

An Assessment of Satisfaction in Cultural Heritage Tourism Destinations in Tanzania: The Case of Zanzibar Stone Town

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the assessment of tourist satisfaction in cultural heritage tourism destinations in Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO's World Heritage site; in terms of tourist emotional satisfaction, tourist touching loyalty, tourist satisfaction with the tourism destination attributes and tourist willingness to revisit tourism destinations. This study is chosen, because many studies on cultural heritage resources in Tanzania have, until recently, concentrated on the archaeology, management and conservation of the heritage, leaving out issues of tourist satisfaction. Data were collected through questionnaires and the sample size included 105 tourists who visited Zanzibar Stone Town in October and November, 2014. The findings show that overall satisfaction of tourists with Zanzibar Stone Town tourism destinations is high, among other things, because of the good quality and attributes of the site. The paper recommends that hygiene and sanitation of the town should be improved. It is also imperative that a quick maintenance of some sites, such as the House of Wonders Museum, be accomplished, in order to increase best tourist satisfaction with this vital UNESCO's World Heritage site.

Introduction

This paper reports a piece of research undertaken at the Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO's World Heritage site in Tanzania (Figure 1). The study was carried out as part of an MA degree dissertation in Heritage Management, by Maximilian F. Chami. The objective of the study was to assess tourist satisfaction in cultural

heritage destination at the Zanzibar Stone Town, in terms of (1) tourist emotional satisfaction, (2) tourist touching loyalty, (3) tourist satisfaction with attributes found in Zanzibar Stone Town, and (4) tourist willingness to revisit Zanzibar Stone Town (*cf.* Smith 2012). The need to research on this topic matured, because most studies on cultural heritage resources in Tanzania and elsewhere in the continent have mainly concentrated on the archaeology, management and conservation (or preservation) of the historical sites and monuments (Sidi and Joffroy 2005; Eloundou 2005; Githitho 2005; Kigongo 2005; Bardagot and Bida 2005; Ndoro 2001; Ndoro and Pwiti 2005; Mabulla 1996, 2000, Lwoga, Kimaro). In Tanzania, including Zanzibar islands, the concentration has been on archaeological excavations of cultural heritage sites, such as Amboni caves, Bagamoyo, Kilwa Kisiwani and Kwale Island (Chami 2009, Peter 2013, Sasi 2006, Chami and Msemwa 1997b), while others have concentrated on issues related to management and conservation of cultural heritage (Mabulla 2000, Kamamba 2005, Kayombo 2005, Juma *et al.* 2005, Lwoga 2010, Bwinabona 2012). The concentration on these aspects has, unfortunately, left out some important aspects of the cultural heritage resources, such as cultural tourism satisfaction. The over concentration on those aspects alone, is perhaps, a less comprehensive approach, because tourists frequently visit a lot of cultural heritage destinations in Africa. A comprehensive approach would be conserving and managing the site coupled with tourist satisfaction studies. No wonder that if there is no research information on whether tourists are satisfied or not, compared to their expectations, we will be slowing down the fledging of cultural tourism in Tanzania and elsewhere in the continent. In this paper, we argue that efforts in terms of the management and conservation of cultural tourism destinations should parallel endeavours to satisfy the cultural heritage tourists. The paper presents aspects that make tourists in Zanzibar Stone Town satisfied or dissatisfied with the site.



Figure 1: Map of Zanzibar Stone Town and its Attributes

Source: www.zanzibarpalacehotel.com/howtofindus.html

Previous Studies on Tourist Satisfaction

Researchers have been conducting studies on overall satisfaction of tourists or customers. Johnston (1995) and Nowacki (2013) argue that overall tourist satisfaction differs in age and gender, in relation to the determinants of the satisfaction. Aksu *et al.* (2010) and Huh (2002) in Antalya region and Virginia Historic Triangle, respectively, also identify that tourists' expectations influence tourist overall satisfaction, because tourists' dissatisfaction equates well to expectations not met from the destinations. Prebensen (2004) and Armario (2007), write that the relationship that exists between tourist motivations and the activities they perform at their destination influence their overall satisfaction. Dmitrovic *et al.* (2008) argue that the outcome of complaint behavior of the tourists, usually indicates dissatisfaction. Sadeh *et al.* (2012) also support the view that tourist complaints decrease overall satisfaction. In addition, Khuong and Ngoc (2014) and Canny (2012) argue that sometimes tourists could be satisfied by quality of service more than attractions within the destination site, or satisfied by attractions and be dissatisfied by quality of service or both. Thus, these could have effects on tourist overall satisfaction positively or negatively.

On the other hand, Wuleka *et al.* (2013) and Toteng (2007) argue that tourists' satisfactory experience cannot be influenced by prior expectations before they travelled to destination [national parks]. They go on to argue that, tourists' expectations are not one of the critical variables that contribute to wildlife tourist overall satisfaction (destination). To these authors, visitation to the site is a vital factor to be given due weight if one wants to discuss tourist satisfaction. In Tanzania, different scholars (e.g. David 2011) have written on natural heritage, hotel management and tourists' market demand, but have accidentally ignored to measure tourist satisfaction in cultural heritage sites.

In terms of tourist touching loyalty with the destination, scholars have expressed different ideas. Arvin and Andisheh (2013) explain that there is no relationship between tourists' loyalty and gender. In this publication, the writers cast out the idea in the minds of many people that tourist loyalty is largely related to gender. Valle *et al.* (2006) in Algarve, Portugal show that tourist satisfaction influences tourist loyalty within the area. The view of Valle *et al.* (2006) has recently been

questioned by Hu, Cheng and Hong (2011), who argue that tourist loyalty is independent of tourist satisfaction. Similarly, Caruana (2002), identified that customer satisfaction does not play a mediating role in tourist loyalty. While Rai and Srivastava (2012) argue that customer loyalty has three outcomes: behavior outcomes, attitudinal outcomes and cognitive outcomes, Haque and Khan (2013), have revealed that destination image, perceived value and service quality have a positive relationship with tourist loyalty on tourist destination. Chinomona and Sandala (2013), in mobile service in South Africa, revealed that customer satisfaction, customer trust and customer intimacy have a positive significance in customer loyalty. These investigations in assessing tourist loyalty in Tanzania have not been investigated in cultural heritage destination.

Moving on to tourist satisfaction with destination attributes, many scholars such as Chaudhary and Aggarwal (2012), Huh (2002), Na (2010), Hou (2009), Mhlanga *et al.* (2014) and Mensah (2013) have written that tourists have generally been highly satisfied by many of the attributes in a destination. However, some of the attributes might dissatisfy some tourists due to unexpected reasons, but still the overall satisfaction of tourists by different attributes in destination has been of high level. Although Kaltenborn *et al.* (2011) did great work to identify the level of tourists' satisfaction with attributes in Serengeti National Park, nothing on the assessment of the level of tourist satisfaction with attributes in cultural heritage sites have been done in Tanzania.

Lastly, tourist willingness to revisit the site has also been topical with some scholars. Zhang (2012) showed that the destination satisfaction is most important in revisiting intention and willingness by tourists to recommend places to others.. Apostolos and Ioannis (2004) say that the willingness for revisiting usually depends on many aspects of tourism services including accommodation. In addition, Lertputtarak (2012) has come up with the idea that tourists' destination image and attributes have a positive relationship with tourists' intention to revisit. Matos *et al.* (2012) argue that there are two major forces: controllable force (promotion, access routes and tourism infrastructure) and uncontrollable forces (motivation and past travel experience) that influence tourist visits or revisiting the destinations. Moreover, Canny and Hidayat (2012) have argued that service quality has a positive influence on future behavioural revisit intentions of

tourists. Ijeomah and Esaen (2011) in Nigeria revealed that sometimes majority of tourist would not want to repeat visiting the sites due to limited attractions and boring experiences. Neuvonen *et al.* (2010) went further to argue that one site within a destination could have more intentions to revisit than other sites. In a synopsis, studies on tourist satisfaction on cultural heritage sites have received almost no weight in Tanzania, which formed the need of this research work in Zanzibar Stone Town site.

Stone Town, also known as *Mji Mkongwe* (Swahili for “Old Town”) is located on the western coast of Unguja, the main island of the Zanzibar Archipelago in the Indian Ocean, 25-50 km off the coast of the mainland. Stone Town was the former capital of the Zanzibar Sultanate, and a flourishing center of the spice trade as well as the slave trade in the 19th century. Its architecture, mostly dating back to the 19th century, reflects the diverse influences underlying the Swahili culture, with a unique mixture of Moorish, Arabs, Persians, Indians and European elements. In Zanzibar Stone Town, there are a number of important sites that usually attract many tourists. Some of these sites include Slave market, House of Wonders Museum, Palace Museum, Old fort, Hamamni baths (Persian baths), Forodhani gardens, Natural History Museum and Central Market. For this reason, the town was included in the UNESCO’s World Heritage List in 2000 (STCDA 2014).

Data Collection and Analysis

The study employed quantitative research approach in data collection, because closed-ended questionnaires were designed and distributed to 120 respondents (tourists) at different sites in Zanzibar Stone Town. However, only 105 filled in questionnaires were returned. The questionnaires were carefully crafted into four parts, in order to capture information related to the four objectives of the study (*cf.* introduction). Respondents were requested to give a score to each of the questions of the questionnaires with 5 points Likert- scale. Probability sampling procedure was used in order for each of the respondents to have an equal chance to express their opinions and feelings on the research topic. One hundred and five respondents was the sample size, reached within the two months. Data analysis was completed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) and excel programs.

Results

Overall Tourist Emotional Satisfaction

The tourist emotional satisfaction was assessed in four areas: (i) how tourists were satisfied with their visit in Zanzibar Stone Town, (ii) if they were pleased with their visit in Zanzibar Stone Town, (iii) if they were regretting to have come to Zanzibar Stone Town, and (iv) on the overall quality of the site. Figure 2 presents data on the first three parts of the objective, while Figure 3 presents the results for the third part of the objective.

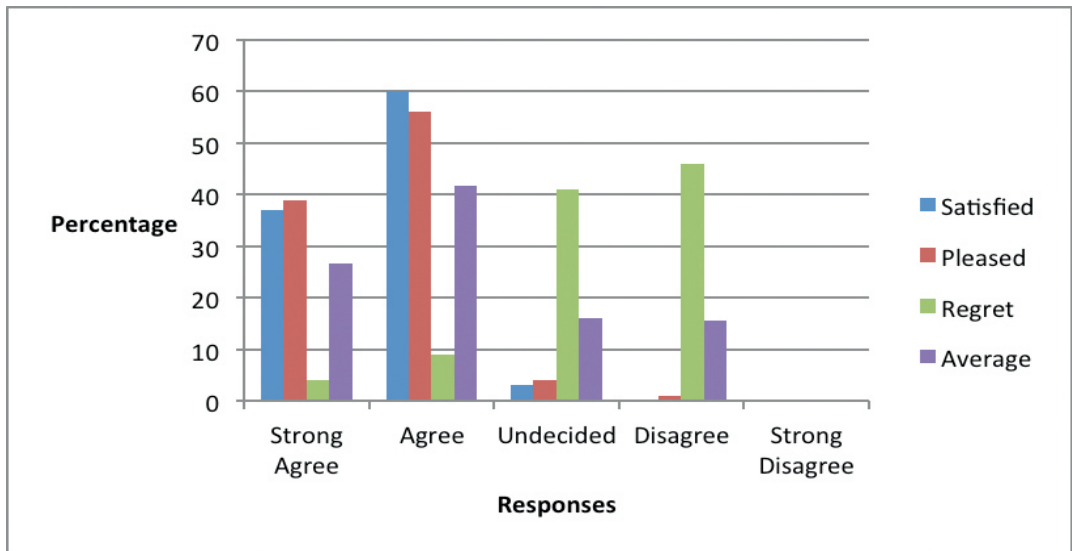


Figure 2: Overall Tourist Emotional satisfaction (P=100%)

On the question of whether tourists were satisfied or not, 60% of the respondents were satisfied, 37.1% were strongly satisfied, and 2.9% were undecided on whether or not they were satisfied with their visit in Zanzibar Stone town. This implies that most of the respondents visiting Zanzibar Stone Town were satisfied. Secondly, 56% of the respondents were pleased, 39% were strongly pleased, 4% were undecided, and 1% were not pleased with their visit in Zanzibar Stone Town. Thirdly, on the aspect of whether tourists were regretting to have come to Zanzibar Stone Town; 47% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 41% disagreed, 8% were undecided, and 4% of the respondents agreed that they regret coming to visit Zanzibar Stone Town. With the exception of the latter, the data implies

that all tourists who visit Zanzibar Stone Town did not regret coming to Zanzibar Stone Town for tourism purposes.

Lastly, on the question of quality of Zanzibar Stone Town site, 45% of the respondents said the quality was good, 27% said it was fair, 25% said it was very good, and 3% asserted that the overall quality of the site was bad (see Figure 3).

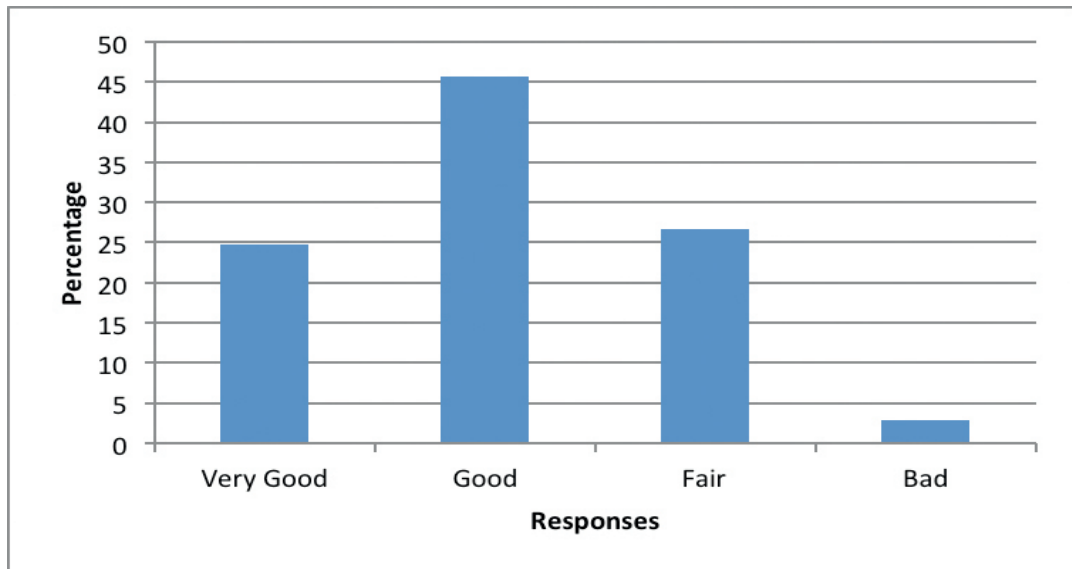


Figure 3: Satisfaction with the Quality of Zanzibar Stone Town (P=100%)

Tourist Touching Loyalty with Zanzibar Stone Town

Touching loyalty was measured through planning to continue coming to Zanzibar Stone Town and on whether tourists could recommend Zanzibar Stone Town to others. Figure 4 shows that 46% of the respondents agreed that they will continue visiting Zanzibar Stone Town, 28% strongly agreed that they will continue visiting, , 23% were undecided on whether or not they will continue visiting, and 3% disagreed. On the question of recommendation, 46% of the respondents will strongly recommend Zanzibar Stone Town to other people, friends and relatives; 41% agreed that they would also recommend the site to others, 11% of the respondents were undecided about recommending the site to others, and 2% will not recommend the site to other people, friends and relatives. With the exception of the latter, it appears that tourists would recommend Zanzibar Stone Town to others, which reflects touching loyalty of the tourists with the site.

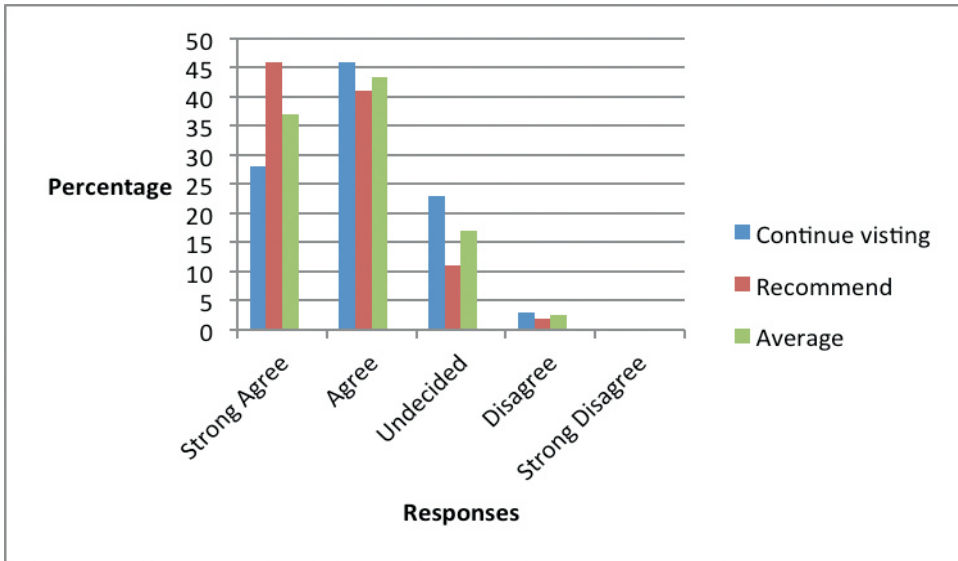


Figure 4: Tourist Touching Loyalty (P=100%)

Tourist Satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town Attributes

On the question of general tourist satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town attributes (Figure 5), 42% were satisfied with the attributes, 25% were very satisfied with the attributes, 20% were moderately satisfied, 8% were dissatisfied with the attributes, 1% were very dissatisfied by the attributes, and 4% of the respondents did not visit other attributes.

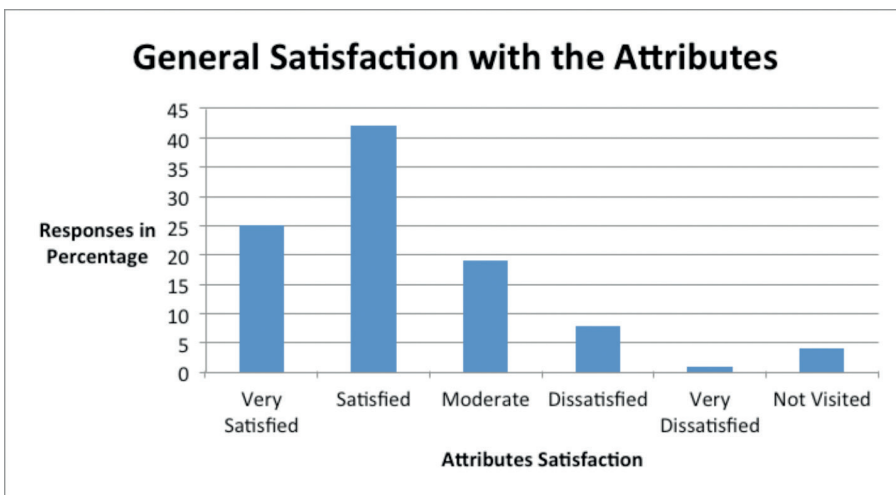


Figure 5: Tourist Satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town Attributes (P=100%)

Zanzibar Stone Town has got different sites found within this UNESCO World Heritage Site. The tourists were asked to mention which one of the sites satisfied them most. (Figure 6). Thirty three percent (33%) of the tourists were satisfied with the slave market, 21.9% were satisfied with the Palace Museum, 21% were satisfied with the central market, 6.7% were impressed with handcrafts or art galleries, 5.7% were impressed with Old Fort, 4.8% were impressed with the House of Wonders, and 2.9% were satisfied with the Hamamni Baths. The data shows that the slave market attributes is the most attractive to tourists visiting Zanzibar Stone Town.

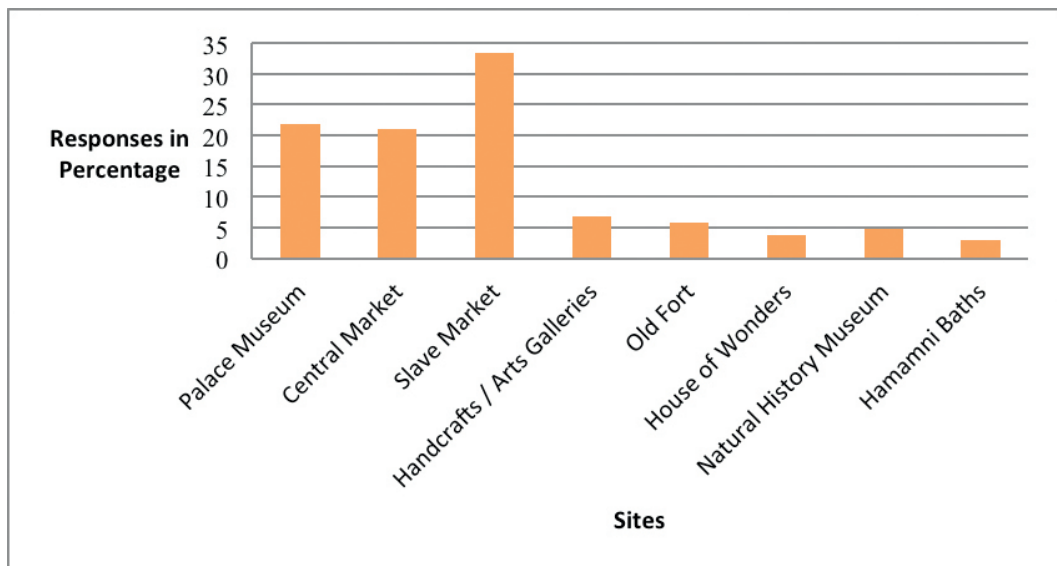


Figure 6: Tourist Satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town Attributes (P=100%)

Willingness of the Tourists to Re-visit Zanzibar Stone Town

Of all respondents, 25.7% said that they would come back to Zanzibar in the next 5 years, 24.8% said they would come back to Zanzibar within the next 10 years, 18.1% did not know whether would come back to Zanzibar, 13.3% would come back in the next (?)years, 9.5% would come back within the next 20 years and 8.6% would be back after the next 15 years (see Figure 7).

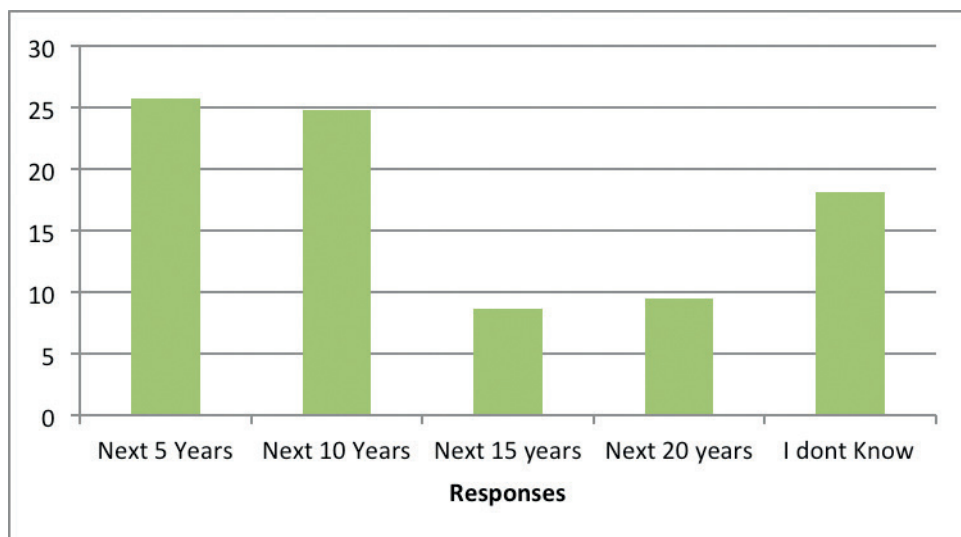


Figure 7: Tourists Willingness to Revisit Zanzibar Stone Town ($P=100\%$)

Discussion This paper aimed at assessing four specific objectives: overall tourist emotional satisfaction, tourist touching loyalty, tourist satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town attributes and tourist willingness to revisit the site. On the aspect of tourist satisfaction, the findings show that over 97% of the respondents are satisfied, meaning that tourists are highly satisfied with their visit to Zanzibar Stone Town. Also, 95% of the respondents were pleased with their visit to the site, while 88% of respondents were not regretting coming to Zanzibar Stone Town. Lastly, over 70% of the respondents were impressed with the good quality of the site. These findings suggest that tourists were emotionally very satisfied with Zanzibar Stone Town site. This is inconsistent with previous studies (Aksu *et al.* 2010; Pizam *et al.* 1979; Huh 2002; Kozak and Rimmington 2000).—on Zanzibar Stone Town.

On the aspect of tourist loyalty, over 74% of the respondents would continue coming to Zanzibar Stone Town, while 87% of the respondents would recommend the site to their friends and relatives. This means that tourist touching loyalty with the site is at a higher level. These findings are consistent with Valle *et al.* (2006), Hu *et al.* (2011) and Rai and Srivastava (2012), who also found out similar

results. No wonder that tourist loyalty can be attributed to the satisfaction of the tourists as noted earlier. It is noteworthy that sometimes, satisfaction cannot influence loyalty. However, Rai and Srivastava (2012) found out similar findings and the scholar suggested that tourist loyalty with the site could be found in three outcomes; behavior outcomes, attitudinal outcomes and cognitive outcomes as supported by cognitive-dissonance theory.

Moving on to tourist satisfaction with the attributes in Zanzibar Stone Town, about 86% of the respondents were satisfied with the attributes. These results perfectly accord previous studies, including Chaudhary and Aggarwal (2012), Huh (2002), Na (2010), Hou (2009), Mhlanga *et al.* (2014) and Mensah (2013). However, there are different levels of satisfaction with the attributes. In order of scale of preference to the attributes, the slave market is the first, central market is the second, palace museum is the third, and Hamamni baths are last. These results on the variation of attributes satisfaction are similar to Na (2010), Huh (2002) and Huo (2009), who found out similar results elsewhere. In addition, the expectancy-disconfirmation theory provides an explanation for the observed tourist variable satisfaction with the attributes. If the tourists' expectations were met, then the satisfaction level would be high and vice versa.

Lastly, on tourist willingness to revisit the site, the findings shown that above 69% of the respondents would want to be back in Zanzibar Stone Town within the next 15 years. This strongly indicates that the majority of the tourists were willing to revisit Zanzibar Stone Town. These results are consistent with Nowack (2013), Gaffar *et al.* (2011), Neuvonen *et al.* 2010, Apostolos and Ioannis (2004), Canny and Hidayat (2012) who also found out that there is always willingness to revisit the site, especially if tourists were satisfied with the site. The willingness to revisit the site is usually influenced by specific attributes, quality service and the products. This means a good quality and attributes of the site have influenced many tourists to think of coming back to Zanzibar Stone Town in the next 15 years.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the discussion above, we can conclude that tourists who visit Zanzibar Stone Town for cultural tourism are overall emotionally satisfied with the site. The emotional tourist satisfaction is reflected in their touching loyalty with Zanzibar Stone Town site and their willingness to revisit Zanzibar in the next 15 years. It is noteworthy also that, the overall satisfaction of the tourists is related to the quality of the site and attractiveness of the attributes especially the slave market, central market, palace museum and Hamamni baths.

In terms of general recommendations, about 60% of the tourists were coming from Europe and the rest from other parts of the world. Therefore, there is need for the Tanzania Tourist Board and the Zanzibar Commission of Tourism to advertise and promote Zanzibar Stone Town as UNESCO World heritage site to other parts of the world, such as North America, Asia, Caribbean, Australia, Africa and South America. Mensah (2013), argues that the access to information helps to inform other tourists from other places of the world. In addition, the Zanzibar Department of Antiquities, Stone Town Conservation Development Authority (STCDA), tourism managers and marketers should ensure that Stone Town environments (Hotels, streets and restaurants) are hygienic. For example, at central market, which is one of the most exciting attributes in Zanzibar Stone Town, the level of sanitation is bad, such that the tourists have been complaining about it. Dmitrovic *et al.* (2008) and Sadel *et al.* (2012) argue that tourist complaints usually could lead to dissatisfaction by tourists. The presences of new and modern buildings within the site cause the site to lose its authenticity and quality, which later reduces the tourist overall satisfaction. There is need to control the construction of new and modern buildings within the site so as to ensure tourist emotional satisfaction. About 53.3% of respondents were not satisfied with the House of Wonders Museum since it was closed in December 2012 for maintenance. There is need to complete the repair of the building because it leads to inconvenience to the tourists. In this matter, the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government and the Antiquities Department of Zanzibar should work together to ensure that the repair and maintenance of House of Wonders Museum is accomplished as soon as possible so that the site is open to tourists.

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