposting, monitoring and enforcement of already existing regulations and a fine system for visitors engaging in clearly illegal actions.



I hope these remarks are useful to you.

Kind regards