WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS' STRATEGIES AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ZANZIBAR

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ABSTRACT

This article uses the concept of enactment to determine how the strategies women adopt to work in the tourism industry contribute to the development of the industry in Zanzibar. The article positions women as capable of negotiating with the structures that constrain their participation in the tourism industry and that they are an integral part of the environment they live or operate in. It identifies the strategies they use and their coping mechanism. As women in the Zanzibar archipelago have generally been limited in their exposure to formal education, they deploy their household competence to thrive in the industry. In addition, they play a balancing act to ensure they accommodate the needs of their marriages and societal culture while engaging in the tourism industry. Besides they trust and act upon their own choices. The strategies they adopt are either for maintaining respect by conforming to the established norms and values or getting more benefits from tourism by neglecting complying with those traditions. As such, women choose to work as producers, retailers or distributers. Through their work choices, the women in Zanzibar have added value to the distribution chain and contribute by supplying crafts and cosmetics that help to foster cultural tourism.

Keywords: *agency, enactment, households' competency, Zanzibar, domestic sphere*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is recognised by the United Nations as one of the potential strategies for promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNWTO, 2015). It is one of the world's largest industries that provides a means to empowering women (Scheyvens, 2000; Tucker & Boonabana, 2010; Ferguson 2011; Ferguson & Alarcón, 2015; UNWTO & UN Women, 2010). Women become empowered when they have '*an ability to make choices'*. In Tanzania, the significant contribution of tourism in fostering economic growth has been acknowledged as an important tool in poverty alleviation through the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) or MKUKUTA as the strategy is commonly

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known under its Kiswahili acronym (Akunaay, 2003; Mitchell *et al*., 2008; URT, 2005; Tourism Confederation of Tanzania [TCT], 2009). In fact, tourism provides a range of opportunities for local people. In consequence, a substantial number of women today participate in the industry through their direct employment in tourism ventures such as hotels and tourist agencies or through the establishment of their own small and medium enterprises (i.e. small hotels, home-stays, curio shops, crafts). As such, the women benefit by gaining economic wellbeing as well as improving their ability to make their choices (Harris and Wilson, 2007; Scheyvens, 2000; UNDP, 2014).

Although participation in tourism contributes significantly to shaping the women's ability to cope with the environment they live in (Tucker, 2007; Harris & Wilson), there are limited studies that show the contribution of their coping strategies to the development of the tourism industry, particularly in the Isles. The participation of women has mostly been debated in terms of the influence of gender relations. Focusing on the gender differences in consuming and producing tourism, these studies have largely construed tourism as thriving in an environment that allows inequality between men and women (Aitchison, 2001; Ateljevic and Hall, 2007; Kinnaird & Hall, 1996; Kinnaird *et al*., 1994). In this respect, they have identified structures such as patriarchy and capitalism as influencing the hierarchical relations in the employment and consumption of tourism, which places women in the lowest position (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). Moreover, they contend that the notion of domesticity is magnified by the tendency of specifying women and men positions and, hence, constructing the masculinity and femininity in tourism processes (ibid.). Business activities in tourism are also tend to place women as part of 'tourism package', the position which leads to misconception and creation of negative image and stereotypes for directly employing women and those who sell tourism products and services. This view presents women as objects of the tourists' gaze and as passive victims of the dominant socio-cultural structures, such as traditional values and norms, which are informed by gender relations (Gentry, 2007; Pettman, 1997; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000a; Veijola & Valtonen, 2007).

However, using the post-structuralist approach allows women to be viewed as proactive participants with an ability to negotiate with structures and finding their way to coping with them (Ateljevic & Hall, 2007; Ateljevic *et al*., 2005; Harris & Wilson, 2007). Under this approach, an individual's empowerment is viewed in terms of one's *agency.* Agency refers to *'the ability to act on behalf of what you value and have reason to value'* (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007: 384). Moreover, agency allows people to act and make choices *even in the face of others' opposition* (Kabeer, 2005, p.14). This approach sees women as using different strategies to negotiate with the existing structures and make choices that

are appropriate to what they want to achieve. Thus, the women's choice to comply with the societal culture in the tourism industry implies that they affirm and maintain it. Doing so make them continue reproducing it in the industry. On the other hand, if they reject and/or challenge the culture they manage to find their own ways of circumventing it and cultivating their own niche in the industry (Aitchison & Reeves, 1998; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000; Abramovic, 2007).

This article uses the post-structuralist approach to contribute to the current debate by showing that the strategies that women use to work in the tourism industry do not only affirm and challenge the existing traditions but also contribute to the development of the tourism industry in addition to enhancing their ability to make their own choices in life. When they affirm or challenge the traditions they establish another component in the tourism supply that, in fact, they add value of the tourism product chain. It also shows that these seemingly 'rebellious' women influence socio-cultural aspects, particularly gender in influencing the changes in tourism industry business environment. The article uses Zanzibar as a case. Zanzibar is an archipelago located on the Indian Ocean made up several islands, with Unguja and Pemba being the major ones. It is located about 40 kilometres off Tanzania Mainland coastline in the shallow waters of the Indian Ocean. Politically, it is a semi-autonomous state under the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government within the United Republic of Tanzania. Agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, public services and tourism are the main economic sectors on the islands.

Zanzibar is one of East African most famous tourism hotspots, comprising various tourist attractions including sandy beaches, historical sites, marine life, traditional sailing dhows, festivals as well as Swahili cultural heritage sites (Anderson, 2013; TCT, 2009; Zanzibar Commission for Tourism [ZCT], 2010). Tourist arrivals in Zanzibar increased from 130,000 in 2008 to 207,651 in 2014, hence making tourism singly account for more than 51 percent of Zanzibar's GDP (Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors [ZATI], 2015). This sector is growing substantially compared to other traditional sectors, such as agriculture (Tanzania Economic Bulletin, 2011; Steck *et al*., 2010; TCT, 2009).

Despite the increasing number of women engaged in tourism, the societal position of women in Zanzibar is characterised by a number of challenges and highly influenced by religious, marital and educational factors. In particular, the Islamisation of the Swahili culture in Zanzibar influences the labour participation of women (Eastman, 1995; Sindiga, 1996). As a result, many women have jobs that do not expose them to the public. For example, the number of women working in agriculture exceeds that of men as women constitute 86 percent of the agro-labour force. But in the manufacturing and construction, and the service industries women only account for 8.5 percent and 18 percent, respectively

(Office of Chief Government Statistician Zanzibar, 2008). Also a good number of women engage in the informal sector in micro and small enterprises, which mostly operating in their own neighbourhoods (Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar [RGZ], 2010). Similarly, the dominant patriarchal system in Zanzibar that primarily defines women's lives includes their household position and related institutions such as marriages. In this regard, Creighton and Omari (1995), Kissawike (2008), Nchimbi (2003), Swain (2004) argue that the women's household positions and marriage contracts enable male family members to have more access to resources, privileges and power to make decisions much in line with patriarchal values. The life of women in the Isles is, therefore, governed by their respective household position and marriage contracts that tend to bind them firmly within the domestic spheres (ibid.).

This article explores how the strategies that women deploy to negotiate the societal position to benefit from opportunities tourism offers and how these strategies influence the development of the industry in Zanzibar. In particular, it focuses on women who start their own enterprises, instead of being employed at a hotel or restaurant. It probes the way they have been exposed to the societal culture and traditions since they were children and the impact of such exposure on their ability to work in the industry. Furthermore, it identifies the gender-related strategies they use and their work choices as either producers, retailers (vendors) or distributors of tourism products.

The study begins by briefly explaining the theoretical inspirations of this article, the methods it uses, before identifying strategies and their place in the tourism industry value chain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism

Tourism is an economic activity that involves visitors visiting a destination for the purpose of doing different activities such as leisure and business-related endeavours. It can be defined as "the processes, activities, and outcomes arising from the relationships and the interactions among tourists, tourism suppliers, host governments, host communities, and surrounding environments that are involved in the attracting and hosting of visitors" (1995 p. 6.). As an industry tourism comprises all firms, organisations and facilities that serve specific needs and wants of tourists (Leiper, 1979, p. 400). As such, it is built up of economic, social and political structures that form complex relationships (Britton, 1982; Keller, 1987; Nash, 1981). Moreover, as the tourism product involves more than one country, it forms an international entity that involves different stakeholders with different interests. Thus, it constitutes a business entity that provides

opportunities for investors and local people to benefit through socio-economic transactions. However, the relationship between various parties that are involved in tourism business operates in a form of hierarchy that fosters inequalities in tourism (Swain, 1995; Urry, 1990). Generally, different theories have been used to explain the tourism context to understand the position of producers and consumers of tourism with regard to their classes, gender and status.

In this article, tourism is theorised in terms of gender relations. The importance of gender relations in explaining the tourism context of Zanzibar arises from the recognition of varied social relationships available in tourism processes (Britton, 1982; Keller, 1987; Nash, 1981). The social interactions among the tourism stakeholders form gender relations that arguably have a substantial influence in tourism processes. To demonstrate the influence of gender in tourism processes, Kinnaird *et al*. (1994) came up with a gender framework that demonstrates the effects of gender relations. The framework embraces three key issues in understanding gender in tourism thusly:

> First, that tourism processes are constructed from gendered societies ordered by gender relations. Second that gender relations over time inform and are informed by the interconnected economic, political, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of all societies engaged in tourism development. Third power, control, and equality issues are articulated through race, class, and gender relations in tourism practices (Swain, 1995, p. 249).

From a gender perspective, the tourism context is subject to various explanations. Generally, the processes of tourism are explained in terms of the relationship between men and women (Aitchison, 2005; Ateljevic & Hall, 2007; Wall & Norris, 2003; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1996). The central concern is the gendered power relationship that influences the differences between men and women in the production and consumption of tourism products (Apostopolopoulos & Sönmez, 2001; Kinnaird *et al*., 1994; Swain, 1995). These disparities extend their impact to shaping tourism marketing, tourists' motivation and a host of actions (Kinnaird *et al*., 1994; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000a; Swain, 1995). Moreover, they have implications for the employment opportunities usually assigned along gender lines, which Swain (1995) describes as 'women work' norms. This gender-bias has also resulted into femininity and masculinity permeating the tourism employment and activities in the Zanzibar archipelago. Moreover, within this respect, tourism and its accompaniments have been viewed as 'gendered' (Kinnaird *et al*., 1994; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000a; Swain, 1995).

Researches on women who work in the tourism industry have increasingly revealed the effects of their engagements in tourism works in different settings (O'Riordan, 2003; Thrane, 2008; Tucker & Boonabaana, 2011; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995). Generally, gender under patriarchal values attests to its influence on shaping woman's position in society as well as in the tourism industry in both developed and developing countries (Aitchison, 2001). Gender norms and values play a key role in many aspects including the division of responsibilities and determination of individuals' ability to make decisions. In fact, the prevailing patriarchal patterns in many societies have been found to reinforce in peripheral position of women in society (Gentry, 2007; O'Riordan, 2003; Thrane, 2008; Tucker, 2007; Tugores, 2008). However, differences between men and women vary among societies depending on the cultural values that inform these patriarchal systems. Under Islamic values, patriarchal patterns tend to be more conservative than westernised countries and, thus, make gender differences in accessing and controlling of socio-economic resources more pronounced (Tucker, 2007).

In the last decades, debates on tourism and gender have largely been informed by structuralist and post-structuralist standpoints. The structuralist points-of-view predominately provide a framework for understanding the lack of agency of women who work in tourism industry (see, for example, Tugores, 2008; Veijola & Valtonen, 2007). Here, the position of women in tourism is explained in terms of power relations as informed by a gendered tourism industry and society (see, for example, Aitchison & Reeves, 1998; Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). The social construction of gender tends to be strongly informed by culture and traditions that govern individuals, households, community and workplaces (Swain, 1995).

On the other hand, post-structuralist views, although they acknowledge structural constraints, they consider the position and roles of women in the tourism industry and look at the ability of women negotiating with structural constraints, for example, using different coping strategies (see, for example, Candice & Harris, 2007; Aitchison, 2001; Harris & Wilson, 2007; Jordan & Aitchison, 2008). Whereas structures are defined in terms of dominant social rules and norms, agency is defined in terms of different forms of self-knowledge, (un)conscious consent to (re)produce the existing socially-sanctioned practices, self-authoring to trust own voice and act upon it and various strategies to create a variety of new spaces to either cope, negotiate, resist, or challenge the dominant norms and values (Candice & Harris, 2007; Aitchison, 2000, 2005). From this perspective, tourism constitutes a site, a cultural space that can be used to understand individuals' abilities and experiences rather than only as a business entity (Harris & Wilson, 2007).

Enactment theory

In line with post-structuralism, the article uses the enactment concept as a perspective that offers room for exploring the inclusiveness of women in the construction of the environment that they face in their day-to-day lives. In this regard, Weick (1995) argues that "people create their own environments, and these environments then constrain their actions" (p. 31). The people's ability to choose and act accords them the freedom to perceive these environments as either opportunities or constraints for their actions (Chia, 2003). Central here is the notion that when people act they induce structures into action and set them in motion (Weick, 1998). In our case, through working in tourism, women (re)construct the environment that they encounter (Pondy & Mitroff, 1979; Sætre *et al*., 2007; Weick, 1995; Weicket *et al*., 2005). The essence of the enactment concept, as presented by Weick (1969, 1956, 2001, and 2003) is that people and their environment are in constant interaction and they tend to influence each other. In this regard, women continually find ways of interacting with the environment. As a result, their actions become inputs for a possible change of this environment (Weick, 2001). This changing environment, in turn, is an input that an individual can proactively use to (re)create ways of interacting with it (Sætre *et al*., 2007). This reciprocal relationship between people and their environment is a continuous and dynamic process.

The conceptual Framework

The study conceptualises women as an integral part of constructing the society and tourism industry structures (Weick, 2001). The societal environment includes culture, norms and values that position women and the tourism environment, which covers both formal and informal tourist businesses. The society environment informs the women's gender roles that limit their operations within their domestic spheres. After all, under strict patriarchal decorum, the women are mainly responsible for keeping their households, including taking care of the children, parents and husbands. Traditionally, women tend to engaged full-time in their households, which allow them to achieve respect for themselves and their families. On the other hand, women's engaging in the tourism industry, in this case, full-time allows then to gain more benefit but they run the risk of eroding their respect under patriarchal values. Thus, the study assumes that the strategies that they use entail their making of choices of whether to comply with the traditional culture and stick with domesticity or embrace tourism industry requirements and relax some of the binding patriarchal values. In this regard, looking at the influence of their choices also entails examining their agency. The agency of women is viewed in terms of the extent to which they have a say over the choices of the strategies they use when working in the tourism industry.

When defining women entrepreneurs, the study focuses on their individual characteristics. As such, it adopts the Schumpeterian definition of entrepreneurs: "An innovator playing the role of a dynamic businessman adding material

growth to economic" (Roy, 2010, p. 2). Entrepreneurs, therefore, include those who have established their own ventures and those who work in groups. In the African context, the discussion of women entrepreneurs has been in terms of their motivation to establish and join groups (Rutashobya & Nchimbi, 1999) and in terms of the influence of socio-cultural structures on developing their entrepreneurial tendencies (Spring & Rutashobya, 2009). Most of these socio-cultural patterns constitute barriers to women's participation and performance in business (Rutashobya, 1998; Brindley, 2005). In this study, on the other hand, the barriers give credence to the inputs of women when negotiating with the environment. Indeed, as they contend with challenges they modify cultural the patterns and, hence, influence changes in the environment.

Methodology

In all, 22 female entrepreneurs were interviewed, 16 women from Zanzibar and six from Tanzania Mainland, Kenya and Uganda. These women were purposively selected to capture the richness of the interviewees' information. As such, women of various characteristics such as their origin and type of business were selected for inclusion in the study. The respondents were selected using the snowball sampling method. Interviews were unstructured to get an in-depth understanding of the women's experiences. The respondents were asked to tell their life histories from childhood upwards to enrich the information and obtain thick descriptions (Jennings, 2010) in addition to understanding how they make sense of themselves. Besides, a checklist of themes was used to guide the conversation. In the results section, the names of the respondents were omitted to ensure that they remained anonymous.

Fieldwork was carried out from June 2012 to January 2013. Most of the interviews were recorded with consent from the participants. The resultant data was all transcribed. Atlas.ti. was used to analyse the data. The results presented in this article have also been supported by empirical evidence from documentary review and 22 expert interviews conducted during a scoping mission in June 2010 and 23 interviews in March and April 2012 during which the main features of Zanzibar society and tourism were discussed.

Findings

Respondents' Socio-demographic characteristics

The women entrepreneurs in Zanzibar interviewed were drawn from various parts, but they were mostly from East and Central Zanzibar. Most of them are involved in culturally-related businesses. Of these, only a few of them were involved in hospitality and tour operating services. In this study, 16 women were

Zanzibaris and six were from Tanzania Mainland, Kenya and Uganda. The age of the respondents, both Zanzibaris and outsiders, ranged from 21 to 60 years. Most of the producers and distributors were aged older than 40 whereas many of the retailers were aged between 20 and 50. The three types of women entrepreneurs, that is, producers, retailers and distributors have been categorised as presented in Table 1:.

Table 1: Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics

Variable	Categories	Producers	Retailers	Distributers	Total
Place of Origin	Zanzibar	6	3	7	**16**
	Other Places	1	5	0	**6**
Marital Status	Married	6	5	3	**14**
	Single	0	2	0	**2**
	Divorced	1	1	2	**4**
	Widow	0	0	2	**2**
Education	Madras	1	0	0	**1**
	Primary	5	0	0	**5**
	Secondary	1	7	4	**12**
	Post-Secondary	0	1	3	**4**
Religion	Muslim	6	3	6	**15**
	Christian	1	5	1	**7**

Women's Exposure to the Societal Culture and Traditions

All the women interviewed were found to have been exposed to the households' responsibilities from the time they were children. Their brothers, on the other hand, were given ample time to do their school homework and play without being bogged down by domestic chores. Describing this situation, a woman member of one of the groups in Kidoti village said: *"*It was my duty to come and assist my mother with kitchen activities after school while my brother was free to do his school work or play". This experience has been experienced by almost all the women interviewed. In fact, some women helped their parents to work in the fields. Besides, when they were girls they were not allowed to go outside their households. In fact, they would not be allowed to go out of their households without permission. Some women, especially those originating from Zanzibar, would not be allowed to go to school because there had no brothers to accompany them. Explaining, Bahatisha said, *"*I could not start schooling until two years late because I had to wait for my young brother to reach the school age

so that he could accompany me to school." This was one of the reasons that discouraged many women to drop out of school.

Women's school attendance and level of educational achievements (as Table 1 illustrates) was also influenced by other factors. According to their stories, the level of education that they had reached depended mostly on the families' tendency to value education as well as the availability of education facilities. Other parents were reluctant to invest in their daughter's education as it in the case of Maua: "My parents refused to for pay school fees for my secondary education because my brothers had ended in class four". Some women were exposed to the school environment only as a result of the government reinforcement based on citizen's universal access to primary education. As Mjasiriamali, one of those beneficiaries, reported: "I went to school because the government offered it for free and it was compulsory for parents to send their children to school". Other respondents such as Waridi did not have an opportunity to complete schooling as her parents found a man to marry her: "They concluded that I was no longer a child, so they gave me a husband. As a result, I had to drop out of the school".

In the study, more than half of the women entrepreneurs were married. Some of them had experienced childhood marriage. However, most of them ended in divorce. These marriages, especially for Zanzibaris, were, according Mkejina, mostly enforced by the discourse "a girl is a perishable product that may rot in your hand if you delay to sell it". In this respect, early marriages were enforced to protect the daughters against getting children before formal marriages. It was, therefore, the parents' responsibility to select a right husband for their daughter. Many women interviewed experienced more than one marriage. When they go married for the first time it was during early teens. Such marriages had given them different experiences but it was evident that in some marriages women were almost voiceless. Some of the women decided to remain single after getting a divorce or following the death of their husbands because it gave them opportunities to work more independently.

On the whole, marriage has exposed women to the different experiences. Some women were motivated to work in the tourism industry to get a space of their own after being frustrated by their husbands. As Asha explained: "There were so many problems in our marriage… I was starving with my children, yet my husband could not allow me to go out and find something for our family. After the divorce, I was able to work at Forodhani Beach". During this study, divorce was found to be common among Zanzibari women engaged in various tourism enterprises. "According to the Muslim tradition, women may be married and divorced several times", explained Mwanakombo. After divorce, a woman had to take full responsibility for her children. Explaining this situation, Hamisa said: "Even if you get married to another husband after divorce, that man would not carry the responsibility of providing to his stepchildren. So I have to make my

own efforts to provide for my children when I am remarried to another man". Moreover, irresponsible male counterparts motivated some women to engage in tourism, as Mwanaiba explained: "But as for my husband, he just gave me a lot of children but he never provided anything at home".

The study also found that all the women in the study had been exposed to either Muslim or Christian culture. However, many inhabitants of Zanzibar are Muslim and this makes Zanzibar to mostly be characterised by Islamic culture. Women entrepreneurs have different experiences about religion. Many of the Muslims had attended religious classes and understand the underlying principle. Some of principles that were mentioned include maintaining religious values and norms. The values such as being hospitable, working hard and being decent are stipulated in the scriptures such as the Qu'ran. Thus women have to abide by the scriptures so that they could bring respect to the family and the society at large. Also, they had to apply the scriptures in working in the tourism industry.

Another value is concerned with exposure to the public places which are not decent places for them; they are not supposed to be seen in busy areas such as markets and beaches. Also, it is indecent for Muslim women to have a direct contact with the men who are not their relatives. For them, adhering to these norms and values bring respect to the family and the society at large.

Similarly, Women professing a Christian faith talked about the role of religious teachings and orientations in exposing them to different environments. Among other things religious teachings enabled them to develop the hardworking spirit by participating in church activities. As Maua explained:

> I was a member of a church choir since I was young. Singing enabled me to go to many places wherever the choir was invited. Also, as choir members, we were used to camping in many places where they had organised religious-related seminars and workshops. Also, during that time one parish covered a very large area. So we usually walked for a whole day to go and meet together in a certain place.

Some women went to boarding schools where they were exposed to another environment that was different from the one obtaining from their respective homes.

Working in the tourism industry exposed them to the work that entailed direct contact with tourists. As such, some local people perceived them as being involved in 'immoral' activities. Tourism is usually treated as an area where women are at risk due to the nature of their business, for example, mingling with different people. As Nimo explained, "People in my neighbourhood don't understand me at all. Imagine one of my neighbours asked me 'Why do you want to display your face in town? Don't you know that it is tarnishing your dignity?'". Moreover, engaging in income generating activities is perceived as

being greedy and, thus, failure to acknowledge their husband's efforts to earn the daily bread for their family.

All-in-all, the women had to contend with constraints of working in tourism in different ways. Some of those who had not been exposed to formal education could not deal with business that involved their selling of products directly to tourists because of their inability to bargain with tourists and sell the products profitably. Also, some of women were found to be constrained by their marriages because, according to traditions, women were expected to attend full-time to their households. The study also found out that they are also constrained by religion. However, women used different strategies to overcome the challenges and find ways of working in the tourism industry.

Women Entrepreneurs' Strategies

They use their Household Competencies

Many of the women applies the competencies that they had acquired through their responsibilities that they have been given since they were children. Although many of the women, especially Zanzibaris, were not exposed to formal education, their parents exposed them to the traditions (informed by Swahili culture) that prepare them to be housewives. As such, many of Zanzibari women use their knowledge of Swahili art to produce a variety of handicrafts and cosmetic items. Handicrafts-making is a traditional activity of native Zanzibari women that is normally done during their leisure time. Normally, a Zanzibari woman is expected to furnish and decorate her home by producing decorative items using the raw materials available such as raffia palms and herbal colours. This tradition provided a means for many Zanzibaris to enter into tourism as producers. As Nimeona explained:

> I used to make mats, baskets for my own use at home. But because I wanted to get some money for home expenses, I started by displaying them at home and got a few customers. However, after seeing other women joining groups, I also joined one and now we are making various different items.

Some women started engraining in tourism business by selling products with traditional designs that are normally used in their own households. However, through interactions with the tourism industry, they become more informed about the desires of tourists. Motivated by this discovery, they strive to improve the products by changing the design and making them more suitable for the tourism market to reap more benefits.

Marital Negotiations for Tourism Business Benefits

Women use their marriages as a strategy for finding ways of working in the industry without tarnishing their respect in society. Many of the non-Zanzibaris sustained their marriages and sometimes used their husbands as one of the key resources in their businesses; the latter operate as 'copreneurs', as stated by Dhahabu: "I normally work in the shop, while my husband travels to Mombasa, Nairobi and Arusha to find different products for the shop". Other women involve their family members such as husbands in their businesses to negotiate through their gender-prescribed roles. In this regard, Mwanahamisi said, "He plays a role of a husband and a business partner, I really feel supported". Women also respond to the negative perceptions from the society by using various ways to co-opt their husbands in their businesses. Nimefika, for instance, used her husband, a civil servant, to support her trade in Zanzibar and get information about trade fairs. Involving her husband as a business advisor helped her to negotiate her role as a wife and entrepreneur. In fact, doing so made her spend more time on her business. Moreover, some retailers have partnerships with their husbands and share responsibilities in business and at home. As Mkemwema explained, "My husband takes over in business when I go home to see the children. Moreover, we agreed that he should be dealing with all issues that require travelling. This enables me to be close to our young children".

Some women make difficult decisions like giving up their marriage and going for divorce to improve their prospects. In fact, some divorced women reported that they had more time in their hands for their businesses as divorcees than when they were engaged in marriage. For example, Mkejina stated, "Now that I am divorced I do my business without the disturbances I used to get from my ex-husband".

Some women face challenges due to the elongated period they spend at their workplaces. In such cases, some men become reluctant to allow them to work in the tourism industry, especially for those dealing with selling directly to the tourists. In many cases, these challenges result into divorces and sometimes the divorced women get re-married to husbands who accept their work. In this regard, Sinajina reported: "I am now enjoying my work because my second husband works in the tourism sector too". Other women complained that their tendency to leave the house for long periods created a loophole for their husbands to marry a second wife. As Furaha explained, "As you know, men are sometimes not tolerant. My husband has broken the Christianity principle and married another woman. I have decided just to take my time in this business now."

Other women use their income to provide a large proportion of their household requirements. As a result, their husbands feel they are supported in carrying the burden of providing resources for their households. Indeed, some women negotiated with their husbands by assisting them to pay some households bills. "I

always pay for children's school fees and buy most of the home requirements. Sometimes, I buy some presents for my husband". ". Moreover, distributers have the ability to employ qualified personnel that enable them to delegate some of their responsibilities as well as create enough flexibility to accommodate their household responsibilities. As Mdada claimed, "I always come to my office around ten o'clock after washing and feeding my children". Remaining single has also been used as a strategy for some women to create more space for working independently in tourism. Nadia said: "I did not want to remarry after the death of my husband because I wanted to make my dreams come true by doing business in tourism without constraints from a man".

Zanzibar Women and Cultural Negotiation

Women negotiate with culture, particularly religion to find the possibilities of working in the industry while maintaining their respect in the industry using different ways. Some of them justify the legitimacy of working in the tourism by using the lines from scriptures. This was affirmed by Muumini who said: "Our holy Qu'ran insists on kindness to the guests so I believe that if you provide such services to tourists you have fulfilled the kindness principle…even Prophet Mohammed's wives used to serve guests with food and with other hospitality services". Furthermore, women entrepreneurs perceive the tourism industry to be a place for fulfilling some religious principles as long as one follows the rules for women such as modest dressing. "One has to cover herself", remarked Swaladini. Nevertheless, most non-Muslim women entrepreneurs took advantage of the Muslim restrictions to enter the tourism industry. One a Kenyan woman, for instance, reported that she decided to deal with sculptures business because it was less competitive as it was perceived to be wrong among Muslim women.

Trusting and acting upon their own decisions

Trusting and acting upon their own decisions and perceptions is also a strategy that retailers use to negotiate with the socio-cultural barriers that forbid women from working in public spaces. Understanding the potentialities of the tourism industry has enabled them to transform the negative perception of being in public spaces into perceiving public spaces as a place where they earn their income and advance their knowledge. According to Zawadi, "People in the streets keep on saying that we are displaying our faces in town. I personally don't care, what matters for me is to make my ends meet". Some other women also feel that working in tourism keeps them busy rather than staying idle at home. As Asia testified, "When I work, I return home at 6p.m. tired, so I do not have the time to go and do other useless activities". Besides, meeting people from different regions and countries, tourism gives them an opportunity to learn about other cultures and, sometimes, they change their lifestyles by imitating the way other

people live. Asia, for example, admired tourists' behaviour of planning for their activities in advance.

Some women perceive tourism as a space where they can manage their own lives rather than being pushed by the environment and socio-economic circumstances. In other words, the tourism industry increases the women's ability to make their own choices in terms of marriage and working life. So their working status helps them to choose the husbands of their choices instead of being chosen. Mjasiri's words aptly capture this essence:

> I think marriage is not that important before one reaches the right age. One must first manage one's own life before thinking about getting married. This is because one has to choose a man that wants to be her husband. Also these days men look at a woman who has her own job so that they can economically support each other in life.

Women Entrepreneurs in Tourism Industry

This study found that the strategies that women entrepreneurs use are based on the choices of whether to find the type of business that would enable them to maintain respect in their family and community or give them more benefit, sometimes a trade-off that makes them lose some of the 'respect' as they are perceived to engage in activities in the tourism industry that women, or rather married women, should desist from. On the whole, basing on their strategies, women are engaged in tourism as manufacturers of various tourists' products (producers), sellers of products and services in their shops and salons (retailers) as well as owning large enterprises in the tourism mainstream business (distributers).

Some of these women are members of recognised women groups that are established for different purposes and in different forms. Some groups are established as a result of the influence of governmental organisations with the purpose of bringing women together and supporting them by providing business management skills. These groups include the Kidoti Women Group and Tupendane Women Group, which are located in rural Zanzibar. Other groups are established for the purpose of getting and pooling resources for handicraft production. The roles of the groups is to give product specifications to the group members, buy directly from the members or find markets and agree on the payment terms with members. In the following part we will distinguish the strategies for three different groups of women: producers, retailers and distributors.

Producers

Producers are women who engage in tourism by producing items for tourists. Although they do not personally and directly deal with tourists, they use their

groups or intermediaries such as retailers and distributors to sell their products to the consumers. Competition due to an increase in the number of producers in the tourism markets in Zanzibar forced women to use various strategies to win over customers. One of the strategies is to gather more information on the customers to improve their products. As many producers work within their household premises, the women joined established women groups. Many women resorted to this strategy as they believed joining groups did not only enable them to sell their products more easily but also made them more competitive though collective efforts. In the case of the Kidoti women group, one member said: "We sat together to discuss and find out the solution that will make us sell more of our products compared to others". Some women joined already established groups whereas others decided to establish their own groups in their neighbourhoods.

Although women deploy various strategies for them to work in the Zanzibar tourism industry, they also ensure that they work in an environment that allows them to fulfil their domestic obligations as well. Joining groups as a strategy allows them to work only for a few days, leaving them with sufficient time to fulfil their domestic responsibilities. In the Kidoti group, "It is two days per week", said Dhahabu, "So what I can do is to do other home activities before I go to the group". Likewise, Ashura was motivated to join the group because of the flexible schedules that did not interfere with her domestic obligations: "It is because I attend to the group's activities only twice a week, that is, on Thursdays and Sundays."

Retailers

Retailers are women who deal directly with customers in the market. As their main activity is direct selling, these women come face-to-face contact with the tourists. Their activities include trailing customers, informing them about the products, convincing them to buy them. Their workplaces are located in busy tourist sites in the Zanzibar Stone Town and along the beach. It is here where they meet different people.

Due to their activities these women expose themselves to public areas, in places where they "display their faces" contrary to the established norms and values in the local area. Retailers in tourism markets spend most of their time finding customers and sometimes travelling out of the city to sell and find products for their shops. At the same time, they are required to look after their children and husbands. Also, they have to comply with some other socio-cultural obligations in the domestic spheres. To negotiate all these three multiple roles, retailers in tourism markets use different strategies. One of them is to understand the market and customers to develop strategies that enable them to get more clients than others. Explaining the selling strategies in the Zanzibari market, which is based on bargaining, Esther narrated:

> To win over customers we have to understand them. We meet customers with different behaviours, some insult us, but we have to stay humble because all we need is their money. We can bargain if he/she does not agree with the price... I will calmly ask 'How much do you have?' And then we reach consensus. The strategy is: I suggest a price for that particular item and ask him/her to choose also from other items regardless of the loss that may be caused by the first item. Because I have understood what she/he is willing to offer me, I can get a higher price that will allow me to bargain without getting loss.

Another important strategy for retailers is to find a strategic place, a place where they can reach customers before other competitors do. This means finding places that are more open and that enable them to see customers from a distance. When there is stiff competition, some women are enforced to leave their shops and join the vendors to follow tourists along the beach. Further explaining, Esther said: "With this business... if I don't get out of shop and follow the customers, I may not sell for the whole day".

Vending is perceived to be the most cumbersome way of tourism selling activities, hence dubbed *Juakali*, which can literally translates into direct exposure to the tropical sunshine heat. Nevertheless all the sellers do it sometimes, including those who own shops and kiosks. According to Grace: "If other people look after customers in 'juakali', why not me? Maasai run after clients in juakali, a few of us do it and sell our products".

Distributors

The group of distributors consists of women entrepreneurs who operate in mainstream tourism business by owning large-scale enterprises such as tour operating companies, hotels and curio shops. Their role in the tourism industry is mainly to provide indirectly products and services to tourists in addition to linking producers to tourism markets. The characteristic that distinguishes them from retailers is that the former have more autonomy in the company as most of them work as directors and managers, and thus serve as employers as well. Also their customers are organisations that provide services to tourists such as hotels and they rarely deal directly with individual tourists. As Nimo explained, "We almost depend on hotels and tourists apart from our foreign market. Otherwise we also sell to the guests who come and go through our shops in the Stone Town". They, therefore, deal with the complex tourism environment where they need to bargain with multinational companies as well as foreign companies and organisations. This work exposes them to people from different countries and backgrounds, both males and females.

Many distributors started a long way back, in the sense that they gained experience in almost all types of entrepreneurship identified in this study. There are also the ones who have had jobs in both tourism and non-tourism businesses.

The women in this group established their own enterprises for various reasons. Some of them were motivated by opportunities such as networks and information necessary to start up their ventures which they saw during their employment days. Other women were driven by frustrations from their work due to the tight schedules and long working days in the office. Establishing their own companies helped them to negotiate their work and household obligations. They felt that owning an enterprise would give them more freedom to control their businesses by delegating some of the responsibilities to their subordinates and sometimes using technologies such as the internet to work from home. This capacity also gives them mandate to plan and balance activities. Here Mary's statement serves as an illustration: "I was able to continue with my work when I was in bed during my maternity leave because of the internet and telephone facilities. It was also possible to do this because it is my own company".

To be able to survive in a competitive tourism environment, distributors use various strategies including networking, making alliances with other companies and joining organisations in the industry such as the Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors (ZATI), which organises meetings, conversations and workshops on salient issues pertaining to tourism in the Isles. Apart from spending many hours attending these meetings, many of the association's activities involve direct contact with men. For example, out of 110 ZATI members, there were only three women. Mdada said: "I was the only woman when this started in 2003, but at least now two other women have joined the association". Taking into account the traditions that restrict direct contact between men and women who are not related, these contacts create challenges in their families as well as in the society at large. "It was a difficult for my husband to accept my participation in our association activities because it involves meeting with men", claimed Mdada.

Thus, distributors' interactions with the tourism environment enabled them to be more autonomous and independent. This has brought them into a position of financially contributing to the family responsibilities and participation in decision-making. Thus, instead of a public space, and more specifically tourism in public space, being perceived as a space of 'displaying faces', distributors perceive it as a space where they can get their tourism-related needs and benefits.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that the strategies that women deploy have contributed to the development of the tourism industry in Zanzibar in addition to increasing the participation of women in a largely conservative setting. The women were found to use their household competencies to produce handicrafts and cosmetics for the tourist industry. For many women, the household competencies made up for their limited formal education. Through their handicrafts and cosmetics, this group of women contributed to maintaining the Swahili culture and fostering cultural tourism in Zanzibar. They are also

contributing to keeping the traditions that position women within the household boundary. Actually, these strategies make them feel at home while working. Thus, they continue to reproduce the notion of domesticity in the workplace, hence maintaining and sustaining the gender differences in terms of socially-constructed feminine and masculine roles in the industry. In fact, the home-based segment of tourism industry has emerged as a result of this arrangement. On the other hand, women who work as retailers spend their full-time in the industry and get more income than the producers. The strategies of this latter group make them 'feel at workplace' and by doing so they tend to adjust their domestic roles accordingly. Also, they maintain the tourism culture by meeting the demands of the industry for them to obtain requisite benefits. For example, some of them use the strategies that expose them to the public, places where 'display[ed] their faces' contrary to established social norms and values. Women who work as distributors resort to strategies that make them to 'feel autonomous'. By doing so, they became independent and liberated to make their choices pertaining to their engagement in the tourism industry. Generally, the more women are exposed to the tourism industry the more they are able to increase opportunities for making their own choices in their lives. They also developed new insights about their lives and choices. More significantly, they made choices that contribute meaningfully to the development of the tourism industry, particularly cultural tourism, in Zanzibar.

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