

**Exploring Exploitation:
Women in Southern African Heritage and Cultural Tourism**

by

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“Tourism has a strong element of theatre, which is part of its charm, but also makes it easy to ignore what is going on behind the scenes as it is to buy garments made in sweat shops...”

(Caroline Sylger Jones – Now: Exploitation in Travel & Tourism, July 2022)

Abstract

This thesis is primarily concerned with the position of women in the Heritage and Cultural Tourism (HCT) industry in southern Africa. It unpacks the extent of exploitation that prevails by focussing on seven southern African countries (South Africa; Namibia; Botswana; Eswatini; Zimbabwe; Lesotho and Mozambique) considering two groups of women employed as service providers in the formal and informal domain. It establishes the key role women play in the sector and considers the nature of HCT endeavours that women are involved in. It also investigates the opportunities and challenges these women encounter as well as the importance of their jobs for their livelihoods. It appraises the tangible policies and regulations as well as organisations and associations available to women in the HCT industry along with the intangible obstacles. Through exploratory research using purposive snowballing it investigates to what extent female labour utilisation in the HCT domain in these seven selected countries is carried out in an exploitative manner. The analysis makes use of an intersectional methodology to consider the complex and nuanced nature of the situation. Key findings yield significant insights into the working conditions within HCT and the industry's impact on women, underscoring the concerning reality that, even in the 21st century, Kafkaesque situations continue to afflict this vulnerable population.

Keywords: Women in tourism; Heritage and Cultural tourism; Southern Africa; Labour exploitation; Tourism legislation.

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Dedication

To my late maternal grandmother, Mpusana Makhapetloane...

The greatest tribute I can offer you, *nkhono*, is the attainment of this doctoral degree. From an early age, you recognised my potential to become the woman I am today. Thank you, *Mofokeng*, for your unwavering belief in what seemed impossible, despite my humble beginnings.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

APEC	Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASAPA	Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists
BNSA	Botswana, Namibia and South Africa
CRM	Community Resource Monitor
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRPBMEA	Gender-Responsive Planning; Budgeting; Monitoring; Evaluation and Auditing Framework
HCT	Heritage and Cultural Tourism
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ICOM	International Council of Museums
LEA	Local Enterprise Authority
LMSZ	Lesotho; Mozambique, Eswatini and Zimbabwe
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
MUVA	Mujeres Vencedoras
RETOSA	Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SARS	South African Revenue Service
SAWIT	Southern Africa Women in Tourism Program
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TTDI	Travel & Tourism Development Index
WEF T&T	World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism
WUE	Women Unlimited Eswatini
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WITEP	Women in Tourism Empowerment Programme
WIT	Women in Tourism
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WECONA	Women Economic Assembly
WOVSA	Women of Value Southern Africa
ZGC	Zimbabwe Gender Commission

Chapter One: Introduction

Tourism has been shown to be an important driving force for inclusive socio-economic development, with significant potential to stimulate enterprise and job creation, particularly for women and young people. There is already a rich literature on the impacts of tourism both for the global North and global South. Researchers conclude that tourism development plays a significant role in the economic growth of many countries, particularly those classified as developing. However, they also recognise that tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on destinations, affecting the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions associated with its expansion.¹ Even though the performances of tourism destinations vary considerably by region across the globe, one of the commonalities lies in the fact that women feature significantly as a workforce in the tourism industry worldwide.² It is on this aspect of the sector that this study is focused.

Southern Africa is defined as the southernmost region of the African continent and comprises of ten countries which are: Angola; Zambia; Malawi; Mozambique; Zimbabwe; Botswana; Namibia; Eswatini; Lesotho and South Africa (SA). With the awareness of the potential of tourism in the region, many countries in southern Africa have drafted plans to develop the sector as an economic opportunity and development catalyst.³ In the last decade, southern Africa has seen a vast expansion of “heritage” as a mode of cultural production throughout the region. As a result of this, the area’s traditional reliance on the richness of its natural resources is now shifting to the potential to further develop

¹Damelin: The Economic Impact of Tourism on Developing Countries. 01 August 2024. <<https://damelin.co.za/tourism/the-economic-impact-of-tourism-on-developing-countries>. > Accessed: 29 January 2025.

²UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. <<http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021; IDB: Sostenibilidad. 28 March 2024. Closing the Gender Gap: The Role of Tourism Towards Equity. <<https://www.blogsiadb.org/sostenibilidad/en/closing-the-gender-gap-the-role-of-tourism-towards-equality>. > Accessed: 08 February 2025.

³P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear, (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realising Potential*. The World Bank. 2013, p. 115.

heritage and cultural tourism (HCT).⁴ Moreover, despite the many efforts made in the region regarding heritage and cultural tourism's products, development and market improvement, it is argued that tourism in southern Africa is still in the early stages while it also faces numerous challenges, including infrastructure⁵ and security.⁶ Of the ten countries in the region, it is only a few of them that "seem" to have put a significant effort into advancing heritage and cultural tourism development. Consequently, this study focuses on the following seven countries: South Africa; Namibia; Botswana; Zimbabwe; Lesotho; Mozambique and Eswatini (See Map 1). Within these seven southern African countries there is a distinct difference in how they perceive and prioritize tourism. This ranges from ranking it as one of the key contributors to the gross domestic product (GDP) to being relatively ignored and underdeveloped and even absent (see Table 1).

⁴P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear, (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realising Potential*. The World Bank. 2013, p. 115.

⁵R. G. Cleverdon. "Tourism Development in the SADC Region: The Opportunities and challenges" *Development Southern Africa* 19 (1), 2002, pp. 1-28.

⁶A. Heryl. "South Africa's competitiveness as a tourist destination examined". *Research Matters*. University of Pretoria. 5 October 2015. Tourism Month Launch University of Venda.

Map 1. Map: Southern Africa Map



Source: Adapted from Southern Africa: Free Maps

<<https://images.app.goo.gl/Sxn2q2q2i4MXgY7>.> Accessed: 28 January 2025.

The conclusions drawn from these seven countries can be regarded as symbolic of experiences across much of the African continent.

Table 1: The position of tourism in seven southern African countries

Southern African Countries	Position of Tourism of the Country
South Africa	Major contributor to the economy of SA, almost on par with mining sector.
Botswana	Major contributor to the economy along with sectors such as mining and agriculture. ⁷
Namibia	Second only to mining in terms of foreign revenue earned. Tourism offers tremendous potential for growth in Namibia.
Zimbabwe	Despite its tourist attractions, very limited development has occurred since 1996 due to insufficient support and less promotional activities for the sector.
Lesotho	The potential of the tourism industry's economic contribution has not been realised.
Mozambique	Tourism industry is limited but attempting to recover to its pre-civil war stature.
Eswatini	Tourism remains a vital contributor to Eswatini's economy, although relatively limited.

Source: NDT Report 2014-2015⁸

⁷Some research indicates that tourism is ranked higher than other sectors – example in Botswana: B. Gumbo, “The Negative Impacts of Tourism in Africa: The case of Botswana”, *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol 11, SE2, October 2022, pp. 1750-1764.

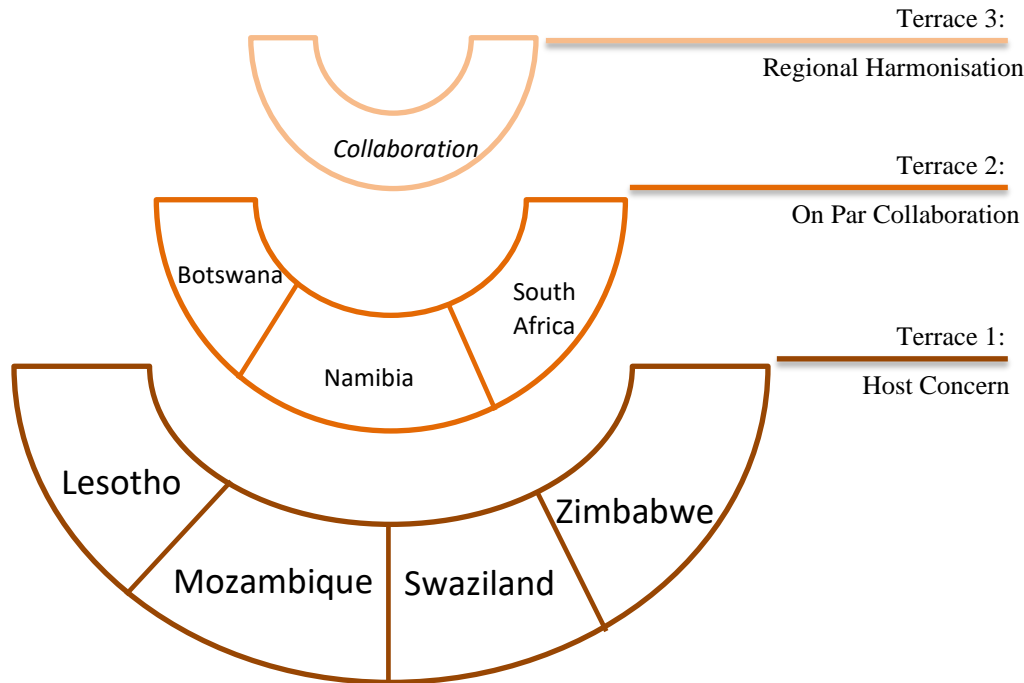
⁸Tourism Department: Tourism Department of South Africa. 2014-2015. Harmonization of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III). Department of Heritage and Historical Studies University of Pretoria.

It is clear from the above Table that South Africa, Namibia and Botswana have been among the leading and “hardest” working countries to improve their business environment for tourism investment, whilst many other countries such as Mozambique; Zimbabwe; Eswatini and Lesotho are still lagging behind.⁹ The reasons for these discrepancies in the region are multi-faceted and include political and social factors related to stability, infrastructure and security. Figure 1 is a terraced approach adapted from the 2014 National Department of Tourism (NDT) Report, illustrating that the seven countries involved in this study are not on par in terms of the HCT development and growth sector. The first phase or terrace includes the three countries which are relatively on par which are Botswana, Namibia and South Africa (BNSA). The second phase or terrace 2 cluster includes Lesotho; Mozambique; Swaziland and Zimbabwe (LMSZ).¹⁰

⁹L. Signe and C. Johnson. Africa’s Tourism Potential: Trends, Drivers, Opportunities and Strategies. Africa Growth Initiative at Brookings, 2018.

¹⁰Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)”. Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

Figure 1: BNSA and LMSZ Terraced Approach



Source: NDT Report 2014¹¹

1.1 Aims and Objectives of the Study

Tourism is often linked to sustainable economic development. It is argued that it contributes to the upliftment of communities and many countries have proven that HCT has the potential to generate a significant number of jobs that are vital to combat unemployment.¹² However, more often than not, the benefits accumulated from HCT do not accrue to those producing the services.¹³ Unfortunately, little is made of the harsh conditions that many who service the industry face in the HCT domain. When it comes to

¹¹Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. "Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)". Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

¹²M.T. Sinclair. *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, 1997.

¹³M.T. Sinclair. *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, 1997.

HCT and employees, concerns over links with “modern slavery” have been mostly ignored and subdued.¹⁴

As mentioned, research clearly indicates that women are the dominant workforce in the tourism industry. Their participation, particularly in the HCT industry, cannot be neglected as this dominant presence of female labour masks underlying challenges for women employed in this sector. As already indicated, tourism research has paid comparatively scant attention to issues involving their well-being in this niche. The extent of exploitation of the female workforce in this segment of tourism, particularly in southern Africa, therefore, requires further investigation.

Consequently, this research departs from the current focus of southern African scholarship, that has focused primarily on themes such as: commodification of culture;¹⁵ cultural tourism and sustainability;¹⁶ socio-cultural impacts of tourism on heritage sites;¹⁷ socio-economic impact of tourism on communities;¹⁸ role of tourism employment in poverty reduction;¹⁹ negotiating gender and tourism work;²⁰ women tourism

¹⁴C. S. Jones. 2022. Now Transforming Travel: Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. < Now Transforming Travel: Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. <<https://www.itmustbenow.com/feature/our-big-questions/exploitation-travel-tourism>> Accessed: 11 September 2023.

¹⁵B. Gumbo, “The Negative Impacts of Tourism in Africa: The case of Botswana”, *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Vol 11, SE2, October 2022, pp. 1750-1764; M. Matsoso. The ‘Moshoeshoe Walk’: The Commodification and Cultural dilemma? Bachelor of Social Science Honors University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 2017.

¹⁶N. Moswete, J. Saarinen & H. Manwa. “Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa: Progress, Opportunities and Challenges”. Channel View Publications, 2016.

¹⁷R. N. Okech. “Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism on World Heritage Sites: Communities’ Perspective of Lamu (Kenya) and Zanzibar Island”. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research* 15(3), 2010, pp. 339-351.

¹⁸J. E. Mbaiwa. The Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism Development on the Okavango Delta, North-Western Botswana. *Journal of Arid Environments* 54(2), 2003, pp. 447-467.

¹⁹A. Spenceley & D. Meyer (eds.). *Tourism and Poverty Reduction: Principles and impacts in Developing countries*. Routledge, 2017, p. 22.

²⁰C. Ashley & D. Roe. “Making Tourism Work for the Poor: Strategies and Challenges in Southern Africa”. *Development Southern Africa* 19(1), 2002, pp. 1-22.

entrepreneurs,²¹ empowering women through cultural tourism.²² This study therefore rather seeks to focus on the well-being of women working in the HCT sector. It unpacks the extent of exploitation that prevails by focussing on two groups of women employed as service providers in both the formal and informal domain of HCT in southern Africa.

In order to deliberate on the above concerns, the thesis sets out to investigate in a southern African context, women's involvement and role in this domain over the years; the nature of HCT endeavours that women are involved in; the extent to which female labour utilization in the HCT domain is carried out; whether there is any exploitation imposed on any of these key female players in this domain and to what extent; and finally, to consider if there are any support structures for women in the form of organisations and their effectiveness.

It also appraises the heritage and cultural tourism policies in the region and analyses how these deal with the complex issue of women's exploitation.

1.2 Definition of Key Concepts:

The following key terms are considered for their specific meaning within the context of the tourism sector and in this study in particular: heritage and cultural tourism; service providers; exploitation; well-being and social inclusion.

Heritage and Cultural Tourism (HCT)

In its simplest form, HCT is a branch of tourism oriented towards the cultural heritage of the location where tourism is occurring.²³ T. Silberberg concurs that:

²¹A. Rocha, J. de Carvaiho, D. Liberato, E. Gonzalez & P. Liberato (eds.), *Advances in Tourism, Technology and Smart Systems*. (171) Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-2024-2_30. Conference Paper.

²²H. Manwa, N. Moswete & J. Saarien (eds.). *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa*. Channel View Publication, 2016.

²³IGI Global Publisher of Timely Knowledge, Nd. "What is Cultural Heritage Tourism." <<https://www.igi-global.com>. Dictionary/challenges-for-promotion-of-heritage-tourism/56429. > Accessed: 28 July 2021.

heritage and cultural tourism is a tool of economic development that achieves economic growth through attracting visitors from outside a host community, who are motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical; artistic; scientific or lifestyle/heritage offering of a community; region; group or institution.²⁴

He maintains that such travel is focused upon experiencing the cultural environment; which includes: landscapes; the visual and performing arts and special lifestyles; values; traditions and events.²⁵

The domains in which HCT is especially manifested include, among others:

the oral traditions and expressions of which language is a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices; rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices; rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship and so on.²⁶

The problem though with cultural heritage is that it may refer to tangible objects (such as buildings, sites and locations) as well as intangible features (such as traditions and customs).²⁷ Therefore, A. Peacock and I. Rizzo state that “the very nature of heritage may change overtime as it is a social and cultural construct”.²⁸ Nonetheless, it is worth noting that these domains in which cultural heritage manifests, do differ from region to region, as each country possesses unique attractions and different people with different cultures.

²⁴T. Silberberg. “Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites.” *Tourism Management* 16/5, 1995, pp. 361–365.

²⁵T. Silberberg. “Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites.” *Tourism Management* 16/5, 1995, pp. 361–365.

²⁶T. Silberberg. “Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites.” *Tourism Management* 16(5), 1995, pp. 361–365.

²⁷ D. Throsby. “Regional Aspects of Heritage Economics: Analytical and Policy Issues”. Australasian. *Journal of Regional Studies* 13(10), 2007, pp. 21-30.

²⁸A. Peacock & I. Rizzo. *The Heritage Game: Economic, Policy and Practice*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2008.

These are in themselves vital tourist drawcards and it is their uniqueness which adds to their value in the HCT sector. It is in the light of this that A. Leask *et al.*, maintain that heritage and culture form “the basis of tourism in many countries.”²⁹

Informal and Formal Sector

The tourism economy consists of two economies, which are the formal and informal economies. Formal and informal enterprises differ significantly in their structure. The formal-informal terminology highlights the importance of the relationship between an enterprise and the state.³⁰ Informal enterprises typically operate without legal recognition or protection, whereas formal enterprises benefit from such recognition and protection.³¹ The formal sector consists of jobs that have specific working hours and fixed wages, whereas the informal sector is where the workers or employees do not have fixed working hours and wages.³²

Within tourism, the informal sector consists of workers and businesses that are not registered with the authorities and operate outside legal and regulatory frameworks.³³ These include all individuals and businesses that interact with tourists and the tourism industry but are not affiliated with any formal association or trade organisation. This can include street vendors; unofficial tourist guides; transport providers; musicians and dance troupes; artisans; sex workers; homestay providers; food stall owners; and chambermaids. R. Wahnschafft notes that, functioning outside government systems of

²⁹A. Leask, Fyall, A. & Garrod, B. “Heritage Visitor Attractions: Managing Revenue in the New Millennium”. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 8(3), 2002, pp. 247 -265.

³⁰M. Lebouc; V. C. Jaunky & V. Ramesh. 2019. “Tourism and Informal Sector”. *SAGAR International Journal of Management and Research* III (3), pp. 67 -76.

³¹D. Biggs; C. Michael & N. Stoeckl. 2012. “The Resilience of Formal and Informal Tourism Enterprises to Disaster: Reef Tourism in Phuket, Thailand”. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20(5), pp.645-665.

³²VS: N.d. Difference between Formal and Informal Sector. <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org> >Accessed: 08 February 2025.

³³Zhike, L. V. 2020. “Does Tourism Affect the Informal Sector.” *Annals of Tourism Research* 80, pp. 1-10

subsidies and taxes, these enterprises often face extortion and are frequently subjected to harassment or suppression due to government policies.³⁴ Consequently, their incomes tend to be low and unpredictable.

On the other hand, in terms of employment, formal sector employment is governed by a comprehensive set of rules and procedures for hiring and assessing employees, which requires a strong educational background and sets a high entry threshold.³⁵ In contrast, informal employment does not have these strict requirements. Employees in the formal sector include hotel managers, tour guides, resort managers, sommeliers, hotel general managers, travel agents, and museum curators.

Service Providers

For the purpose of this study, service providers refers to those that tourism is built around or on, particularly in HCT. In a journal article titled, “e-Participation Model for Sustainable Cultural Tourism Management: A Bottom-Up Approach”, A. Chiabai *et al.*, analyse service providers from the supply side as the suppliers of the services and not the users.³⁶ They maintain that, as a consequence, the main objective of service providers is to meet the demand of the different categories of users, within a long-term vision of the cultural tourist sector and its development within the urban context. Moreover, they argue that service providers usually make full use of the importance of cultural resource for its indubitable historic, artistic and cultural value.³⁷

³⁴R. Wahnschafft. 1982. “Formal and Informal Sectors: A Case Study in Pattaya, Thailand”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 9(3) p.429

³⁵J. Tian & W. Guo. 2021. “A Study of the Income Difference between Tourism Formal and Informal Employment.” *Journal of Hospitality Management* 46, pp. 414 – 422.

³⁶A. Chiabai, K. Krassimira & P. Lombardi. “e-Participation Model for Sustainable Cultural Tourism Management: a Bottom-Up Approach”. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2011, pp. 1-18.

³⁷A. Chiabai, K. Krassimira & P. Lombardi. “e-Participation Model for Sustainable Cultural Tourism Management: A Bottom-Up Approach”. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2011, pp. 1-18.

From a tourism perspective, S. Marios defines tourism service providers as all businesses offering tourism and experiences to consumers when the latter are travelling and performing tourism activities.³⁸ These businesses include transport companies; travel agents; tour operators; tourist guides; performing artists and other tourism-related institutions directly servicing tourists' needs. C. Kalinic and M. D. Vujicic also note tourism service providers as any type of government, private, or civil organization that participate in the tourism industry from the supply side, offering core or supplementary products and services.³⁹

Exploitation

Exploitation is a key concern in this study and refers essentially to the action or taking advantage or making use of someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work.⁴⁰ The theory of exploitation, as proposed by Karl Marx, is widely regarded as highly influential.⁴¹ According to Marx, in a capitalist society, workers are exploited when they are forced to sell their labour power to capitalists for a value that is less than the full value of the goods they produce through their labour.⁴² In the field of tourism, there is an ongoing debate regarding the fundamental relationship between the tourism industry and capitalist development, despite the significant transformative impact of tourism on spaces and economies.⁴³ It is argued that exploitation through tourism can take many different

³⁸M. D. Sotiriadis. Social Media as a Channel of Constructive Dialogue for Tourism Businesses. *In Advanced Methodologies and Technologies in Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurship*. IGB Global. 2019, pp. 552-564.

³⁹C. Kalinic & M. D. Vujicic. "Social Media analytics: Opportunities and challenges for cultural Tourism destinations". *Handbook of Research on Digital Communications, Internet of Things, and the Future of Cultural Tourism*, 2022, pp. 385-410.

⁴⁰Collins English Dictionary. n.d., Exploitation Definition. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com>. Accessed: 15 June 2021.

⁴¹Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. N.d., Exploitation. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation>. > Accessed: 13 August 2024.

⁴²Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. N.d., Exploitation. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation>. > Accessed: 13 August 2024.

⁴³B. G. Gumbo. "The negative Impacts of Tourism in Africa: The Case of Botswana". *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 11(SE2), 2022, pp. 1750 – 1764.

forms: poor wages; long hours under pressure without a break; unhealthy conditions for live-in-staff; dangerous working conditions; slavery (enforced labour); sexual discrimination; inappropriate sexual behaviour by either bosses or clients; prostitution; human trafficking and loss of rights to privacy.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, women living in poverty in developing countries are particularly vulnerable to these threats. J. Seager indicates that with the rapid development of tourism, poor third world countries face an increase in different forms of exploitation of women.⁴⁵

In the context of this study, the term exploitation refers to the human exploitation (of women) who are serving as the workforce in the heritage and cultural tourism domain in southern Africa. It considers the range of different forms of exploitation that women are subjected to.

Well-being

The notion of well-being is one which is crucial to many aspects of our daily lives. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “well-being” as the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.⁴⁶ B. Gottfried and H. Aghajan hold that in addition to providing one of the cornerstones to a healthy lifestyle, the concept of well-being extends to the selection of the type of environment we live in, our interaction with other people and the things we do to realise our plans for the future.⁴⁷ Scholars also argue that the meaning of well-being is multi-dimensional.⁴⁸ They argue that an overall sense of wellness will not be achieved

⁴⁴C. S. Jones. 2022. Now Transforming Travel: Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. <<https://www.itmustbenow.com/feature/our-big-questions/exploitation-travel-tourism>. >Accessed: 11 September 2023.

⁴⁵J. Seager. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World* (4thed.). Penguin Books, New York, 2009.

⁴⁶*Collins English Dictionary*, n.d., Exploitation Definition. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com>. > Accessed: 15 June 2021.

⁴⁷B. Gottfried & H. Aghajan, H.K. *Behaviour Monitoring and Interpretation – bmi: Well-being*, Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2011.

⁴⁸Wellbeing People, 20 July 2018. <<https://www.wellbeingpeople.com/2018/07/20/what-does-wellbeing-actually-mean>. >Accessed: 06 August 2021.

without having a balance in the following key elements: physical; emotional or psychological; social; spiritual; intellectual and economic.⁴⁹

According to an international webpage “Wellbeing People”, well-being can be seen to comprise six facets. It is maintained that firstly, physical well-being includes lifestyle choices that affect the functioning of one’s bodies. Secondly, emotional or psychological well-being is one’s ability to cope with everyday life and reflects on how one thinks and feels about oneself. Thirdly, social well-being is the extent that one feels a sense of belonging and social inclusion. For instance, the way we communicate with others, our relationships, values, beliefs, lifestyles and traditions are all important factors of social well-being. Fourthly, spiritual well-being is the ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose in life. Fifthly, intellectual well-being is important to gain and maintain intellectual wellness as it helps one to expand knowledge and skills in order to live an enjoyable and successful life. Lastly, economic wellness is one’s ability to meet basic needs and feel a sense of security.⁵⁰ It is worth noting, however, that despite the meaning of well-being provided here and what the word entails, the state of perfect well-being may be completely different from one person to another. Hence, each aspect of being comfortable, healthy and happy also has many different levels that can be interpreted subjectively.

Social Inclusion

According to P. Donnelly and J.J. Coackley, “social inclusion is about making sure all individuals are able to participate as valued, respected, and contributing members of the society on the basis of five principles: valued recognition, human development,

⁴⁹Wellbeing People, 20 July 2018. <<https://www.wellbeing people .com/2018/07/20/ what –does-wellbeing-actually-mean.>>Accessed: 06 August 2021.

⁵⁰Wellbeing People, 20 July 2018. <<https://www.wellbeing people .com/2018/07/20/ what –does-wellbeing-actually-mean.>>Accessed: 06 August 2021.

involvement and engagement, proximity and material well-being”.⁵¹ S. Shortall holds that social inclusion also plays a key role in creating a stable social order premised on social action. However, he cautions it is dependent on the openness of political structures within a particular country.⁵²

As far as tourism is concerned, B. C. Grant and M. A. Kluge argue that tourism is capable of providing opportunities to promote social inclusion by extending limited social realms, facilitating social interaction and networks and the “reaffirming self and developing a new identity in later years”.⁵³ However, R. Genc and E. A. Genc hold that at this particular point, there is limited literature on social inclusion of the disadvantaged groups in the face of the developments in tourism as a sector. They attribute this lack of focus in part to a lack of creative steps by stakeholders, as well as local authorities or governments. They also maintain that social inclusion of disadvantaged groups within an area may be enhanced through “creative tourism”.⁵⁴

Decent Work

“Decent work” is a concept developed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) that refers to employment that respects rights, dignity, and security of workers.⁵⁵ ILO identified four pillars of decent work: employment creation; social protection; rights at work; and social dialogue. According to the ILO, decent work encompasses the following aspects:

⁵¹P. Donnelly & J. J. Coackley. *The Role of Recreation in Promoting Social Inclusion*. Toronto: Laidlaw Foundation. 2002.

⁵²S. Shortall. “Are Rural Development Programs Socially Inclusive? Social Inclusion, Civic Engagement, Participation and Social Capital: Exploring the Difference”, *Journal of Rural Studies* 24(4), 2008, pp. 45 - 457.

⁵³B.C. Grant & M.A. Kluge. Leisure and Physical Well-being”. *Leisure and Aging: Theory and Practice*, 2012, pp. 129 -142.

⁵⁴R. Genc & E. A. Genc. “Promotion of Social Inclusion through New Steps in Tourism”. *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Economica* 13(3), 2017, pp. 194 -201.

⁵⁵International Labour Organisation (ILO). 1999. Decent Work. Report of the Director General to the 87th Meeting of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: International Labour Office.

- Providing fair income through productive work opportunities.
- Ensuring secure workplaces and social protection for families.
- Offering better prospects for personal development and social integration.
- Allowing freedom for individuals and groups of people to voice concerns, and to organise and participate in decisions affecting their lives.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men.⁵⁶

Hence, decent work goes beyond job creation and also focuses on ensuring the equality of such employment.⁵⁷ However, the ILO report acknowledges that different societies, may have varying interpretations of equality in employment, including “different forms of work, conditions of work and feelings of value and satisfaction”.⁵⁸ As a consequence, K. Lucas recognises that providing decent work is a way to upholding people’s dignity in the workplace.⁵⁹ In tourism, the grounding of the value of dignity in tourism employment is envisaged in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 8 as part of the wider sustainable development agenda.⁶⁰ SDG 8 is the notion of decent work and economic growth and calls for sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.⁶¹

⁵⁶International Labour Organisation (ILO). Decent Work. Report of the Director General to the 87th Meeting of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1999.

⁵⁷International Labour Organisation (ILO). Decent Work. Report of the Director General to the 87th Meeting of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1999.

⁵⁸International Labour Organisation (ILO). Decent Work. Report of the Director General to the 87th Meeting of the International Labour Conference. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1999.

⁵⁹K. Lucas. Workplace Dignity. In SCOTT, C. & LEWIS, L. (eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Organisational Communication* (iv), pp. 2549-2562. Chichester: John Willey & Sons, 2017.

⁶⁰Tourism & SDG8 Decent Work and Economic Growth. <<https://tourism4sdgs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/sdg-8-Single-Factsheet-.pdf>>15 May 2024.

⁶¹Tourism & SDG8 Decent Work and Economic Growth. <<https://tourism4sdgs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/sdg-8-Single-Factsheet-.pdf>> Accessed:15 May 2024.

1.3 Research Methodology and Sources

This thesis considers the conditions, and in particular the well-being of women, serving as the workforce in the HCT sector as a whole (formal and informal) in southern Africa. As stated in the introduction, the focus is on the following countries: South Africa; Namibia; Botswana; Zimbabwe; Lesotho; Mozambique and Eswatini (See Map 1), with the exclusion of the following SADC countries: Malawi, Zambia and Angola.

The research drew inspiration from the research done for a National Department of Tourism Report (NDT) of 2014-2015,⁶² which is the first, if not the only, attempt to study the seven member states in the SADC region, excluding Angola, Zambia, and Malawi. The NDT document contains extensive data sets and statistical analysis, providing a comprehensive overview of the region. Due to the reliability of this government report, this research considered it an authoritative source. In addition, Angola, Zambia and Malawi were excluded from the study as they are not bordering countries of South Africa which still remains a hub for much of the tourism activity. This also allowed for the opportunity to narrow the scope and make it more manageable. Nonetheless, the findings regarding women's experiences in the HCT industry across the region were strikingly similar, leading to the decision to delimit these countries to avoid repetition. Additionally, tracking women across the region for interviews proved to be one of the major challenges for this study and initial research made it apparent that this was to prove futile.

In order to delve deeper into the problem, the research adopted an exploratory research approach. Exploratory research, also known as qualitative research, is a method used to study a problem that has not yet been clearly defined.⁶³ Its purpose is to determine the

⁶²Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. "Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)". Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

⁶³Business Research Methodology. N.d., Exploratory Research. <<https://research-methodology.net/research-methodology/research-design/exploratory-research>>. >Accessed: 9 May 2024.

nature of the problem and gain a better understanding of it, rather than providing conclusive evidence.⁶⁴ This method helps to uncover the behaviour and perception of a target audience in relation to a specific topic. The results of qualitative methods are descriptive, making it easier to draw inferences from the obtained data.⁶⁵

Thus, exploratory research focuses on new problems with little or no existing research.⁶⁶ Its goal is not to provide final and conclusive answers to research questions, but rather to explore the research topic with varying levels of depth.⁶⁷ It serves as the initial research that lays the foundation for more conducive studies.

For the purpose of this thesis, the research included primary and secondary literature. It also included a literature review which can be defined as a review and synthesis of existing research on a topic or research question⁶⁸ and is meant to analyse scholarly literature, make connections across writings and identify strengths, weaknesses, trends, and missing deliberations.⁶⁹ Hence, an evaluation of previous work related to the research topic was carried out. Based on the body of literature, a model was developed for this thesis from the identified best practices to assess the situation in a southern African context. The thesis also analysed the South African Development Community (SADC) tourism legislation, which is in the public domain, in order to assess to what degree women are featured and or protected by law or regulations within the tourism sector.

⁶⁴Business Research Methodology. N.d., Exploratory Research. <<https://research-methodology.net/research-methodology/research-design/exploratory-research>.>Accessed: 9 May 2024.

⁶⁵R. Stephens, Loudon, B. Wrenn & H, Cole. *Concise Encyclopaedia of Church and Religious Organisation Marketing*. Routledge, New York, 2013.

⁶⁶R. B. Brown “*Doing Your Dissertation in Business and Management: The Reality of Research and Writing*”. Sage Publications, 2006, p. 43.

⁶⁷Business Research Methodology. N.d., Exploratory Research.< <https://research-methodology.net/research-methodology/research-design/exploratory-research>.>Accessed: 9 May 2024.

⁶⁸Northwestern: Libraries/Research Guides. N.d., Literature Reviews. <<https://libguides.northwestern.edu/literaturereviews#s-lg-box-27888673>.>Accessed: 9 May 2024.

⁶⁹Northwestern: Libraries/Research Guides. N.d., Literature Reviews. <<https://libguides.northwestern.edu/literaturereviews#s-lg-box-27888673>.>Accessed: 9 May 2024.

Therefore, another component of the research for this thesis was exploratory interviews with key role players: the women in the HCT sector ranging from management to the informal and casual sector. The nature of the research questions and the objectives of this research determined the appropriate research instruments which were the interviews. The questions created for the interviews corresponded to the research main objective, which implies that the research considered if there was any sense of exploitation imposed on the female workforce in the HCT sector and to what extent, based on the interviewees' experiences. Additional questions were added during the interview or discussion wherever needed. Henceforth, a purposive and snowball sampling was employed to identify the participants.

When conducting interviews, it is standard practice to establish inclusion and exclusion criteria for study participants as part of designing high-quality research protocols.⁷⁰ Inclusion criteria refer to the key characteristics of the target population that researchers will use to address their research question.⁷¹ In this study, the focus was on females working in the HCT workforce as indicated above, identified in both the formal and informal sectors across seven southern African countries.

In contrast, exclusion criteria pertain to characteristics of potential study participants who meet the inclusion criteria but possess additional traits that could hinder the study's success or increase their risk of an unfavourable outcome. In this case, exclusion applied to individuals who did not meet the specified criteria and were located outside the seven selected southern African countries.

⁷⁰S. B. Hulley, S. R. Cummings, W. S. Browner, Grady, D. G, T. B., Newman. *Designing Clinical Research*. PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2007.

⁷¹S. B. Hulley, S. R. Cummings, W. S. Browner, Grady, D. G, T. B., Newman. *Designing Clinical Research*. PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2007.

Purposive and snowball sampling research techniques were also utilised to enhance the recruitment of potential interviewees. Both methods are valuable for qualitative educational research, as they enable the selection of participants who can provide rich and relevant data for the research questions.⁷² In this technique, research participants are asked to assist the researcher in identifying other potential subjects who would be willing to participate in the research project.⁷³ Since this study focuses on service providers of various institutions of HCT across several southern African countries, the researcher encountered numerous obstacles with recruitment of potential interviewees. This technique was thus helpful in reaching potential interviewees in a reasonable time frame.

This method proved beneficial as it enabled selection of participants who could provide rich and relevant data for the research questions. These participants involved female service providers in the HCT in the formal and informal Sector within Southern African Countries. These participants had necessary Knowledge and or experiences required by this research study. The total number was 23 because as referrals were added, and the sample size grew.

Therefore, face-to-face and telephonic interviews consisting of a set of open-ended questions were carried out, so as to gather and assess information regarding women's well-being as the backbone of the workforce in the HCT sector. It also considered if there was any sense of exploitation and probed what the extent of this exploitation was in the HCT sector based on the interviewees' experiences (See Annexure A). R. Stephens *et al.*, holds that one of the best ways to obtain desired insights, hypotheses and clarification, is to talk to someone whose experience, expertise, or position gives him or her unique

⁷²R. Atkinson, J. Flint, J. "Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Population: Snowball Research Strategies". *Social Research Update* 33, 2001.

⁷³R. Atkinson, J. Flint, J. "Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Population: Snowball Research Strategies". *Social Research Update* 33, 2001.

perspectives on the subject of interest.⁷⁴ Therefore, exploratory interviewing enables one to gain insights into some important issue as it affords the interviewer the opportunity to probe and query each key informant to gain full benefit of their unique experience.⁷⁵ Also, in the exploratory research method, the researcher is allowed to deviate from the guide, particularly when unexpected responses reveal more significant issues related to the topic. Therefore, gaining insights, clarifications, and making revelatory observations are desired outcomes of this research method.⁷⁶

Interviewees were attained by approaching various HCT entities and asked that the representatives act as a go-between to recruit respondents. (See Annexure B: Letters of Introduction and Informed Consent). In the light of the sensitive nature of this topic, every effort was made to keep the identity of the interviewees confidential. No names or details that could identify participants were included. This process was submitted and approved by the Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee with reference Number: HUM022/0322.

Also, given the nature of this research and the field itself, the specific area under investigation has not been thoroughly explored, if at all. HCT represents a relatively new niche, within which gender issues have been insufficiently addressed by scholars. Consequently, there exists a dearth of relevant sources. As a result, this study employed an interdisciplinary methodology.

Interdisciplinary research is defined as a "type of study that draws from two or more disciplines in order to gain a more well-developed perspective or discover something

⁷⁴R. Stephens, Loudon, B. Wrenn & H, Cole. *Concise Encyclopaedia of Church and Religious Organisation Marketing*. Routledge, New York, 2013.

⁷⁵R. Stephens, D. L. Loudon, B. Wrenn & H, Cole. *Concise Encyclopaedia of Church and Religious Organisation Marketing*. Routledge, New York, 2013.

⁷⁶R. Stephens, Loudon, B. Wrenn & H, Cole. *Concise Encyclopaedia of Church and Religious Organisation Marketing*. Routledge, New York, 2013.

new”.⁷⁷ This study incorporated insights from fields such as tourism management, hospitality studies, gender studies, and women's studies. The objective of this approach was to deepen the understanding of the issues examined in this research, particularly the exploitation of women in the HCT industry within the Southern African region, a topic that remains under-researched.

This methodology expanded the educational experience by integrating multiple disciplines and fostering critical thinking. It enabled the researcher to appreciate diverse viewpoints. Through this approach, the researcher achieved a more comprehensive worldview and leveraged knowledge from various disciplines for the purposes of this study.

Additionally, for the purposes of this thesis, in order to focus on generating a good understanding of the cases of female service providers in a southern African context, an intersectional approach method analysis was adopted.⁷⁸ UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina indicate that “If we fail to consider intersection, our efforts to promote gender equality might be limited in their impact and could even worsen the situation for some of the most disadvantaged women.”⁷⁹

A theoretical framework for studying the women workforce typically draws amongst others, from international analysis. Given that this is a highly sensitive issue, this intersectional methodology was adopted. According to the UN Intersectionality is a term that describes how social relations involve multiple intersecting forms of discrimination.⁸⁰

⁷⁷N. Perdue. N.d. Interdisciplinary Research Definition, Process and Advantages. <<https://study.com//academy/lesson/interdisciplinary-research-definition-process-andtheory>. >Accessed: 04 February 2025.

⁷⁸D. Atewologun. 2018. Intersectionality Theory and Practice. Research Method, social sciences. Doi: 10.1093/9780190224851.013.48.

⁷⁹UNDP|Bosnia and Herzegovina: N.d. What is Intersectionality? And Why is It Important for Gender Equality? <<https://www.undp.org>. >Accessed: 04 February 2025.

⁸⁰UNDP|Bosnia and Herzegovina: N.d. What is Intersectionality? And Why is It Important for Gender Equality? <<https://www.undp.org>. >Accessed: 04 February 2025.

This means that a person may experience several forms of discrimination, such as sexism, racism, and ableism, simultaneously. For example, a woman might face discrimination based on both her gender and ethnicity.

S. M. B. Thatcher holds that intersectionality refers to the complex and interconnected effects of various identity groups. It examines how different combinations of individuals' social identities, including gender, race/ethnicity, and age, influence their lives, professional pursuits, and affiliations with organisations.⁸¹ In simple terms, this approach recognises that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression. It also acknowledges that various factors, such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and physical ability, can marginalize people.⁸² Adopting this approach for analysis requires including individuals with different intersecting identities, particularly those from multiple marginalized groups, in research to ensure their voices are heard. D. Atewologun asserts that “intersectionality” allows for nuanced and complex comparisons within groups, challenging assumptions of homogeneity among group members.⁸³ He argues that researchers find this method particularly relevant as it enhances analytical sophistication and provides theoretical explanations for how individuals within specific groups, such as women, may experience the workplace differently based on factors like their social positions, sexual orientation, class, and ethnicity.⁸⁴ Moreover, he notes that intersectionality is relevant in helping individuals, scholars, and practitioners understand and navigate the complex experiences that arise at the intersection of these social categories and systems, and the resulting implications. Intersectionality is important for

⁸¹S. M. B. Thatcher, C. B. Hymer & R. P. Arwine. “Pushing Back Against Power: Using a Multilevel Power Lens to Understand Intersectionality in the Workplace”. *Academy of Management Annals* 17 (2), 2023, pp. 710-750

⁸²Ontario Human Rights Commission: An Introduction to the Intersectional Approach. N.d., <<https://www.ohrc.ca/en/intersectional-approach-discrimination>. > Accessed: 13 May 2024.

⁸³D. Atewologun. 2018. Intersectionality Theory and Practice. Research Method, social sciences. Doi: 10.1093/9780190224851.013.48.

⁸⁴D. Atewologun. 2018. Intersectionality Theory and Practice. Research Method, social sciences. Doi: 10.1093/9780190224851.013.48.

gender equality because it helps us understand how different forms of discrimination interact and exacerbate inequality.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, adopting an intersectional approach would enhance one's understanding of how different forms of discrimination can interact and combine to limit the contribution and participation of individuals in the HCT workforce at all stages of their career pathway.

Thus, the sources utilised for this study encompassed both primary and secondary source material. Primary sources included reports, commissions and other official documentation emanating from both international and national bodies as well as governments. It also included records of private institutions but that did not require permissions as they were in the public domain. Other primary sources included newspapers and social media. In addition, oral interviews and individual correspondence with women in the HCT sector also formed part of the primary research material. As indicated, these interviewees were approached through the use of go-betweens. Again, it must be emphasized that given the sensitive nature of the research, participants' identities were kept confidential and they were ensured they would remain anonymous in the reporting and data analysis utilised for this study.

As regards to the secondary material, books, journal articles and web pages, these were all in the public domain and did not require specific ethical clearance or permission.

1.4 Chapter Outline

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one introduced the study; explained the rationale and purpose; outlined the aims and objectives; defined key terms relevant to the study and indicated the research methodology and sources.

The second Chapter is the literature review covering the following four key domains: heritage and cultural tourism in southern Africa; gender issues and women in tourism generally; women in the heritage and cultural tourism sector specifically in southern Africa; and lastly, the employment conditions in the tourism industry, with specific reference to women.

Chapter three evaluates the heritage and cultural tourism policy within these respective seven southern African countries and how this possibly influences women. It assesses how the formal legislation deals with the complex issue of women's employment and in turn also the possible exploitation. Lastly, it explores development programmes and organisations geared to assist women in the HCT domain and their effectiveness.

The fourth Chapter provides a brief general overview of HCT in southern Africa, that is, its development and cultural services. It analyses the southern Africa's HCT market and its economic value. Then, this section also considers the history of women in HCT; their role; contribution; and HCT's benefits to women generally. Lastly, it assesses HCT employment structures which are the formal and informal labour market in the heritage and cultural tourism domain, as far as women are involved in this niche.

Chapter five presents a brief discussion on the state of the southern Africa tourism labour force and gender in the region. It also interrogates the voices of the female workforces in the HCT domain across the following southern African countries: South Africa; Namibia; Botswana; Eswatini; Zimbabwe; Lesotho and Mozambique. Various scenarios are presented highlighting experiences that female service providers are undergoing in the day-to-day running of their businesses in both the formal and informal economy of this niche.

The last Chapter wraps up the analysis and the findings and presents a detailed reflection of the topic at hand.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

As indicated above, a literature review is the analysis, critical evaluation and synthesis of existing knowledge relevant to one's research and research problem.¹ It may provide the background for a larger work, or it may stand on its own. This existing knowledge may be published or unpublished including articles, chapters, books, theses and reports as long as it is in the public domain. For the purpose of this study, the rather lengthy literature overview is divided into four parts. First, it considers HCT in the ten southern African countries relevant to this study. Secondly, the literature review focuses specifically on work produced on women in tourism generally and concerns gender issues, while the third considers women in the HCT sector specifically in southern Africa. Lastly, it considers the literature on employment conditions in the tourism sector. The rationale was to present a fairly inclusive overview of what has been written on the four key areas relevant to this topic at hand.

2.1 Heritage and Cultural Tourism in countries in southern Africa

The ten southern African countries selected for the literature study include: South Africa; Botswana; Namibia; Zambia; Zimbabwe; Malawi; Angola; Mozambique; Lesotho and Eswatini. These are discussed in the order of their global ranking according to the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024,² which also aligns with the position diagram in Table 2. Although not all of these countries are intended for the research analysis, they form part of the literature review so as to present the broader context of southern Africa.

¹C. Hart. *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Research Imagination*. Sage Publication, London, 2018.

²World economic Forum. 21 May 2024. Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024.

<<https://www.weforum.org/publications/travel-tourism-development-index-2024>. >Accessed: 13 June 2024.

Table 2: Southern Africa Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024

No.	Southern African Countries	Rankings
1	South Africa	55
2	Botswana	75
3	Namibia	95
4	Zambia	104
5	Zimbabwe	110
6	Malawi	115
7	Angola	116
8	Mozambique	127
9	Lesotho	Not ranked
10	Eswatini	Not Ranked

Source: Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 overall rankings³

For the countries selected for this literature review, a selection of key articles on each of the domains have been included so as to analyse and get a general idea of the status of HCT in the respective countries.

According to R. M. MacDonald and L. Jolliffe at a global level “cultural tourism is a growing social, cultural and economic activity with a relatively long history”.⁴ However, they argue that in recent decades, cultural tourism has increasingly expanded to new geographical areas, such as southern Africa and its remote parts, where it may still represent a

³World economic Forum. 21 May 2024. Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024.

<<https://www.weforum.org/publications/travel-tourism-development-index-2024>. >Accessed: 13 June 2024.

⁴R. M. MacDonald & L. Jolliffe, “Cultural Rural Tourism: Evidence from Canada”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 30(2), 2003, pp. 307-322.

relatively new sector of the economy.⁵ This “newness” is a indeed a dominant factor among the countries utilised for this study and is also evident in the literature included in this study.

In a 2017 article entitled “Growing Heritage Tourism and Social Cohesion in South Africa”, J. Viljoen and U.S. Henama explore the nature of heritage tourism as well as the concept of social cohesion, before dealing with the question of how heritage opportunities can be balanced with challenges that currently face South Africa.⁶ They also interrogate the future of heritage tourism in South Africa and how it can be utilised to improve and support social cohesion and nation building. They further argue that due to South Africa’s apartheid history, cultural diversity of available heritage products is under-represented and under-performing despite being highly appreciated by tourists. Also, they maintain that there has been a lack of heritage and cultural tourism in contributing to social cohesion, despite research suggesting that South Africans have a desire to visit heritage sites. They argue that the unavailability of information and lack of adequate communication between museum marketers, local authorities, public and local tourists decrease the likelihood of them visiting these heritage sites. The article concludes that there is a need to better understand how heritage tourism interacts with other forms of tourism, such as shopping, sports, nature-based and cruise tourism, in a context where heritage tourism has been found to be under-performing in a broader market.⁷ This article emphasises the relative underdevelopment of the HCT sector.

⁵J. Mbaiwa & L.K. Sakuze, “Cultural Tourism and Livelihood Diversification: The Case of Gcwihaba Caves and XaiXai Village in the Okavango Delta, Botswana”. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 7(1), 2009, pp. 61-75.

⁶J. Viljoen & U. N. Henama, “Growing Heritage Tourism and Social Cohesion in South Africa”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6(4), 2017, pp. 1-15.

⁷J. Viljoen & U. N. Henama, “Growing Heritage Tourism and Social Cohesion in South Africa”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6(4), 2017, pp. 1-15.

In a 2016 article entitled “Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Africa: Perceived a Panacea for Rural Development?”, M. S. Nkwanyama *et al.*, examine the perceptions of local communities regarding their cultural heritage tourism development and their level of participation in South Africa.⁸ Through a structured questionnaire and the use of randomly selected respondents, the study found that local communities generally believe that cultural heritage tourism products should be conserved. However, a significant number do not participate in cultural heritage tourism activities at all. Additionally, most local community members view cultural heritage tourism development outcomes positively.⁹ However, a significant number of them are skeptical about how cultural heritage tourism development affects them. Lastly, a significant number of respondents were unsure whether cultural heritage tourism development raises individuals' cultural awareness, enables income generation, supports infrastructure development, and improves living standards in the communities. Therefore, it was inferred that these ambivalent responses to cultural heritage tourism development may be the reason why local community members are hesitant to participate in cultural heritage tourism activities. The article suggests that local municipalities should be cautious in the development of their cultural heritage tourism. It also emphasizes the importance of promoting collaboration among local actors, creating opportunities for local employment, allowing local access to services and infrastructure used by tourists, supporting local participation, and facilitating institutional capacity-building that encourages active local involvement as ways to promote inclusive cultural heritage tourism development.¹⁰ This research endorses the tenuous nature of HCT within the African continent and in particular a southern African context.

⁸M. S. Nkwanyama, I. O. Ezeuduji & A. T. Nzama. “Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Africa: Perceived a Panacea for Rural Development?” *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(6), 2016, pp. 160-167.

⁹M. S. Nkwanyama, I. O. Ezeuduji & A. T. Nzama. “Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Africa: Perceive a Panacea for Rural Development?” *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(6), 2016, pp. 160-167.

¹⁰M. S. Nkwanyama, I. O. Ezeuduji & A. T. Nzama. “Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Africa: Perceive a Panacea for Rural Development?” *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(6), 2016, pp. 160-167.

In N. Masilela's *et al.*, 2023 article, "Cultural Tourism in South Africa: A Case Study of the Experiences of Employees", it is noted that despite authenticity issues and local commodification of local cultures receiving significant research attention and growth, many locations in the global South still require investigation.¹¹ Hence, the article analyzes the growth of tourist visitation and the experiences of people employed to promote cultural tourism at the Matsamo Cultural Village in the Mpumalanga province of South Africa. Through the analysis of data collected using interviews and questionnaires, Masilela et al. argue that as the sector grows and with the authenticity of the Swazi representation, employees will perceive cultural tourism as an economic means to an end, rather than a cultural expose celebrating Swazi culture.¹² Again, the potential of HCT is made apparent.

In the 2014 article by J. Saarien *et al.*, "Cultural Tourism: New Opportunities for Diversifying the Tourism Industry in Botswana", it is argued that communities and Botswana's cultural and heritage attractions are increasingly seen as one of the future cornerstones of tourism development.¹³ The authors therefore provide an overview of cultural tourism with specific reference to existing cultural and heritage attractions and the potential thereof for tourism in Botswana. The article concludes that while the role of culture is still underutilised in tourism, cultural tourism in Botswana has the potential to contribute to a more equitable distribution of tourism-based development and the related benefits for local communities.¹⁴

¹¹N. Masilela, G. Hoogendoorn & G. Visser. "Cultural Tourism in South Africa: A Case Study of the Experiences of Employees". *African Journal of hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 12(1), 2023, pp. 326-338.

¹²N. Masilela, G. Hoogendoorn & G. Visser. "Cultural Tourism in South Africa: A Case Study of the Experiences of Employees". *African Journal of hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 12(1), 2023, pp. 326-338.

¹³J. Saارينen, N. Moswete & M.J. Monare. "Cultural Tourism: New Opportunities for Diversifying the Tourism Industry in Botswana". *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-Economic Series* 26, 2014, pp. 7 -18.

¹⁴J. Saارينen, N. Moswete & M. J. Monare. "Cultural Tourism: New Opportunities for Diversifying the Tourism Industry in Botswana". *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-Economic Series* 26, 2014, pp. 7 -18.

As regards Namibia, in an article entitled “Creative Cultural Tourism for Namibia: Opportunities and Challenges”, which I. Green *et al.*, published in 2018 the development of creative cultural tourism in Namibia is examined.¹⁵ These authors also analysed various opportunities and possible challenges that may exist for the development of this niche tourism product for Namibia. They argue that the concept of “creativity” could be applied to tourism through the development of new products or experiences, new forms of consumption and or new tourism spaces. The study reveals that Namibia has a high potential for developing creative cultural tourism due to its rich and less exposed cultural practices. Among other things, they identify that the lack of policy implementation, low literacy level among community members and fear of cultural exploitation form some of the challenges. The article concludes by indicating that although creative cultural tourism has more economic and social benefits, the fact is more attention is needed in terms of policy development and implementation, as well as creativity and innovation to maximize cultural and heritage tourism.¹⁶

“The Role of Cultural Heritage Towards Socio-Economic Development in Namibia: The Case of Oshikoto Region” is a dissertation by A. P. Muulila's. It explores the contribution of cultural heritage to the socio-economic development of the Oshikoto Region in Namibia.¹⁷ The study focuses on the significance of cultural heritage tourism and cultural creative industries in supporting the livelihood of the local community. The findings reveal that cultural heritage, through cultural heritage tourism and cultural creative industries, plays a vital role in creating employment and generating income in this region. It was found that it also helps preserve the local culture, history, and identity, while fostering

¹⁵I. Green & M. Sheyapo. “Creative Cultural Tourism for Namibia: Opportunities and Challenges”. *Journal of Tourism, Cultural and Territorial Development* 9, 2018, pp. 181-194.

¹⁶I. Green & M. Sheyapo. “Creative Cultural Tourism for Namibia: Opportunities and Challenges”. *Journal of Tourism, Cultural and Territorial Development* 9, 2018, pp. 181-194.

¹⁷A. P. Muulila. “The Role of Cultural Heritage Towards Socio-Economic development in Namibia: Case of Oshikoto region”. PhD Dissertation, The University of Namibia, 2022.

unity among people from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, Muulila argues that cultural heritage serves as a means to learn about different cultures and languages and can be utilized as a tool for counselling and therapy.¹⁸ Furthermore, the findings highlight that cultural heritage has a positive impact on the community's livelihood by improving the standard of living and quality of life for locals. This is achieved by enhancing access to social services such as healthcare, clean water and education.¹⁹

T. K. Tylor and C. Banda-Thole in their 2013 article “Tourism Development Potential of the Northern Province of Zambia”, highlight the potential and opportunities for the promotion of tourism in this region.²⁰ The article applies some of the principles and characteristics enshrined in both the rural and eco-tourism concepts towards evolving a strategic rural development framework for the promotion of sustainable rural development activities within this large rural territory of Zambia.²¹ Although cultural tourism is not explicitly mentioned, the view is similar to the most in that it underlines the underdevelopment of tourism in Zambia.

In a study entitled “Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Heritage,” C. S. Kabeta and T. Chikwanda explore the potential of sustainable tourism and cultural heritage in Zambia, specifically focusing on ten natural waterfalls located in five provinces.²² The research investigates the number of annual visits to these waterfalls by both international and local tourists. The findings reveal that the sites receive minimal visits, primarily from domestic tourists, due to inadequate infrastructure and underdevelopment that falls short of

¹⁸A. P. Muulila. “The Role of Cultural Heritage Towards Socio-Economic development in Namibia: Case of Oshikoto region”. PhD Dissertation, The University of Namibia, 2022.

¹⁹A. P. Muulila. “The Role of Cultural Heritage Towards Socio-Economic development in Namibia: Case of Oshikoto region”. PhD Dissertation, The University of Namibia, 2022.

²⁰T. K. Tylor and C. Banda-Thole, “Tourism Development Potential of the Northern Province of Zambia”, *American Journal of Tourism Management* 2(1A), 2013, pp. 10-25.

²¹T. K. Tylor and C. Banda-Thole, “Tourism Development Potential of the Northern Province of Zambia”, *American Journal of Tourism Management* 2(1A), 2013, pp. 10-25.

²²C. S. Kabeta & T. Chikwanda. “Sustainable Tourism and Cultural heritage”. *Mulungushi University Multidisciplinary Journal*. 4(2), 2023, pp. 1-24.

international standards. Moreover, the study highlights the lack of social and economic benefits for local communities, as cultural heritage activities are limited. Kabeta et al. argue that this undermines the tourism industry in the area. In conclusion, the study recommends the development of these sites to meet international standards, making them more appealing to tourists. By doing so, they argue that they can contribute to the sustainable growth of the national economy, alleviate poverty, and benefit the local communities residing near these sites.²³ Again, the potential of this aspect of tourism is prevalent in this region.

In an article by S. Moyo and T. M. Tichaawa titled “Community Involvement and Participation in Tourism Development: A Zimbabwe Study”, insights into the level of community involvement and participation in the development of tourism in the urban community of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe are considered.²⁴ The findings indicate that communities were not adequately involved in the planning, decision-making, and overall development of tourism. Additionally, communities believed that the benefits of tourism are limited to business and government officials, rather than benefiting the entire community.²⁵ However, communities recognize the potential of tourism to bring them benefits and express a strong willingness to be involved in future development initiatives. The article argues for the importance of capacitating, educating, and involving individuals and stakeholder groups in order to reshape Zimbabwe's tourism economy for long-term sustainability through the adoption of an innovative community-based tourism

²³C. S. Kabeta & T. Chikwanda. “Sustainable Tourism and Cultural heritage”. *Mulungushi University Multidisciplinary Journal*. 4(2), 2023, pp. 1-24.

²⁴S. Mayo & T. M. Tichaawa. “Community Involvement and Participation in Tourism Development: A Zimbabwe Study”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6(1), 2017, pp. 1-15.

²⁵S. Mayo & T. M. Tichaawa. “Community Involvement and Participation in Tourism Development: A Zimbabwe Study”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6(1), 2017, pp. 1-15.

approach.²⁶ No mention is made of HCT specifically again pertaining to its under development and lack of recognition in the region.

In two 2019 articles however, HCT is considered more specifically in Zimbabwe. The first article titled, “Towards the Development of Cultural Tourism as an Alternative for Tourism Growth in Northern Zimbabwe”, E. Woyo and E. Woyo stipulate that Zimbabwe’s tourism, which has traditionally pivoted around wildlife, has been in decline since the land invasions that occurred in 2000.²⁷ They argue that wildlife-based tourism is no longer a viable option and maintain that cultural tourism has been found to be an effective alternative source of revenue in cases where traditional industries are declining. The article explores the development potential of the heritage sector. The authors conclude that the development of cultural and heritage tourism will contribute towards the diversification of the seasonal and threatened nature-based tourism in Zimbabwe.²⁸

Another 2019 article by C. Makacha *et al.*, in a study titled “Partnerships and Networks in Zimbabwe’s Cultural Tourism Arena: A Host Community Perspective”, aim to incorporate host communities at the Great Zimbabwe National Monument, a World Heritage Site, into the cultural tourism in Zimbabwe.²⁹ It does so by exploring three main areas. Firstly, the study seeks to understand and document the existing partnerships and networks within these communities. Secondly, it aims to identify the potential benefits that can arise from partnerships and networks in the realm of cultural tourism. Lastly, the study aims to identify and address the factors that hinder the development and effectiveness of

²⁶S. Mayo & T. M. Tichaawa. “Community Involvement and Participation in Tourism Development: A Zimbabwe Study”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 6(1), 2017, pp. 1-15.

²⁷E. Wayo & E. Wayo, “Towards the Development of Cultural Tourism as an Alternative for Tourism as an Alternative for Tourism Growth in Northern Zimbabwe”. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 9 (1) 2019, pp. 74-92.

²⁸E. Wayo & E. Wayo, “Towards the Development of Cultural Tourism as an Alternative for Tourism as an Alternative for Tourism Growth in Northern Zimbabwe”. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 9 (1) 2019, pp. 74-92.

²⁹C. Makacha, M. Njovo & A Mada. “Partnerships and Networks in Zimbabwe’s Cultural Tourism Arena: A Host Community Perspective”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8(4) 2019, pp. 1-11.

partnerships and networks, which should benefit a wide range of stakeholders in the new normal era.³⁰ The collected data was then analyzed thematically. The research findings revealed that the host community at Great Zimbabwe National Monument was aware of partnerships and networks but did not trust them. As a result, local participation was very low.³¹ The main concern of the host community was that these partnerships and networks were being championed by external agents whose motives were unclear. Despite this, the host communities did experience various benefits from partnerships and networks in cultural tourism, such as employment opportunities and a “reduction in idleness”, particularly among the youth and other vulnerable members of the community. However, the formation of these partnerships and networks faced challenges due to a lack of trust, especially among local residents. The research found that the primary concern of the host community was that these partnerships and networks were being led by individuals from outside their local areas, whose motivations were not clearly communicated.³²

J. M. Chilembwe & I. K. Mponda's paper titled “Tourism Sustainable Governance Practice in Malawi as Tourist destination: The Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development”, examined issues related to tourism governance and their impact on the development of tourism practices. The study focuses on governance, its effects on the sector, and how government issues are addressed. The findings reveal that Malawi was not favourably rated in the region due to a lack of direct routes to major international tourist destinations. Additionally, the results show a correlation between governance and tourism development, but indicate that there were challenges in achieving sustainable governance in Malawi. Lastly, the study highlights a lack of coordination due to a failure

³⁰C. Makacha, M. Njovo & A Mada. “Partnerships and Networks in Zimbabwe’s Cultural Tourism Arena: A Host Community Perspective”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8(4), 2019, pp. 1-11

³¹C. Makacha, M. Njovo & A Mada. “Partnerships and Networks in Zimbabwe’s Cultural Tourism Arena: A Host Community Perspective”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8(4), 2019, pp. 1-11

³²C. Makacha, M. Njovo & A Mada. “Partnerships and Networks in Zimbabwe’s Cultural Tourism Arena: A Host Community Perspective”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 8(4), 2019, pp. 1-11

to follow up on tourism policy objectives, strategies, and the roles of key players, which hindered expected tourism development. The study concludes by identifying remedies to tourism challenges in the country, such as adopting a better approach to tourism development within national development agendas.³³ Here again, HCT is not identified specifically.

In a more recent journal article published in 2021 titled “Managing a World Heritage Site in Malawi: Do Residents’ Sentiments Matter?”, E.L. Chauma and C. Ngwira sought to assess residents’ sentiments towards HCT at the Chongoni Rock Art Sites in Malawi.³⁴ They argue that there is a deficit of research on the local communities’ perceptions on the impacts of and changes to their communities due to the World Heritage Site’s operations. Findings indicate that there was a lack of community involvement in the tourism activity at the sites which they point out have destroyed heritage assets. They conclude by recommending that residents’ participation is one way of empowering the local community and enhancing economic benefits from heritage tourism.³⁵

In a study entitled “Built Heritage, Cultural Tourism and the Historical City of Dondo (Angola)”, B. de Castro and P. Carvalho analyse the development of tourism in the city, based on its built heritage.³⁶ They indicate that built historic heritage, represents an instrument for the cities to boost development of projects of interest for locals. This in turn can improve the image of their own cities, the conservation of their cultural and natural heritage and the generation of economic and social gains. The study aims to

³³J. M. Chilembwe & I. K. Mponda, “Tourism Sustainable Governance Practices in Malawi as Tourist Destination: The Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development”. *Tourism Spectrum* 2(1), 2016, pp. 1-10.

³⁴E. C. Chauma. & C. Nguira. “Managing a World Heritage Site in Malawi: Do Residents’ Sentiment Matter? *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 2021, pp. 1-14.

³⁵E. C. Chauma. & C. Nguira. “Managing a World Heritage Site in Malawi: Do Residents’ Sentiment Matter? *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 2021, pp. 1-14.

³⁶ B. de Castro & P. Calvalho, “Built Heritage, Cultural Tourism and the Historical City of Dondo (Angola),” *Turismo y Desarrollo: Revista de InvestigacionenTurisme y Desarrollo Local* 7(6), 2014, pp. 1-12.

sensitize the different stakeholders on the conservation and enhancement of the built historic heritage of the city of Dondo in Angola.³⁷

In a chapter published in 2018 and entitled “Tourism in Angola: Tourist Resources of the Cuando Cubango Province – Identification and Potential”, J. E. Ezequias and M.K. Alberto explore the potential for development in the province of Cuando Cubango through the sustainable utilization of its flora and fauna. Their main goal is to gather the information needed to design strategies that will boost local tourism. The authors conclude that this research will mainly contribute to the national perspective by promoting tourism as a source of revenue and country promotion.³⁸ Here again we see the notion of HCT is not identified or explored, but rather emphasizing the natural tourism attributes (safari) which emerged after the post-colonial civil war that ended in 2002.

E. Magnani's article titled “Culture and Tourism? Limits and Potential of Sustainable Tourist development in Goree, Senegal and Ilha de Mocambique”, discusses the case of Goree and Ilha de Mocambique, two small African islands that have been designated as World Heritage Sites due to their historical connection to the slave trade and their colonial architecture.³⁹ Magnani argues that despite the significant historical and cultural heritage of these sites, and their importance to African and global history, they have not effectively utilized their cultural resources to alleviate poverty. The author examines the strengths and weaknesses of the current tourist management strategies.⁴⁰

³⁷B. de Castro & P. Calvalho, “Built Heritage, Cultural Tourism and the Historical City of Dondo (Angola),” *Turismo y Desarrollo: Revista de InvestigacionenTurisme y Desarrollo Local* 7(6), 2014, pp. 1-12.

³⁸J. E. Ezequias & M. K. Alberto. “Tourism in Angola: Tourism Resources of the Cuando Cubango Province – Identification and Potential”. *Turydes: Revista Turismo y Desarrollo Local* 11(25), 2018, pp. 1-12.

³⁹E. Magnani. “Culture and Tourism? Limits and Potential of sustainable Tourist Development in Goree, Senegal and Ilha de Mocambique, Mozambique”. *Patrimoine Mondial Tourisme et Development Durable en Afrique*, 2014, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁰E. Magnani. “Culture and Tourism? Limits and Potential of sustainable Tourist Development in Goree, Senegal and Ilha de Mocambique, Mozambique”. *Patrimoine Mondial Tourisme et Development Durable en Afrique*, 2014, pp. 4-5.

In another 2017 journal article entitled “The International, Regional and Local Interaction in the Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Mozambique,” E. Magnani focuses on the tourist promotion of the cultural and natural heritage in this east African country. The strategy there is for the reduction of poverty which highlights the role of tourism in supporting territorial development and implementing some of the SDGs: the United Nations Plan to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.⁴¹ He argues that tourists’ usage of the country’s natural resource may play a vital role in helping in the reduction of poverty and also promote the sector. The article also compares the country’s actual performance with those of the rest of the African continent reflecting a comparatively weak performance. It concludes by analysing the role of international cooperation in the development of the national tourist sector and also considers the multiple-level strategy that has been put in place.⁴²

In contrast, in a 2007 Master’s thesis entitled “Developing Heritage and Cultural Tourism in Lesotho: The Case of Ha Kome Cave Village”, T.M. Shano sets out to confirm the integrity of heritage tourism by using a case study, the Ha Kome Caves, in Lesotho.⁴³ She considers the tourism resources and a facility offered by the place and examines how heritage and culture resources are being exploited for tourism and investigates the tourism impact on the area. She concludes by using Edward Inskeep’s renowned tourism life cycle model as a viable tool to assess the value of the key heritage and culture attractions and resources presented by Ha Kome Village.⁴⁴ Here the potential of HCT within Lesotho is emphasized.

⁴¹E. Magnani, “The International, Regional and Local Interaction in the Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Mozambique”, *Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development* 7, 2017, pp. 231-242.

⁴²E. Magnani, “The International, Regional and Local Interaction in the Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Mozambique”, *Journal of Tourism, Culture and Territorial Development* 7, 2017, pp. 231-242.

⁴³T.M. Shano. “Developing Heritage and Cultural Tourism in Lesotho: The case of Ha Kome cave village”. MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2007.

⁴⁴T. M. Shano. “Developing Heritage and Cultural Tourism in Lesotho: The case of Ha Kome cave village”. MHCS, University of Pretoria, 2007.

In 2022 N. Mkwandi in a journal article entitled “Cultural and Heritage Tourism as an Alternative Rural Livelihood Diversification Strategy for Communities Living Adjacent to the Sehlabathebe National Park”, also focuses on Lesotho. It examines the impact of cultural and heritage tourism as a basic strategy for rural survival and an active social process in which households construct a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities for survival and well-being in Sehlabathebe National Park.⁴⁵ The results show that despite the importance of cultural and heritage tourism in livelihood diversification, its impact was found to be low in reducing household vulnerability and poverty, as a substantial number of households remain impoverished even though they are the traditional custodians of the mixed World Heritage Site, Sehlabathebe National Park. The study concludes that the overall impact of cultural and heritage tourism on livelihood diversification was therefore insignificant.⁴⁶ Hence, the article recommends the provision of education, awareness, and funding opportunities to local communities to enable them to showcase and sell their services to tourists and start generating significant supplementary income. Also, as part of the inclusive tourism product, they recommend that the park management should organize village tours with tourists in order to give local communities opportunities to sell their wares. This could increase local communities' autonomy and reduce dependence on park resources.⁴⁷ Again, the potential of HCT is identified, showing that it is still in the development phase in the region.

In N. S. Mthethwa’s study of 2003, “The Swaziland Tourism Potential”, presents an evaluation of the factors influencing the delivery of Swaziland’s (now Eswatini) tourism

⁴⁵N. Makwindi. “Cultural and Heritage Tourism as an Alternative rural Livelihoods Diversification Strategy for communities Living Adjacent to the Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 11(2), 2022, pp. 901 – 918.

⁴⁶N. Makwindi. “Cultural and heritage Tourism as an Alternative rural Livelihoods Diversification Strategy for communities Living Adjacent to the Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 11(2), 2022, pp. 901 – 918.

⁴⁷N. Makwindi. “Cultural and heritage Tourism as an Alternative rural Livelihoods Diversification Strategy for communities Living Adjacent to the Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 11(2), 2022, pp. 901 – 918.

industry towards its full potential. It provides recommendations on what Swaziland can do to improve the delivery of this industry,⁴⁸ which includes among others re-skilling of staff members in the industry; introduction of specific tourism programmes; and putting clear marketing strategies and policies in place to address the tourism industry.⁴⁹ Here again HCT is not specifically mentioned underlining its marginalised and underdeveloped status.

In a more general publication H. Manwa *et al.*, focus on the cultural tourism of the SADC region as a whole. The book titled *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa* examines the utilization of culture in tourism in southern Africa, as well as the related impacts, possibilities, and challenges.⁵⁰ The chapters use case studies to showcase cultural tourism in the region and explore concepts such as authenticity, commodification, the tourist's gaze, and "otherness", heritage, sustainability, and sustainable livelihoods. The authors carefully examine both the positive and negative impacts of cultural tourism.⁵¹ Also, B. Rasethunsa's later study, titled "The Management of Cultural Tourism Development in the Southern African Development Community Region," also highlights the increasing focus of policymakers on cultural tourism and its perceived economic advantages. These advantages include employment opportunities, business growth, and income generation. The study explores the strategies used in Tanzania, Botswana, Namibia, Mauritius, and Seychelles, which can serve as models for other countries in the region looking to develop cultural tourism. These strategies encompass various initiatives such as establishing cultural exchange programs, preserving local cultural practices, raising awareness among the local community about the importance of cultural tourism, fostering collaborations for both local and international cultural tourism development, and formulating cultural

⁴⁸N.S. Mthethwa. "The Swaziland Tourism Potential". MA, University of Kwazulu – Natal, 2003.

⁴⁹N.S. Mthethwa. "The Swaziland Tourism Potential". MA, University of Kwazulu – Natal, 2003.

⁵⁰H. Manwa, N. Moswete & J. Saarinen. *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa*. Channel View Publications, 2016.

⁵¹H. Manwa, N. Moswete & J. Saarinen. *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa*. Channel View Publications, 2016.

policies among others. In conclusion, the study offers valuable insights into the similarities and differences in the strategies adopted by the selected countries. Furthermore, it provides recommendations that other developing African countries can implement to enhance their management of cultural tourism.⁵²

What is apparent from this selection of research work on the ten southernmost countries in Africa is that despite the HCT sector still being considered as being relatively new in the region, the selection of literature presented here is indicative of how most of these different countries are scaling up their tourism industry with particular reference to HCT tourism. It is however evident that these ten countries in the region are showing uneven progress as they individually depict different levels in terms of development, marketability, consumption and impacts. It can however be deduced from all these countries that HCT represents a growing special interest market and one for which the demand is high. Additionally, it is apparent that the prospects for employment are numerous, either directly in HCT ventures or indirectly in support services.

2.2 Women in Tourism and Gender Issues

Women are not entirely absent in tourism literature. Due to the predominance of the female workforce in the industry, research has explored, amongst others, issues of gender inequality in the tourism sector. Currently, there are studies on the notion of women's economic empowerment in the industry, with great emphasis being placed on entrepreneurship. In earlier studies, women have also often featured as subjects of exploitation, and in particular sex tourism. This section will consider the literature on women and gender inequality broadly speaking. It will then consider research on women across the globe, but primarily in the global South and thereafter Africa and southern Africa more specifically.

⁵²B. Rasethunsa, "Practical Aspects of Socio-Cultural management", *Socio-Cultural Management Journal* 5, 2022, pp. 92-104.

In a 1997 book titled *Gender, Work and Tourism*, M.T. Sinclair examines the central role played by women in tourism.⁵³ By using a comparative international perspective integrating the relatively unrelated literatures on tourism, gender and work, the book considers a range of tourist locations across the world such as the United Kingdom, Northern Cyprus, Bali, Mexico, the Philippines and Japan. It examines the gendered structure of the tourism workforce in the different international destinations and helps to explain the processes which reinforce or challenge gendered patterns of work, gender ideologies and distinctions in income, status, power and control.⁵⁴ The study does however not include any references to countries on the Africa continent.

The "UN's Global Report on Women in Tourism in 2010" aims to examine women's active participation in the tourism industry worldwide.⁵⁵ This report focuses on developing countries and is divided into five main areas: Employment, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Education, and Community. The findings of the study confirm that women play a major role in the global tourism sector, which presents various opportunities for their economic empowerment.⁵⁶ However, upon closer examination, the report reveals that women tend to be concentrated in low-skilled, low-paid, and unstable jobs in the tourism sector. In general, the report indicates that gender equality has proven to be highly beneficial in the business world, but not the tourism world.⁵⁷ However, women who receive higher levels of training and more opportunities to develop their businesses are said to contribute to significant improvements in all aspects of tourism. This report holds that this fact opens up new and exciting possibilities for the tourism industry, which has yet to fully harness the enormous potential of women. The study also offers recommendations

⁵³M.T. Sinclair. *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, 1997.

⁵⁴M.T. Sinclair. *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, 1997.

⁵⁵UN Women: Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2010.

⁵⁶UN Women: Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2010.

⁵⁷UN Women: Global Report on Women in Tourism, 2010.

for the tourism industry, national tourism administrations, and the international community on how to address this important issue going forward.⁵⁸

Following the success of the first Global Report in Women in Tourism in 2010, the second edition followed in 2021.⁵⁹ This second Report on Women in Tourism aimed to analyse the factors that contributed to gender equality in the tourism sector and proposed global strategies to address inequality and promote women's empowerment. It covers the same thematic areas as the first edition of the Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010: employment, entrepreneurship, education and training, leadership, policy and decision-making, and community and civil society.⁶⁰ By setting thematic goals for each area, it provides a comprehensive understanding of what gender equality and women's empowerment in tourism should entail. The report utilizes a combination of quantitative analysis, literature review, and 25 in-depth case studies from 18 countries.⁶¹ It has an extended geographical scope covering developed and developing countries, additional in-depth industry analysis, and several case-studies that illustrate how women around the world are using tourism as a vehicle for empowerment and development.⁶² It explores trends in four regions - Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe - as well as in four key tourism industries: digital platforms and technology, hotels and accommodation, tour operators, and community-based tourism.⁶³ Regarding Africa, this report uses the accommodation and food services sector as a representation of the 37 selected countries from the region. The report highlights that despite the growing

⁵⁸UN Women: Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010.

⁵⁹UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021.

⁶⁰UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021.

⁶¹UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021.

⁶²UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. <<http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. >Accessed: 15 April 2021.

⁶³UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021.

tourism prospects in Africa and the fact that 69% of women are involved in the industry, women still encounter several obstacles in fully engaging and benefiting from these opportunities. It emphasizes that power dynamics in many contexts persistently restrict African women's chances, particularly in terms of mobility, work perceptions and stereotypes, access to resources, and decision-making power.⁶⁴ Many of these issues are of relevance to the current study and warrant greater analysis.

A 2013 paper by an International Labour Office (ILO) written by T. Baum titled "International Perspectives on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering and Tourism,"⁶⁵ examines the structural and cultural factors that influence the roles of women in the HCT workforce. It also discusses strategies that can improve their status and opportunities within the industry. Some of the issues addressed include occupational segregation, pay equity, career advancement, the involvement of women in micro-enterprises, and the informal hotel/catering/tourism sector.⁶⁶ It argues further that while there has been some exploration of the relationship between gender equality and job quality, workforce development, training, and employment at the national and local levels, there is limited information on gender equality provisions in major international companies operating in global and regional contexts. The study's findings shed light on important issues related to women's employment and provide a basis for future discussions. Additionally, they highlight innovative practices and case studies that can inform human resource planning for governments, employers, and workers' organisations.⁶⁷

⁶⁴UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. <<http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. >Accessed: 15 April 2021.

⁶⁵T. Baum. "International Perspectives on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering and Tourism". International Labour Office (ILO). Working Paper 1/2013.

⁶⁶T. Baum. "International Perspectives on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering and Tourism". International Labour Office (ILO). Working Paper 1/2013.

⁶⁷T. Baum "International Perspectives on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering and Tourism". International Labour Office (ILO). Working Paper 1/2013.

for women and helps mitigate gender inequality in areas where tourism employment is available.⁷¹

A 2014 journal article titled “Women in Tourism: Experiences and Challenges Faced by Owners of Small Accommodation Establishments”, A. Deen *et al.*, analyse the role that women are playing in the tourism business sector.⁷² It basically focuses on the experiences of women who operate accommodation-related businesses and reveals that women face various challenges world-wide. These are mainly in terms of a lack of appropriate training and education that might adequately support their business ventures, as well as lacking sufficient access to finance for their businesses. Moreover, women tend to enter into business ventures for diverse and varying reasons, such as the need for growth and better quality of life, rather than simply to make profits. Additionally, it reveals that their experiences vary, with the most prominent experience being the meeting and interacting with people.⁷³

In a 2018 study entitled “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction of Gender Inequality”,⁷⁴ R. Genç broadly investigates the positive contribution of the tourism sector to the well-being of women in three different aspects. First, the economic conditions of women and the propensity to increase their presence within the tourism sector which corresponds to new opportunities of employment as well as creating revenue for public spending, specifically to finance the social policies for women. Second, the tourism sector enables social interaction among people from different cultural backgrounds and provides an opportunity for women in a particular destination to observe what cultural rights other

⁷¹L. K. Khatiwada & J. A. Silva. “Mitigating Gender Inequality in Rural Regions: The Effects of Tourism Employment in Namibia”. *International Journal of Tourism Research* 17(5), 2014, pp. 442-450.

⁷²A. Deen, V. Harila & N. Achul. “Women in Tourism: Experiences and Challenges Faced by Small Accommodation Establishments”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 5(3), 2014, pp. 1-15.

⁷³A. Deen, V. Harila & N. Achul. “Women in Tourism: Experiences and Challenges Faced by Small Accommodation Establishments”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 5(3), 2014, pp. 1-15.

⁷⁴R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

women have in other countries and opens the eyes of local women to the rights they can obtain. Lastly, psychological well-being of women which is measured by quality of life that is likely to increase as they take part in economic activities and social life. The study maintains that the tourism sector has the capacity to provide significantly higher amounts of specific benefits for women and therefore positively contributes to the establishment of gender equality.⁷⁵ It concludes by devising a model that was suitable for any type of numerical data. Its main goal was to quantitatively measure the contribution of tourism activity to gender equality. The provided model was capable of addressing the complex nature of gender inequality, which involves a range of social and economic factors. It allowed for their measurement through statistical analysis of objective scientific activity, rather than relying on qualitative evaluations that may raise questions about objectivity.⁷⁶ So, Genç note that the overall well-being of women can be measured by quality of life (QoL) variable in a quantitative manner, indicating the level of psychological wellness of local women in a particular tourism destination.⁷⁷ Hence the model can be considered as: $TI = \beta_0 + \beta_1.RW/TR + \beta_2.SI + \beta_3.QL + \epsilon$ where, TI implies the Impact of Tourism; RW implies Total Revenues Received by Women; TR implies Total Revenues Received by All Actors; SI implies the degree of Social Inclusion for Women; QL implies Quality of Life of Women; β_0 , β_1 , β_2 and β_3 imply coefficients, and ϵ implies residual (i.e. the effect of other variables).⁷⁸

Another study by the World Bank, “Tourism for Development, Women and Tourism: Designing for Inclusion”,⁷⁹ explains the rationale for integrating a gender lens into tourism

⁷⁵R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

⁷⁶R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

⁷⁷R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

⁷⁸R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

⁷⁹World Bank Group & International Finance Corporation. N.d.” Tourism for Development Women and Tourism: Designing for Inclusion”. *Knowledge Series*.

development projects throughout the world. It also includes a set of resources designed to help development professionals and project managers get started and find necessary data. The study paves the way for more in-depth operational research and data collection on what works for empowering women in the tourism sector.⁸⁰ Four strategic objectives for enhancing women's economic empowerment are outlined and these include: improving human development; removing constraints for more and better jobs; removing barriers to women's ownership of and control over assets; and enhancing women's voice and agency.⁸¹

With the tourism industry being one of the sectors with potentially more job creation and with the realisation that women are key players in the industry, scholars have also explored the gender inequality in tourism businesses. The studies cited here include a range of case studies primarily in the global South. In a 1991 article titled "Tourism as a Factor in Development Implications for Gender and Work in Barbados", D. E. Levy and P. B. Lerch examine the implications of employment in tourism for gender arrangements in the workplace and the place of women tourism workers in the West Indies.⁸² The study found that women tend to be in less stable, lower-paid, and lower-level jobs in the industry and often must balance domestic and market work. The authors argue that women tourism workers often rely more on additional sources of financial and network support than men do, especially from their families. They conclude by suggesting that women's autonomy could be enhanced with industry and government programs such as

⁸⁰World Bank Group & International Finance Corporation. "Tourism for Development Women and Tourism: Designing for Inclusion". *Knowledge Series*, N.d.

⁸¹World Bank (2016). *Gender Strategy, 2016, 2016-2023: Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive growth* Washington DC: World Bank Group. <<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/102114-REVISED-Public-WBG-Gender-Strategy.pdf>. >Accessed: 21 January 2022.

⁸²D. E. Levy & P. B. Lerch. "Tourism as a Factor in Development Implications for Gender and Work in Barbados" *Gender and Society* 5(1), 1991, pp. 67 – 85.

flexible hours, increased formal training and support for women managers and entrepreneurs.⁸³

Another major case study of significance in this domain is a chapter written by A. Lynn Bolles in 1997 titled “Women as a Category of Analysis in Scholarship on Tourism: Jamaican Women and Tourism Employment”.⁸⁴ Bolles explores another relatively neglected area of anthropological research related to tourism – the consequences of the industry for the local women who, as Bolles points out, figure prominently in both the imagery and economics of tourism in countries like Jamaica.⁸⁵ She points out that the employment opportunities normally available to Jamaican women are inequitably limited by patterns of gendered exploitation in which tourism follows the course of earlier colonial activity. However, contrary to expectation, those women she interviewed reported that they were satisfied with their employment in the tourism sector and expressed the feeling that they would be worse off should such opportunities not be available to them.⁸⁶

In a 2007 article titled “Undoing Shame: Tourism and Women’s Work in Turkey”, H. Turker discusses changes in a Turkish village context by exploring how gender identities and gendered spaces are being reconstituted through tourism-related work.⁸⁷ Based on long-term anthropological field work, the study considers the process whereby there was an increase both in women’s paid employment in local tourism small business and in women’s micro-scale entrepreneurial activity associated with tourism. It also considers

⁸³D. E. Levy & P.B. Lerch. “Tourism as a Factor in Development Implications for Gender and Work in Barbados” *Gender and Society* 5(1), 1991, pp. 67 – 85.

⁸⁴A. L. Bolles, Women as Category of Analysis in Scholarship on Tourism: Jamaican Women and Tourism Employment” in Chambers, E. (ed.). *Tourism and Culture: An Applied Perspective*. State University of New York Press, Albany. 1997.

⁸⁵A. L., Bolles, Women as Category of Analysis in Scholarship on Tourism: Jamaican Women and Tourism Employment,” In Chambers, E. (ed.). *Tourism and Culture: An Applied Perspective*. State University of New York Press, Albany. 1997.

⁸⁶E. Chambers (ed.). *Tourism and Culture: An Applied Perspective*. State University of New York Press, Albany. 1997.

⁸⁷H. Turker, “Undoing Shame: Tourism and Women’s Work in Turkey”. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 5(2), 2007, pp. 87-105.

some of the broader influential aspects of social change and it highlights how the special and moral boundaries have shifted in order to allow women to work in the tourism domain.⁸⁸ The researcher noted that an increasing number of women in Göreme, especially young and elderly females, are actively participating in tourism production by engaging in entrepreneurial activities, thereby "crafting new selves."⁸⁹ As a result, spatial boundaries and the boundaries of societal shame are slowly changing and expanding.⁹⁰

However, in another study published in 2014 focusing on women in Turkey there is a slightly different view. Entitled "Cultural Heritage and Women: The Case of Beypazari" the chapter by M. Kaplan and Z. Y. Odabas presents an evaluation from the perspective of women in Ankara's Beypazari County in Turkey. These women are producers of items that could be described as "cultural heritage". The study reveals that the women producers in Beypazari do not have institutional ties which results in them being disadvantaged in terms of sustainability of the production of the traditional products. Moreover, despite the support of the local government, the women producers cannot act as a unified body and that due to this lack of unity, it is not plausible to think that a common ground exists for these women in this context.⁹¹

A 2010 publication *Tourism in the Muslim World*, includes a chapter by A. Shakeela *et al.*, titled, "Women's Participation in Tourism". In this chapter Shakeela *et al.*, argue that Maldivian women are recognised as being among the most emancipated in South Asia and the Islamic world as there is no institutional discrimination along gender lines in access to education, health services or for jobs in the public sector. However, they

⁸⁸H. Turker, "Undoing Shame: Tourism and Women's Work in Turkey". *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 5(2), 2007, pp. 87-105.

⁸⁹H. Turker, "Undoing Shame: Tourism and Women's Work in Turkey". *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 5(2), 2007, p. 100.

⁹⁰H. Turker, "Undoing Shame: Tourism and Women's Work in Turkey". *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 5(2), 2007, pp. 87-105.

⁹¹A. Y. Mermod & S. O. Idowu. (eds.), *Corporate Social Responsibility in the Global business World*, Turkey, 2014.

indicate that the proportion of women working in the Maldivian tourism industry is relatively low. The chapter therefore explores the participation of the local women in the Maldivian tourism industry. They argue that the role of government in balancing religion, politics, and economy is considered imperative in positively influencing local tourism labour participation and the employment of women.⁹²

In a 2014 article titled “An Analysis of Gendered Employment in the Portuguese Tourism Sector”, I. Carvalho *et al.*, study gender inequalities in employment in accommodation services, travel agencies and tour operators in Portugal.⁹³ The article’s main objective is to analyse what the conditions of employment generated in the tourism field in Portugal are and assess the gendered patterns of employment that emerge. The study reveals that despite women’s high level of education, they are more prevalent in low qualified jobs, while men hold executive and management positions. It further reveals that women’s pay is consistently lower. The authors conclude by indicating that the accommodation sector and travel sector have distinct characteristics in terms of gender and suggests that future studies analyse the sectors in a disaggregated way.⁹⁴

Focussing on Asia, in a 2017 article titled “Female Empowerment and Tourism: A Focus on Business in Fijian Village,”⁹⁵ A. Monovo and H. Dahles seek to extend an understanding of the links between female empowerment, tourism and business among the Fijian women, through their involvement in the indigenous Fijian community. The study focuses on the gender dimension of community-based tourism development in Vatuolalai village, along with the coral coast of Fiji. They argue that through tourism-based

⁹²N. Scott & J. Jafari (eds.), *Tourism in the Muslim World* (Bridging Tourism Theory and Practice). Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Bingley, 2010.

⁹³I. Carvalho, C. Costa, N. Lykke & A. Torres. “An Analysis of Gendered Employment in the Portuguese Tourism Sector”, *Journal of Human Resources Hospitality and Tourism*, 2014, pp. 405-429.

⁹⁴I. Carvalho, C. Costa, N. Lykke & A. Torres. “An Analysis of Gendered Employment in the Portuguese Tourism Sector”, *Journal of Human Resources Hospitality and Tourism*, 2014, pp. 405-429.

⁹⁵A. Monovo & H. Dahles. “Female Empowerment and Tourism: A Focus on Business in Fijian Village”. *Asian Pacific Journal Tourism Research* 22(6), 2017, pp. 681 – 692.

entrepreneurship and participation in tourism employment, local women have attained not only economic, but also psychological, social, and political empowerment. They further maintain that given the literature, this is not a mainstream result, particularly in patriarchal and embedded indigenous communities.⁹⁶ Also, the findings indicate that men's roles have broadened to encompass childrearing, cooking, and daily household chores, which were traditionally associated exclusively with women. Furthermore, it was observed that men displayed reduced interest in farming or fishing, opting instead to invest a considerable amount of time in consuming kava. Monovo *et al.*, contend that these societal transformations among indigenous Fijians challenge the notion of a rigid and unyielding patriarchal society. They conclude by pointing out that this study serves as evidence that cultural and empowerment dynamics are ongoing processes that necessitate consultation, incremental adaptations, and growth.⁹⁷

In a 2019 journal article titled “The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries”,⁹⁸ A. Rinaldi *et al.*, focus on bringing out the current condition of women in the tourism sector, particularly in the emerging global South countries. With case studies located in India, the article explores what happens to women and their communities when the role of women in tourism is actively supported. The author highlights the existence of organisations in India, such as the Mahila Mandals, which aim to address various issues faced by women in rural areas.⁹⁹ They point out that members of the Mahila Mandals contribute through membership fees and monthly subscriptions, which are then reinvested in various welfare programs. In the process, these organisations work in close collaboration with local authorities to promote

⁹⁶A. Monovo & H. Dahles. “Female Empowerment and Tourism: A Focus on Business in Fijian Village”. *Asian Pacific Journal Tourism Research* 22(6), 2017, pp. 681 – 692.

⁹⁷A. Monovo & H. Dahles. “Female Empowerment and Tourism: A Focus on Business in Fijian Village”. *Asian Pacific Journal Tourism Research* 22(6), 2017, pp. 681 – 692.

⁹⁸A. Rinaldi & I. Salerno. “The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries”. *Qual Quant* 54, 2019, pp. 1465 -1477.

⁹⁹A. Rinaldi & I. Salerno. “The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries”. *Qual Quant* 54, 2019, pp. 1465 -1477.

collective efforts among women. One of the key outcomes of their work is the facilitation of women's entry into the tourism job market, resulting in improved income generation, self-esteem, and decision-making power within their families.¹⁰⁰ More, financial assistance is provided to women through self-employment initiatives, self-help groups, and participation in enterprises and cooperatives, particularly within the tourism sector, which is known for its significant economic growth.¹⁰¹ Consequently, these organizations play a crucial role in enhancing women's participation in household decision-making. The study findings indicate that this increased involvement contributes to improved income generation, self-esteem, and bargaining power within the family.¹⁰²

In a 2019 article by A. Ntajanam *et al.* "Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship in South Africa: Is it a Man's World?" the prominence of women in the tourism entrepreneurial space in South Africa is explored. It evaluates the range of challenges faced by women in the tourism sector. It looks into the privileges awarded to males by society from birth, as well as the effects of socialisation among women who aspire to be entrepreneurs. The study concludes by attempting to ascertain if the notion that "It's a man's world" still applies in the 21st century tourism boardroom.¹⁰³ The prevailing consensus suggests that women primarily hold positions as employees within tourism organisations that are owned and managed by men. Consequently, there remains a pressing need to promote and support women-led businesses within the tourism sector.¹⁰⁴ Ntajana *et al.*, conclude by posing a question: what actions can be taken by society, the private sector, government, institutions of higher education, and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate

¹⁰⁰A. Rinaldi & I. Salerno. "The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries". *Qual Quant* 54, 2019, pp. 1465 -1477.

¹⁰¹A. Rinaldi & I. Salerno. "The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries". *Qual Quant* 54, 2019, pp. 1465 -1477.

¹⁰²A. Rinaldi & I. Salerno. "The Tourism Gender Gap and its Potential Impact on the Development of the Emerging Countries". *Qual Quant* 54, 2019, pp. 1465 -1477.

¹⁰³A. Ntajana & J. Mangwane. "Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship in South Africa: Is it a Man's World?" *Advances in Tourism, Technologies and Smart Systems*, 171, 2019, pp. 335 -344.

¹⁰⁴A. Ntajana & J. Mangwane. "Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship in South Africa: Is it a Man's World?" *Advances in Tourism, Technologies and Smart Systems* 171, 2019, pp. 335 -344.

the process of gender transformation, particularly within an industry like tourism that is a crucial driving force of the economy and predominantly employs women?¹⁰⁵ This question to a large extent remains debated, if not unanswered.

In an initiative designed by Nedbank and South African Tourism aiming to empower black women in tourism, titled “Nedbank and South African Tourism Announces Empowering the Women in Tourism initiative,”¹⁰⁶ Nedbank, along with South African Tourism and McGeralds Entrepreneurship Centre focus on this topic. They argue that besides statistics from the United Tourism World Organization (UNWTO) showing that women make up the majority of employment in the tourism industry, and besides them being well represented in service and clerical level jobs, they also indicate that they are represented poorly at professional levels and in leadership positions.¹⁰⁷ Hence, they maintain that inspiring entrepreneurship development is designed to create a knowledge foundation, provide mentorship and eventually, open markets to black-women-owned small, medium and micro-enterprises operating in the tourism sector. They conclude that by the end of the programme women should take their rightful place and contribute to the country’s socio-economic growth and development.¹⁰⁸

In 2020, in an article titled “Segregation of Women in Tourism Employment in the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Region”,¹⁰⁹ K. Hutchings *et al.*, present results from an international survey of women’s employment in the tourism sector. They analyse 363 responses representing the views of employers, employees and government officials. The

¹⁰⁵A. Ntjana & J. Mangwane. “Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship in South Africa: Is it a Man’s World?” *Advances in Tourism, Technologies and Smart Systems* 171, 2019, pp. 335 -344.

¹⁰⁶South Africa, 14 October 2021, <https://www.southafrica.net/gl/en/corporate/press/nedbank>, Accessed: 08 March 2022.

¹⁰⁷South Africa, 14 October 2021, <https://www.southafrica.net/gl/en/corporate/press/nedbank>, Accessed: 08 March 2022.

¹⁰⁸South Africa, 14 October 2021, <https://www.southafrica.net/gl/en/corporate/press/nedbank>, Accessed: 08 March 2022.

¹⁰⁹K. Hutchings, C. Moyle, A. Chai, N. Garofano & S. Moore. “Segregation of Women in Tourism Employment in the APEC Region”, *Tourism journal Perspective*, 2020, pp. 1-15.

result reveals continued segregation of women across the economies, but also highlights national cultural barriers and intersectionality (sexual orientation; gender; class; race and so on) which affect women's employment and progression in tourism employment.¹¹⁰

Hutchings et al.'s, study emphasizes the problem of women's segregation in tourism jobs in the APEC region. The study's table provides a summary of the obstacles that women face in this region: gender discrimination; conflicts between work and family; inadequate workplace support; sexual harassment; and issues related to intersectionality, such as class, gender, sexual orientation and race. It is crucial to acknowledge that these problems are exacerbated by societal norms and economic factors that impact gender roles and employment opportunities, similar to the situation in Africa.

Also in Asia, and on a more positive note, in a 2020 study by M. M. Su *et al.*, titled "Empowerment of Women through Cultural Tourism: Perspectives of Hui Minority Embroiderers in Ningxia,"¹¹¹ the authors highlight the potential of engaging vulnerable rural women in the demonstration and practice of cultural heritage for tourism as a means of empowerment. The study focuses on a Hui ethnic community in Haiyuan County, located in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region of northwest China, which is widely recognised for its poverty.¹¹² The findings of the study reveal that involving rural Hui women in embroidery tourism not only brings economic advancement, but also offers opportunities for various forms of empowerment, including social, psychological, educational, and political empowerment to varying degrees. Furthermore, the study suggests that the participation of rural women in showcasing and preserving their

¹¹⁰K. Hutching, C. Moyle, A. Chai, N. Garofano & S. Moore. "Segregation of Women in Tourism Employment in the APEC Region", *Tourism Journal Perspective*, 2020, pp. 1-15.

¹¹¹M. Ming Su, G. Wall, J. Ma, M. Notarianni & S. Wang. 2020. Empowerment of Women through Cultural Tourism: Perspectives of Hui Minority Embroiderers in Ningxia, China. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2020.1841217.

¹¹²M. Ming Su, G. Wall, J. Ma, M. Notarianni & S. Wang. 2020. Empowerment of Women through Cultural Tourism: Perspectives of Hui Minority Embroiderers in Ningxia, China. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2020.1841217.

intangible cultural heritage for tourism can be an effective strategy for revitalizing local cultural expressions while also providing economic support for the women and their communities.¹¹³

In a journal article titled “Assessing the Role of Women in Tourism Related Sectors in the Caribbean,” F. Pastore *et al.*, focus on a group of 13 Caribbean countries.¹¹⁴ The article analyses the impact of women in apical positions (top manager or owner) within businesses on firm performance-productivity, profitability and female employment. The analysis finds that opportunities for women in these positions in the Caribbean are constrained to less productive and profitable businesses, as elsewhere. The article concludes however by stating that those businesses with females at the top employ more women particularly in management roles.¹¹⁵

In a seminal book focusing on women in tourism in developing regions edited by Y. Apostolopoulos, S. Sonemez and D. J. Timothy published in 2001, there is a chapter by P.U.C. Dieke titled “The Forgotten Giant: Women’s Role in Africa’s Delayed Tourism Development”.¹¹⁶ This examines the proposition that African women are important in the tourism sector in the region. It presents the general trends and problems in Africa’s tourism development, sets out the situation in the tourism industry, identifies and examines the problem, and considers the role of gender in these various contexts. The chapter concludes by suggesting measures to enhance African women’s participation in

¹¹³M. Ming Su, G. Wall, J. Ma, M. Notarianni & S. Wang. Empowerment of Women through Cultural Tourism: Perspectives of Hui Minority Embroiderers in Ningxia, China. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2020. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2020.1841217.

¹¹⁴F. Pastore, A. Webster & K. Hope. “Assessing the Role of Women in Tourism Related Sectors in the Caribbean”. *International Journal Tourism Research* 2020, pp. 1-22.

¹¹⁵F. Pastore, A. Webster & K. Hope. “Assessing the Role of Women in Tourism Related Sectors in the Caribbean”. *International Journal Tourism Research* 2020, pp. 1-22.

¹¹⁶Y. Apostolopoulos, S. F. Sonemez & D. J. Timothy (eds.), *Women as Producers and Consumers of Tourism in Developing Regions*. Greenwood Publishing Group, USA, 2001.

tourism development and draws from the analysis implications for other tourism destinations.¹¹⁷

In an online seminar of Leeds Beckett University school of Events Tourism and Hospitality Management (ETHM) Research Seminar entitled “African Women and Tourism: Bridging the Gap to Success with a Focus on Nigeria and Ghana,”¹¹⁸ Dr O. Adeola argues that women are the cornerstone of economic activity in the tourism sector. She further holds that tourism has also contributed to reducing gender-related inequalities across the globe. However, she mentions that despite efforts to bridge the gender equality gap, women entrepreneurs still experience challenges that limit their success. She gives specific attention to Africa and indicates that socio-cultural and cultural and economic constraints hinder women’s path to success in the sector. On this basis, she maintains that for women to succeed in the tourism sector, these limitations must be addressed.¹¹⁹

A chapter by M. Christian *et al.*, titled “Gender in Tourism Industry: The Case of Kenya”¹²⁰ in a 2013 publication, provides a snapshot of the gender distribution of employment and key constraints faced by women in three of the main segments of the Kenyan tourism value chain: the tour operator, the excursion package and the accommodation provider. The study shows the comparatively disadvantaged position of women in these roles.¹²¹ They conclude their discussion by examining specific approaches utilized by both the

¹¹⁷Y. Apostolopoulos, S. F. Sonemez., & D. J. Timothy (eds.), *Women as Producers and Consumers of Tourism in Developing Regions*. Greenwood Publishing Group, USA, 2001.

¹¹⁸ETHM Research Seminar: 17 May 2022. African Woman and Tourism: Bridging the Gap to Success <<https://ogechiadeola.com/ethm-research-seminar-african-women-and-tourism-bridging-the-gap-to-success/>>Accessed: 08 February 2025.

¹¹⁹ETHM Research Seminar: 17 May 2022. African Woman and Tourism: Bridging the Gap to Success <<https://ogechiadeola.com/ethm-research-seminar-african-women-and-tourism-bridging-the-gap-to-success/>>Accessed: 08 February 2025.

¹²⁰ P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing Potential*. The World Bank. 2013. p. 115.

¹²¹P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing Potential*. The World Bank. 2013. p. 115.

private and public sectors to enhance the status of women in the tourism industry.¹²² These approaches involve increasing the annual supply and diversity of tourism. The authors mention that businesses can keep their workforce throughout the year, which optimizes the use of fixed capital investments and increases their willingness to train employees. This is because firms can fully benefit from training.¹²³ As a result, the number of temporary work contracts, particularly for women, could potentially be reduced, leading to more stable employment and income. Additionally, they suggest that Kenya's tourism sector can address some of the obstacles faced by women by adjusting work schedules to accommodate the needs of female employees, training women in traditionally male-dominated occupations, and implementing gender-equitable policies and communication strategies.¹²⁴

Another study on Kenya is the 2013 MA dissertation, "Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Women Involvement in the Production and Supply of Cultural Tourism Products: A Case of Katangi Women Basket Weavers in Yatta - Machakos, Kenya".¹²⁵ In this, S. M. Matiku investigates and establishes factors that influence women's involvement in the production and supply of tourism products. He specifically investigates the cultural, social and economic factors that influence women's involvement in the production and supply of tourism products, and the role women play in the production and supply of these tourism products. His study establishes that women are pivotal in the production of handicrafts as well as the selling of them to tourists as souvenirs. It is shown that through the handicrafts the women played a critical role in mitigating financial

¹²²P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing Potential*. The World Bank. 2013. p.115.

¹²³P. Brenton, Gamberoni, P. & Sear, C., (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing Potential*. The World Bank. 2013. p. 115.

¹²⁴P. Brenton, P. Gamberoni & C. Sear (eds.), *Women and Trade in Africa: Realizing Potential*. The World Bank. 2013. p. 115.

¹²⁵S. M. Matiku. "Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Women Involvement in the Production and Supply of Cultural Tourism Products: A Case of Katangi Women Basket Weavers in Yatta - Machakos, Kenya". MA., Moi University, Kenya, 2013.

difficulties in their families, as well as being key in the conservation and preservation of Kamba culture of traditional basket weaving. The study further contributes to a better understanding of the issues affecting women who are involved in the production of cultural tourism products.¹²⁶ The dissertation sets out a number of recommendations aimed to guide policy makers and stakeholders in enhancing women's participation and involvement in tourism production. It indicates that collaborative effort requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including governments, intergovernmental bodies, local government, industry, trade unions, local communities and their various member groups, NGOs, and community-based tourism initiatives.¹²⁷ Also, he points out that the ultimate goal of further tourism development should be to harness tourism's potential while simultaneously preserving the natural environment and cultural heritage, as well as promoting social and economic justice. Additionally, to empower women in self-employment through tourism-related activities, micro-credit programs should be developed. Most importantly, Matiku notes that by including loans to women's initiatives, the industry can create opportunities to support local sourcing and maximize the benefits for local communities. Lastly, he holds that the tourism industry, local government, NGOs, and independent tourism initiatives should work closely together to develop awareness-raising programs that educate tourists about the advantages of purchasing local products, such as handicrafts.¹²⁸

¹²⁶S. M. Matiku. "Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Women Involvement in the Production and Supply of Cultural Tourism Products: A Case of Katangi Women Basket Weavers in Yatta - Machakos, Kenya". MA., Moi University, Kenya, 2013.

¹²⁷S. M. Matiku. "Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Women Involvement in the Production and Supply of Cultural Tourism Products: A Case of Katangi Women Basket Weavers in Yatta - Machakos, Kenya". MA., Moi University, Kenya, 2013.

¹²⁸S. M. Matiku. "Socio-Cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Women Involvement in the Production and Supply of Cultural Tourism Products: A Case of Katangi Women Basket Weavers in Yatta - Machakos, Kenya". MA., Moi University, Kenya, 2013.

At the UNWTO Women in Tourism Empowerment Programme (WITEP) meeting held on 25 January 2019, titled “A Taskforce for Women in Tourism”,¹²⁹ the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Ghana, H.E. Catherine Afeku, emphasized the issue of the “invisibility” of women in the tourism sector despite the fact that they make a major contribution. She maintained that there is a need to give women “visibility”. She argued that the lack of skills among these women is due to the absence of suitable programmes that could calculate the value of women in tourism. The taskforce concluded by establishing that the WITEP programme should focus in the long-term on the general theme of women in tourism, but there should be a short-term focus on more specific topics developed through pilot projects.¹³⁰ The members agreed that given the level of experience that South Africa has on this issue, the first pilot project of the WITEP programme would be launched in South Africa.¹³¹

From the above discussion, focusing on general studies primarily of the global South and then specifically, the dominance of the female workforce in the tourism sector observed world-wide, and specifically in Africa, clearly indicates that women are important in the tourism industry and cannot be ignored. Nonetheless, several studies have highlighted both inequalities in terms of access to tourism jobs and the associated cultural, social, economic and political elements that maintain or challenge gender roles and hierarchies.¹³² Obviously, both the discussion of the tourism literature on the notion of the “empowerment of women” and its focus on “inequality in the tourism work space”

¹²⁹UNWTO, 12 March 2019., <<https://www.unwto.org/africa/news/2019-03-12/taskforcefor-women-in-tourism>> Accessed: 8 June 2021.

¹³⁰UNWTO, 12 March 2019., <<https://www.unwto.org/africa/news/2019-03-12/taskforcefor-women-in-tourism>> Accessed: 8 June 2021.

¹³¹UNWTO, 12 March 2019., <<https://www.unwto.org/africa/news/2019-03-12/taskforcefor-women-in-tourism>> Accessed: 8 June 2021.

¹³²C. C. Aitchison. “Feminist and Gender Perspective in Tourism Studies: The Social-cultural Nexus of Critical and Cultural Theories”, *Tourist Studies* 5(3), 2005, pp. 207 – 224.

as seen above, indicates that women do face specific constraints in this industry. This then undermines their economic activities and positions in the sector.

The literature on women in general also makes it apparent that little to no research has been done on Africa, and even less on southern Africa. Hence, the main aim of this thesis is to address this lacuna in the literature by exploring the exploitation of those who are numerically dominant in the industry, but who are subservient if not exploited - that is women working in the HCT domain. It tackles as its focus study, the geo-specific southern Africa region. It is also apparent that the focus is increasingly on a need for the empowering of women who have become important role players in the tourism entrepreneurial arena.

2.3 Women in Heritage and Cultural tourism in southern Africa

Due to the prevalence of jobs associated with femininity in the sector, this penultimate section of the literature review focuses on women in the heritage and cultural tourism with special reference to southern Africa. Despite the evidently fundamental role women play in this niche as key service providers, even in HCT, women also experience the challenges brought by tourism differently, including its negative impacts.

In a project titled, “Empowerment of Women through Cultural Heritage Tourism”, T. Nzama seeks to establish the ways in which cultural heritage tourism can be used as a means of fostering cultural exchanges between and among Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) member countries and also as a vehicle of empowering women so that they can contribute economically to the development of their communities. She states that if the project is properly implemented, IORA member countries will not only have brought the IORA member countries together, but will also contribute to greater gender equality and the empowerment of women, in line with the UN Third Millennium Development Goal.¹³³

¹³³T. Nzama. N.d., Empowerment of Women through Cultural Heritage Tourism. <<https://iora-sa.dirisa.org/documents/files-for-links/Presentation>> Accessed: 20 February 2022.

To promote a strong connection among member countries of IORA through cultural heritage, Nzama has put forward the following five recommendations. Firstly, she suggests that mechanisms be put in place to enable cultural exchange opportunities and actively involve women in cultural heritage tourism within the study area.¹³⁴ Secondly, she maintains that these countries should share their experiences by utilizing formal government structures that specifically address women in tourism, with a particular focus on cultural heritage tourism.¹³⁵ Thirdly, channels should be established to facilitate the sharing of best practices. Fourthly, partnerships should be formed between countries that have similar experiences. Lastly, exchange programs should be organized to allow for first-hand experience of cultural heritage products in each selected country.¹³⁶

In a chapter titled “Enhancing Participation of Women in Tourism”, H. Manwa indicates that most developing countries in southern Africa see tourism as an engine for economic development especially of marginal areas.¹³⁷ She holds that these marginal areas are dominated by women with no other forms of livelihoods, and thus argues that tourism is indeed “opening doors for women”.¹³⁸ The first section of her study provides context on the position of women in the tourism industry and the factors that contribute to their underrepresentation in senior roles. These factors include gender stereotypes that associate women with nurturing and caregiving roles.¹³⁹ Manwa asserts, as others do, that these stereotypes are reinforced by the low levels of education among women in

¹³⁴T. Nzama. N.d., Empowerment of Women through Cultural Heritage Tourism. <<https://iora-sa.dirisa.org/documents/files-for-links/Presentation>. > Accessed: 20 February 2022.

¹³⁵T. Nzama. N.d., Empowerment of Women through Cultural Heritage Tourism. <<https://iora-sa.dirisa.org/documents/files-for-links/Presentation>. > Accessed: 20 February 2022.

¹³⁶T. Nzama. N.d., Empowerment of Women through Cultural Heritage Tourism. <<https://iora-sa.dirisa.org/documents/files-for-links/Presentation>. > Accessed: 20 February 2022.

¹³⁷G. Moscardo, (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

¹³⁸G. Moscardo, (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

¹³⁹G. Moscardo, (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

developing countries, which limits their access to necessary skills and training. Additionally, women tend to be confined to lower-level positions that align with societal expectations of their caregiving roles, further restricting their chances for career advancement.¹⁴⁰ Sexual exploitation and discriminatory organizational cultures also hinder women's progress. The second section of Manwa's chapters examines how the informal sector, particularly community and rural-based tourism, has provided opportunities for women in developing countries often aligned to HCT.¹⁴¹ Finally, the last section concludes by offering recommendations to enhance women's participation in the industry. These recommendations, not unlike others include implementing pro-poor strategies to create more opportunities for women, government support for community and rural-based tourism.¹⁴²

In yet another chapter written by H. Manwa in 2009 entitled "Women and Tourism in Southern Africa" she focuses on three southern African countries: Botswana, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. In this chapter, she adopts D. Hall's gender-awareness framework as well as M. William's framework to discuss women and tourism in southern Africa.¹⁴³ Hall's framework argues that women's positions cannot be separated from their overall position in society, including their assigned gender roles, which are also replicated in tourism organizations. William's framework categorizes women into four groups based on the impact of tourism: formal labour market employment; informal sector employment; sustainable livelihoods; and women's social and economic development.

¹⁴⁰G. Moscardo, (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

¹⁴¹G. Moscardo, (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

¹⁴²G. Moscardo, G. (ed.), *Building Community: Capacity for Tourism Development*. CABI International, London: UK, 2008.

¹⁴³J. Saarien, F. O. Becker, H. Manwa, D. Wilson (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

The remaining chapters provide a brief review of existing literature on gender and tourism to provide context for the experiences in southern Africa.¹⁴⁴ The penultimate section presents case studies from southern Africa that explore the informal sector including HCT and how it has created opportunities for women. Specifically, successful projects initiated by women under Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) are examined, such as basket making in Botswana's Okavango Delta and the Vulamehlo Handicraft project in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. The final section concludes the study by providing recommendations to improve the position of women in southern Africa. These recommendations include recognizing the significance of societal culture, which influences behaviour in all aspects of life.¹⁴⁵ Manwa suggests using culture as a catalyst for change in women's involvement in tourism development in the SADC region. Additionally, Manwa indicates that SADC governments should establish legal instruments to enhance the position of women in tourism and develop monitoring and evaluation tools to assess women's progress and mitigate any negative effects, while learning from successful practices internationally.¹⁴⁶ Funding and training should also be provided to acknowledge the important contribution of tourism SMEs and the role of women in these businesses. Furthermore, Manwa urges that efforts should be made to foster pride in existing local competencies, skills, and culture, with cultural and heritage tourism being developed to empower women as custodians of culture.¹⁴⁷ Lastly, decisions regarding SMEs should involve consultation with the affected women. National tourism organisations/authorities can play a crucial role in market analysis instead of solely

¹⁴⁴J. Saarien, F. O. Becker, H. Manwa, D. Wilson (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

¹⁴⁵J. Saarien, F. O. Becker, H. Manwa, D. Wilson (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

¹⁴⁶J. Saarien, F. O. Becker, H. Manwa, D. Wilson (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

¹⁴⁷Saarien, J., Becker, F.O., Manwa, H., Wilson, D. (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

promoting the main attractions of a destination. National Tourism Boards can also play a significant role in marketing these SMEs.¹⁴⁸

In a 2015 southern Africa article by N. Moswete and G. Lacey entitled “Women Cannot Lead: Empowering Women through Cultural Tourism in Botswana”, the perceptions of empowerment in Botswana and how far villagers felt that the new tourism policy introduced by government had facilitated female agency and opportunity are examined. It was found that the new policy that was introduced in 2006 had significantly contributed to a sense of female empowerment expressed in terms of freedom from economic dependency on men and society, and from depravity, emptiness and familial dependency. They mention that women have progressed from “passive involvement” to “active participation” in cultural-related tourism ventures. However, they argue that barriers remain, including a lack of start-up capital, low level of education, centralized control of protected tourism sites and low earnings. They suggest ways to enhance the objectives and policies for women’s participation in tourism in Botswana as well as other developing countries.¹⁴⁹

In the context of southern Africa, in G. Mkhize, and N. Cele’s 2017 article titled “The role of women in Tourism in Kwazulu-Natal: Case Studies from the South Coast of Kwazulu-Natal,” they discuss the intersection of race and gender in the study of tourism in Kwazulu-Natal and South Africa in general.¹⁵⁰ They conclude that as the tourism industry grows in South Africa, attention should be given to the analysis of the role of women, specifically black African women, as one of the paradigms in tourism. The article argues

¹⁴⁸J. Saariën, F. O. Becker, H. Manwa, D. Wilson, (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*, Channel View Publications. 2009.

¹⁴⁹N. Moswete & G. Lacey. “Women Cannot Lead”: Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), 2015, pp. 600-617.

¹⁵⁰C. Mkhize, & N. Cele. “The Role of Women in Tourism in Kwazulu-Natal”, *Empowering Women for Gender Equity* 31(1), 2017, pp. 128 -139.

that there is a need for a fresh focus on the subjective development, fundamental issues and competitive advantage of black African rural women striving for a fair chance in the tourism economy.¹⁵¹ This call aligns very much with the focus and intention of this thesis and thereby corroborates the aims set out in Chapter one.

In a 2019 paper titled “Women and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Southern Africa”, M. K. Chiwele and P. Matupo highlight the various nuances and complexities involved in understanding the position of women in relation to intangible cultural heritage (ICH). They show that in terms of preservation of ICH, UNESCO views women as the main bearers and providers of ICH in communities. However, they point out that this is contested across the world and in many communities, including spaces in Africa, as women are not recognised as part of the heritage sector. They argue that women’s contribution to the creation of heritage is undervalued and often deprived from the possibility to participate in the identification of ICH. They conclude by recommending the need for member states to institute a robust gender mainstreaming exercise in all ICH safeguarding, promotion and protection activities.¹⁵²

It can be observed from the literature review above that the issues most omnipresent in the development and other discourses in the contemporary world are mostly related to gendered deprivation and discrimination.¹⁵³ Also, Sinclair argues that practical problems that women shoulder with regards to tourism work are compounded by the continuing dominance of traditional gender roles.¹⁵⁴ Hence, due to women’s differing social roles and status in relation to men, even in this niche, women tend to experience the development and changes brought by tourism differently, including its negative impacts.

¹⁵¹C. Mkhize, & N. Cele. “The Role of Women in Tourism in Kwazulu-Natal”, *Empowering Women for Gender Equity* 31(1), 2017, pp. 128 -139.

¹⁵²M. K. Chiwele & P. Mutopo. “Women and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Southern Africa”. *The Southern African Intangible Cultural Platform*. Chinhoyi University of Technology. UNESCO, 2019.

¹⁵³S. Rani, 2016, <www.safecity.in/recognition-of-gender-issues-in-the-tourism-industry, >Accessed: 28 May 2021.

¹⁵⁴M. T. Sinclair. “Gender, Work and Tourism”. Routledge, London, 1997.

Though concepts such as discrimination and inequality and their effects have been recognised and therefore incorporated in some studies, it could be argued that in the theory and practice of heritage and cultural tourism this is largely neglected. The place of women in this domain and the numerous barriers they face which prevents them from reaching their full potential warrants further investigation. It is also apparent that much of the research in southern Africa focuses on South Africa and to a lesser extent Botswana, whereas the other southern African countries such as Lesotho; Eswatini; Zimbabwe; Namibia; Malawi; Zambia; Angola and Mozambique remain under-researched in comparison and therefore require attention.

In summation, with heritage and culture forming the basis of tourism in many southern African countries, it can be observed that from the above overview discussion of the literature that there is not a large body of literature in this niche pertaining to the well-being of the female workforce, despite their clear dominance in the tourism domain. As mentioned, this study however considers this industry in lower southern African countries by focusing specifically on their exploitation.

2.4 Tourism Workforce

This last section of the literature review focuses specifically on the studies done on the workforce and employment conditions within the tourism domain. Geographers have been active when it comes to investigations concerning tourism labour and the workers who perform it.¹⁵⁵ However, T. Baum et al., argue that in tourism, a kernel of key review articles has provided insights into the state of workforce-related knowledge and research in the hospitality arena. They maintain that much of this research focus has been directly

¹⁵⁵D. Loannides & K. Zampoukos. "Tourism's Labor Geographies: Bringing Tourism into Work and Work into Tourism". *Tourism Geographies*, 20(1), 2018, pp. 1-10.

on the hospitality sector, rather than on the wider tourism environment.¹⁵⁶ It is thus an under-researched facet to which this study turns.

A. Ladkin's 2011 article entitled "Exploring Tourism Labour," uses a thematic approach. He explores the following tourism labour themes: a management perspective; human capital accumulation; the economic value of tourism employment; labour mobility; and tourism as a gendered, new work.¹⁵⁷ Within this context, Ladkin considers three different perspectives, namely: the tourism worker, the tourism employer and the tourism researcher on tourism labour in order to articulate the complexities of labour issues.¹⁵⁸ The three perspectives have been gathered from various real-life stories and utilized for his article. They encompass motivations for working in the hospitality industry, job search techniques, and experiences in work environments, including the establishment of networks and friendships. Ladkin concludes that using a variety of perspectives and methodologies can enhance our understanding of the labour aspect of tourism. In fact, he argues that it could be essential in unravelling the intricacies and complexities of this subject.

In an article titled "Human Resources in Tourism: Still Waiting for Change? – a 2015 Reprise", T. Baum seeks to make a partial assessment of the impact of external change on the human resource environment within tourism over the past 20 years, with particular focus on work and employment themes within the sector.¹⁵⁹ He identifies a range of emerging concerns that continue to shape the tourism workplace and workforce. Baum concludes by indicating that the status of tourism work can be seen in terms of both "continuity and change" and the impact of the contrary forces which are considered in

¹⁵⁶D. Loannides & K. Zampoukos. "Tourism's Labor Geographies: Bringing Tourism into Work and Work into Tourism". *Tourism Geographies* 20(1), 2018, pp. 1-10.

¹⁵⁷A. Ladkin. "Exploring Tourism Labor". *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(3), 2011, pp. 1135 – 1155.

¹⁵⁸A. Ladkin. 2011. "Exploring Tourism Labor". *Annals of Tourism Research* 38(3), pp. 1135 – 1155.

¹⁵⁹T. Baum. "Human Resources in Tourism: Still Waiting for Change? – a 2015 Reprise." *Tourism Management* 1(50), 2015, pp. 204-212.

reaching a conclusion that highlight both the ongoing challenges for tourism and the evident progress that can be identified.¹⁶⁰

In a 2016 article entitled “Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda”, T. Baum et al., argue that the tourism and (hospitality) workforce research domain, beyond being neglected relative to its importance, suffers from piecemeal approaches at the level of topic; analysis; theory and methodology.¹⁶¹ The article therefore defines and clarifies workforce research in tourism and proposes a unifying definition and model that incorporates its multi-level nature. After outlining the methodological parameters of their systematic review report on the tourism and hospitality workforce literature across a defined period, they outline five key emerging themes: tourism work and wider society; organisational practices and functions; the job, the workplace and the work environment; worker attitudes and behaviours; and workforce composition and workers characteristics. They then develop a “representation” narrative to critique the literature’s shortcomings and finally propose an explanatory taxonomy to guide future researchers.¹⁶² They maintain that in doing so, they challenge the academy to conceptually and theoretically locate their work in this taxonomy in a manner that contributes to the advancement of knowledge about work, workforce and the workplace in tourism. The article concludes by reflecting on the implications of this review on tourism and (hospitality) workforce research, by offering suggestions to the broader tourism academy, to consider the applied implications and propose an agenda for future research.¹⁶³ Baum *et al.*'s study and this thesis are

¹⁶⁰T. Baum. “Human Resources in Tourism: Still Waiting for Change? – a 2015 Reprise.” *Tourism Management* 1(50), 2015, pp. 204-212.

¹⁶¹T. Baum, A. Kralj, R. N. S. Robinson & D. J. Solnet. “Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 60, 2016, pp. 1-22.

¹⁶²T. Baum, A. Kralj, R. N. S. Robinson & D. J. Solnet. “Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 60, 2016, pp. 1-22.

¹⁶³T. Baum, A. Kralj, R. N. S. Robinson & D. J. Solnet. “Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 60, 2016, pp. 1-22

connected through their shared objective of advancing the understanding of the tourism workforce environment and its various aspects, which had previously received limited attention.

In the light of the above overview, it is evident that there is a tangible neglect of workforce issues in the sustainable business discourse at both academic and professional level. Though Baum indicates that much of the workforce research is dominated by hospitality researchers, there are a limited number of studies that consider the tourism workforce in a wider international or comparative trans-national context. Consequently, from a workforce perspective, the extant literature is also sparse on the HCT workforce particularly in the southern African context as well as regarding women. Hence, this research differs from the existing literature by explicitly exploring at a micro level, the well-being and possibility of exploitation relating specifically to women that interact directly with the tourist/guest to provide tourism experiences in southern African countries in the HCT field.

The tourism Industry is primarily a labour-intensive type of an industry as it is known to generate employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers. As such, it is able to raise both household and national income. It is argued that even sectors of the economy that do not directly rely on tourism for their survival, for example, taxis and other forms of private transport, as well as places of entertainment, get positively affected, generating revenues and employment opportunities owing to the influx of tourists. However, despite the tourism industry being known to provide work for a large number of people, much of the research has shown the industry to be providing unfavourable employment conditions for its employees and its labourers. This next part focuses on these tourism employment conditions broadly speaking. It then considers the research within a selection of Asian countries as well as in southern Africa.

In another more recent research study titled “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an “Unsustainable” Workforce: The Governmentality of Workplaces in the Tourism Industry,”¹⁶⁴ M. Yildirim focuses on the neglected question of how tourism employees can continue working despite problems with their working conditions. The findings reveal that individuals are subjects in a multi-layered power relationship. He argues that this subjection frames adaptation and resistance practices and reproduces unsustainable conditions within workplaces. The study concludes by encouraging a new perspective highlighting the necessity for further criticism and motivation to promote decent work.¹⁶⁵

Y. Sun *et al's*. research titled “Who are Vulnerable in a Tourism Crisis? A Tourism Employment Vulnerability Analysis for the COVID-19 Management,”¹⁶⁶ develops new analytical models to recognize the vulnerable population in a crisis by identifying who they are, where they work and what sector they work for. The model uses Indonesia as a case study to assess tourism losses and finds four regional hotspots where the employment vulnerability of women, youth and low-education workers was more than five times higher than the national average. The findings demonstrate that this model could assist with rapid and efficient targeted support for crisis management in the short-term and continued investment for an equitable disaster recovery in the future.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘unsustainable’ Workforce: The Governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 1-13.

¹⁶⁵M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘unsustainable’ Workforce: The Governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 1-13.

¹⁶⁶Y. Yen Sun, L. Sie, F. Faturay, I. Auwalin, A & J. Wang. “Who are Vulnerable in Tourism Crisis? A Tourism Employment Vulnerability Analysis for the COVID-19 Management”. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 49, 2021, pp. 304-308.

¹⁶⁷Y. Yen Sun, L. Sie, F. Faturay, I. Auwalin, A & J. Wang. “Who are Vulnerable in Tourism Crisis? A Tourism Employment Vulnerability Analysis for the COVID-19 Management”. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* 49, 2021, pp. 304-308.

Focussing on China, an article titled “Coping with Precarity in the Tourism Performing Arts Industry: A Case Study of China’s WA Entertainers,”¹⁶⁸ X. Yang *et al.*, examine the precarious work experiences and coping tactics of entertainers in China’s tourism performing arts sector. These women are in addition also classified as tourism labour migrants (TLMs). They highlight how TLMs sustain their careers and fight for decent work and then also investigate the place of entertainers in the neglected sector of the tourism industry. The findings reveal that the entertainers face two main aspects of precarity: labour relations and job attributes.¹⁶⁹

A. de Beer *et al.*, in a study entitled “Decent Work in the South African Tourism Industry: Evidence from Tourist Guides”, offer an analysis of the working conditions of tourist guides in the tourism industry in South Africa.¹⁷⁰ The findings reveal that the majority of the tourist guides are in precarious or vulnerable forms of temporary short-term work, and argue much of it is outside of existing labour regulations. The study concludes by highlighting the unprotected and precarious work environments of the majority of South African tourist guides and challenges policy makers about the nature of decent work in the country’s tourism economy.¹⁷¹ In another study, similarly focusing on tourist guides and their precarious position, titled “Tour Guiding in Zimbabwe: Key Issues and Challenges”, D. K. Nyahunzvi *et al.*, bring to the fore the critical issues and challenges facing the Zimbabwean tourist guiding profession.¹⁷² These findings suggest a matrix of challenges that face the tour guiding profession including lack of job security, low

¹⁶⁸X. Yang, J. Round & J. Bao. “Coping with Precarity in the Tourism Performing Arts Industry: A Case of China’s WA Entertainers”, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 2022, pp. 1-20.

¹⁶⁹X. Yang, J. Round & J. Bao. “Coping with Precarity in the Tourism Performing Arts Industry: A Case of China’s WA Entertainers”, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 2022, pp. 1-20.

¹⁷⁰A. de Beer, C. M. Rogerson & J. M. Rogerson. “Decent Work in the South African Tourism Industry: Evidence from Tourist Guides.” *Urban Forum* 25(1), 2013, pp. 90-103.

¹⁷¹A. de Beer, C. M. Rogerson & J. M. Rogerson. “Decent Work in the South African Tourism Industry: Evidence from Tourist Guides.” *Urban Forum* 25(1), 2013, pp. 90-103.

¹⁷²D. K. Nyahunzvi, C. Njereka. “Tour Guiding in Zimbabwe: Key Issues and Challenges”. *Tourism Management* 6, 2013, pp. 3-7.

remuneration, a limited and expensive training curricular and low career development opportunities. The study recommends that the depressed tourism environment prevalent in Zimbabwe in the twenty-first century, in order for tour guides to meet international best practices, the large-scale context in which tour guiding takes place should also be addressed. They argue this should be accompanied by a tour guiding curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning and the acquisition of specific interpretive skills related to the country's attractions. Additionally, the training frameworks used in India and South Africa, which categorize tour guides into three levels based on their training, should be adopted.¹⁷³ They conclude by indicating that there must be efforts to establish a more rigorous, widely accessible, practical-oriented, and coordinated training program in order for Zimbabwe to live up to its reconfigured tourism marketing posture. They hold that similar efforts should also be made to improve the role of the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guide Association, establish a code of ethics, improve tour guides' terms and conditions of service, as well as the licensing and registration systems. Lastly, they point out that it is necessary to conduct similar studies involving more stakeholders in other developing country contexts and that future studies should identify ways to improve the existing tour guide training curriculum, particularly by incorporating practical-oriented learning or fieldwork exercises. They argue that these efforts could also result in the creation of engaging scripts or narratives about the country's tourist attractions that are delivered in the visitors' language.¹⁷⁴

Another research study on tourist guides by K. Melubo and C. N. Buzinde titled “An Exploration of Tourism Related Labour Conditions: The Case of Tour Guides in

¹⁷³D. K. Nyahunzvi, C. Njereka. “Tour Guiding in Zimbabwe: Key Issues and Challenges”. *Tourism Management* 6, 2013, pp. 3-7.

¹⁷⁴D. K. Nyahunzvi, C. Njereka. “Tour Guiding in Zimbabwe: Key Issues and Challenges”. *Tourism Management* 6, 2013, pp. 3-7.

Tanzania,¹⁷⁵ examines issues relating to the labour conditions experienced by tourist guides, particularly Safari guides in Arusha, Tanzania. The findings indicate inadequate working conditions that are endured by safari guides. The research recommends that the tourism industry in Tanzania incorporate labour rights standards within its core business practices in order to positively contribute to human capacity building, guest /provider relationships and future sectorial growth.¹⁷⁶ Here no specific reference is made to a discrepancy between gender roles of safari guides.

In another journal article by A. Ntjane *et al.*, titled “Employment Condition Differences Based on Gender: A Case of Adventure Tourism Employees in Gauteng, South Africa”, they reveal that employment conditions of adventure tourism employees in Gauteng do not differ significantly between men and women. They also claim there is no significant difference even in remuneration between men and women.¹⁷⁷ However, the authors do argue that the tourism industry is notorious for having unfavourable employment conditions, ranging from long working hours, part time or seasonal employment and low-skill jobs. Their study seeks to find out if men and women employed within the adventure tourism industry experience these conditions based on their gender. Interestingly, the findings reveal that adventure tourism employees in Gauteng did not experience varying employment conditions because of their gender.¹⁷⁸

This extensive literature study makes it clear that precarious labour conditions in the tourism industry are a familiar part of daily life. Though these working and living

¹⁷⁵K. Melubo & C. N. Buzinde. “An Exploration of Tourism Related Labour Conditions: The Case of Tour Guides in Tanzania”. *An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research* 27(4), 2016, pp. 505-514.

¹⁷⁶K. Melubo & C. N. Buzinde. “An Exploration of Tourism Related Labour Conditions: The Case of Tour Guides in Tanzania”. *An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research* 27(4), 2016, pp. 505-514.

¹⁷⁷A. Ntjane, M. Maleka & N. Tshipala. “Employment Condition Differences on Gender: A Case of Adventure Tourism Employees in Gauteng, South Africa”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 7(4), 2018, pp. 1-16.

¹⁷⁸A. Ntjane, M. Maleka & N. Tshipala. “Employment Condition Differences on Gender: A Case of Adventure Tourism Employees in Gauteng, South Africa”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 7(4), 2018, pp. 1-16.

conditions of workers in the tourism industry have been addressed in the research, very few studies have been conducted in the specific field of heritage and cultural tourism. Hence, in considering the predominance of women working within the HCT sector, there is a paucity of research relating particularly to women who are primarily labourers therein. While many of the researchers focus on tourism labourers generally, this current study is one of the first to make an attempt to explore the well-being and possibility of exploitation relating specifically to women in southern African countries who are service providers in the HCT field and whom, in most cases, are alleged to bear the worst consequences of poverty and exploitation.

Chapter Three: Policy Frameworks and Women in Southern Africa.

Sinclair holds that historically women across the world have faced numerous barriers to their engagement in the broader economy.¹ He argues that these barriers still exist today and continue to take various forms such as policies and generalisation even in the tourism sector.² For instance, he indicates that these barriers reduce women's employability; constrain their ability to participate on their own terms; restrict the options available to them; and limit the likelihood of utilising their full potentials.³ Considering the predominance of women working within the HCT domain and due to these limited equal opportunities for women, this Chapter evaluates the tourism policies within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, as well as at a national level and how these possibly influence women. It further assesses how the formal legislation deals with the complex issue of women's employment and exploitation. Lastly, the Chapter explores development programmes and organisations geared to assist women in the HCT domain and assesses their effectiveness.

3.1. Southern African Tourism Policies and Implications

The SADC, originally known as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC), was founded in 1980. In 1992, it underwent a transformation and became the SADC.⁴ This intergovernmental organization's main objective is to foster sustainable and equitable economic growth and socioeconomic development in the sixteen member states of southern Africa.⁵ The SADC's main goal is to achieve regional

¹M. T. Sinclair, *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, London, 1997.

²M. T. Sinclair, *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, London, 1997.

³M. T. Sinclair, *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, London, 1997.

⁴These sixteen states currently include: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The Southern African Development Community, (2014) <<https://www.sadc.org>> Accessed: 13 April 2013.

⁵The Southern African Development Community, (2014) <<http://www.sadc.org>> Accessed: 13 April 2013.

integration in southern Africa. This integration is aimed at promoting economic growth, peace, and security within the region. It intends to establish common political values, systems, and institutions among member states in order to strengthen social and cultural ties, reduce poverty, and improve the standard of living for the more than 250 million people living in the region.⁶ Furthermore, one of the key drives in this economic co-operation was to develop and promote the region as a single, but multi-faceted tourism destination internationally and locally.⁷ Table Three provides a list of the selected seven member states for this research, along with the dates they joined the organization.

Table 3: The Selected SADC Member States for this research

Table 3: The Selected SADC Member States for this research		
1	Botswana	1997
2	Lesotho	2014
3	Mozambique	1990
4	Namibia	1990
5	South Africa	1994
6	Swaziland	1980
7	Zimbabwe	1980

Source: Adapted from 2014 -2015 NDT Report⁸

All these seven member states selected for this thesis are part of the sixteen member states of the SADC region. They seek to tap into their HCT potential in order to grow their economies, and thus SADC recognises, amongst others, that investment in tourism could reap substantial local economic and social benefits.⁹ Hence, it is fitting to focus on the tourism policy of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) given that tourism is regarded as the backbone or the “enabler” of socio-economic growth and

⁶South Africa Info, (2014), Internet: <<http://www.southafrica.info/africa/sadc>. >Accessed: 10 March 2024.

⁷K. Acheampong & L. Tseane-Gumbi. “Tourism in the SADC Region and Challenges Facing the Youth Market: The Mozambican Experience”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* 5(4), 2016, pp. 1-16.

⁸Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)”. Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

⁹Southern African Development Community: SADC Tourism Programme 2020 – 2030. SADC 2019.

development for most southern African countries.¹⁰ SADC has implemented a variety of measures over the years with the object of improving the tourism sector and marketing the region as an attractive destination.¹¹ Key to this study and the most notable were the promulgation of the Protocol on the Development of Tourism in 1998.¹²

The SADC Protocol on tourism development aims to boost economic growth and generate greater interest in tourism in the region.¹³ It was approved by the SADC on September 14, 1998, and later amended in 2009. All sixteen member states of the SADC have signed this Protocol, emphasizing the recognized importance of tourism in the region.¹⁴ This Protocol prioritizes tourism as a key driver for sustainable development in southern Africa. Additionally, the SADC recognizes tourism as a vital sector for overall regional development, given its status as one of the fastest-growing industries with numerous socioeconomic benefits.¹⁵ The main goals of the Protocol include enhancing the tourism industry to improve livelihoods, elevating service quality and safety standards, and developing infrastructure to attract more tourists and investment to the region.¹⁶

The 2014 the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies NDT report on “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)” notes that the

¹⁰I. Cristie, E. Fernandes, H. Messerli & L. Twining-Ward. 2013. *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing for Growth and Improved Livelihoods*. The World Bank, Washington, DC.

¹¹P. M. Lehloeny. 2017. “Development and Regulation of Tourism for Mutual Benefit in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)”. *Law, Democracy and Development*, 27(1), pp.84-96.

¹²Southern African Development Community, (2012), ‘Tourism’,

<<http://www.sadc.int/themes/infrastructure/tourism> > Accessed: 28 October 2014.

¹³Southern African Development Community, (2012), ‘Tourism’, Internet:

<http://www.sadc.int/themes/infrastructure/tourism> > Accessed: 28 October 2014.

¹⁴Southern African Development Community, (2012), ‘Tourism’ <

<http://www.sadc.int/themes/infrastructure/tourism> > Accessed: 28 October 2014.

¹⁵Southern African Development Community, (2012), ‘Tourism’.>

<http://www.sadc.int/themes/infrastructure/tourism> > Accessed: 28 October 2014.

¹⁶The Southern African Development Community, ‘The *Protocol* on Development of Tourism’, (2014)

<<http://www.sadc.int/documents-publications/show/818>> Accessed: 13 April 2013.

tourism sector in the SADC has experienced significant growth in recent years.¹⁷ In 2010, tourism contributed a total of US\$940 billion to the global economy.¹⁸ However, southern Africa only receives a small percentage of these tourism receipts.¹⁹ Nonetheless, certain changes have positioned this region as a potential preferred destination in the future.²⁰ Due to the potential of tourism to lift scores of people out of poverty and to boost economic growth, tourism has therefore been of particular interest to SADC. To provide an overview of the current status of tourism in the seven selected member states, Table 4 outlines key aspects such as the direct and total contributions of tourism to the GDP, as well as its impact on employment.

¹⁷Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)”. Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

¹⁸Southern African Development Community, (2012), ‘Tourism’, <
<http://www.sadc.int/themes/infrastructure/tourism>> Accessed: 28 October 2014. ⁸

¹⁹Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)”. Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

²⁰Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. “Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)”. Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

Table 4: Contribution to GDP and Employment

SADC Member States	Tourism Industry (Figures from 2019 - 2022)
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 3.7% ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 779, 532 jobs to overall employment.
Botswana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 3.2 % ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 8.9% to overall employment.
Namibia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 7% ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 57 571 jobs to overall employment.
Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 5.8% ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 165 000 jobs to overall employment.
Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 12% ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 7.5% to overall employment.
Lesotho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 7.2 % ▪ Tourism is estimated to contribute a total of 52 100 people to overall employment.
Eswatini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct contribution of tourism to the GDP 5.9% ▪ Tourism estimated to contribute a total of 2.7% to overall employment.

Source: Adapted from 2014 -2015 NDT Report²¹

The seven selected countries for this study - Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Eswatini, Lesotho and South Africa - have to some extent witnessed

²¹Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. "Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)". Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

“substantial” investment in their economies and in turn in tourism areas. Nonetheless, it can be observed that there is an imbalance in tourism growth within these countries as the contribution of the industry within the SADC region differs from country to country depending on the level of economic diversification and the prioritisation that the sector has been given. For instance, southern African countries such as Mozambique; Zimbabwe; Eswatini; Lesotho have not really reaped the benefits while South Africa; Botswana and Namibia have shown a positive development.²²

In addition to the establishment of the Protocol on the Development of Tourism in 1998, was the establishment of the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) in 2002 and the SADC Protocol on Trade in Services in 2012²³ in the region.

As tourism is one of the sectors with the highest share of women employment, the policies assessment in this Chapter are from the women’s rights’ viewpoint. Seager indicates that in most cases they bear the worst consequences of poverty and exploitation in the HCT industry.²⁴ The aim therefore is to establish how these policies impact on women who are service providers and how they deal with the complex issue of women’s employment and exploitation.

The SADC Tourism Protocol is designed, amongst other, to contribute to human resource development through the development of skills at all levels of the tourism industry;²⁵ to ensure that there is the involvement of small and micro-enterprises, local communities, women and youth in the development of tourism throughout the region; to create a favourable investment climate for tourism within the region for both the public and

²²Tralac Researcher: J.B. Cronje. 2014. “Development of Tourism Value Chains in the SADC Region”. <<https://www.tralac.org>. > Accessed: 05 August 2022. World Economic Forum. 2019. Travel and Tourism CompetitiveIndex <<http://www.weforum.org>. >Accessed: 07 September 2022.

²³P. M. Lehloeny. 2017. “Development and Regulation of Tourism for Mutual Benefit in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)”. *Law, Democracy and Development* 27(1), pp. 84-96.

²⁴J. Seager. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World* (4thed.). Penguin Books, New York, 2009.

²⁵Protocol on the Development of Tourism in the Southern African Development Community, 1998.

private sectors, including small and small to medium scale tourist establishments; to improve the quality, competitiveness and standards of service of the tourism industry in the region; to improve the standards of safety and security for tourists in the territories of member states; to make appropriate provisions for disabled, handicapped and senior citizens in their respective countries and lastly, to improve tourism service and infrastructure in order to foster a vibrant tourism industry.²⁶ Two primary objectives of the SADC Tourism Protocol are clearly articulated as follows:

“(i) ... contribution to human resource development through the development of skills at all levels of the tourism industry”; and

“(ii)... women’s involvement in the development of tourism throughout the region”.²⁷

Despite this being stated in the policy, in practice, skills of service providers are rarely refurbished in the industry as labour is often taken for granted. With regard to the point of women’s involvement in the development of tourism throughout the region, many that are partaking in the industry are still left to fend for themselves against all challenges brought by this industry. For example, the policy is silent on the matter of the creation of a favourable environment within the southern African region in the tourism industry for women who are said to bear the worst consequences in the industry. Consequently, this SADC Protocol does not reflect adequately on the full impact of tourism on women in the region.

On the contrary, RETOSA which was established in 2002, is a SADC body responsible for the promotion and marketing of tourism in the region. All its member states are supportive of its existence as a means of promoting regional integration.²⁸ The Charter

²⁶Southern African Development Community Towards a Common Future, N.d. Tourism.
<<http://www.sadc.int/pillars/tourism>>Accessed: 08 August 2022.

²⁷Protocol on the Development of Tourism in the Southern African Development Community, 1998.

²⁸Tralac: SADC Looks up to Tourism to boost Regional Economic Growth. 12 Feb 2018. <<https://www.tralac.org>>Accessed:10 August. 2022.

imposes on SADC member states the following: development of common and co-ordinated marketing strategies;²⁹ action plans and implementation programmes aimed at advancing intra-regional and international tourism in the region; market the region as a preferred tourist destination and using the RETOSA logo and brand to promote the region's identity and competitiveness; undertaking marketing and promotion activities aimed at highlighting the diversity of tourist products in the region and collaborating in the packaging of their destinations.³⁰ Again, it is observed here that the concern is primarily on the advancing; promoting and the marketing of heritage and cultural tourism activities in the region and little concern is placed on the industry's actual workers, let alone the women.

On the other hand, SADC Protocol on Trade in Services' objectives entails promoting sustainable economic growth and development; enhancing economic development, diversification, local, regional and foreign investments in the service economies of the region; pursuing service liberalisation while preserving the right to regulate and to introduce new regulations and enhancing the capacity and competitiveness of the services sectors of the state parties.³¹ Despite this latter policy's encouragement to introduce the new regulations by member states, it is apparent that the growing focus by member states remains mainly on development, diversification and competitiveness of heritage products, with hardly any focus on the industry's negative impact on those that the industry is built around in southern Africa.

As indicated, the HCT sector is a labour-intensive industry, demanding different skill sets from unskilled to skilled labourers. Though there is a lot of information on employment

²⁹P. M. Lehloeny. "Development and Regulation of Tourism for Mutual Benefit in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)". *Law, Democracy and Development* 27(1), 2017, pp. 84-96.

³⁰P. M. Lehloeny. "Development and Regulation of Tourism for Mutual Benefit in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)". *Law, Democracy and Development* 27(1), 2017, pp. 84-96.

³¹P. M. Lehloeny. "Development and Regulation of Tourism for Mutual Benefit in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)". *Law, Democracy and Development* 27(1), 2017, pp. 84-96.

related benefits accruing to women as a result of tourism, commenting specifically on the impact of tourism on women, studies show that tourism development often comes with challenges, such as, women doing low status work, gender stereotyping, inequality, informal employment and sexual exploitation.³² Obviously, the tourism sector has the potential to negatively affect, among others, the well-being/human rights,³³ of the tourism workforce, especially women. It is disappointing that the SADC instruments and institutions aimed at promoting tourism do not sufficiently safeguard the well-being of those involved (an in particular women labourers). It is also common knowledge that tourism development, if left unchecked, can lead to exploitation of vulnerable groups, such as women.³⁴

Despite the prevailing issues concerning women in the HCT domain, there has hardly been enough discussion in policy discourse in the southern African context regarding those that are service providers, and specifically women. The current tourism development policies within the southern African region therefore have little influence on women. The policies are silent on the implementation, enforcement and promotion of the laws relating to women's employment rights in the tourism sector in southern Africa,³⁵ despite it being evident that women make up a greater proportion of the tourism workforce. One could argue that what ought to be a key theme within sustainable human ecology in tourism, the workforce, has been largely side-lined.

Where tourism policies address workforce themes, it seems fragmented and makes inadequate reference to the complexity of wider policy considerations. To reiterate the existing regional policies are primarily concerned with the protection; development;

³²UNWTO: Global Report on Women in Tourism, Second Edition. < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420384>. > Accessed: 15 April 2021.

³³UNWTO. 2014. "15 Years of the UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection: A Compilation of Good Practices". <<http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/97892884415588>.> Accessed: 21 July 2017.

³⁴UNWTO. 2014. "15 Years of the UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection: A Compilation of Good Practices". < <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/97892884415588>.> Accessed: 21 July 2017.

³⁵UNWTO and UN Women 2010.

competitiveness and marketability of HCT products, with little commitment to socio-economic issues impacting those who tourism is built around. For example, as mentioned earlier, when it comes to tourism, concerns over links with modern “slavery” have mostly been ignored or subdued. Consequently, this needs to be elevated in order to avoid exploitation and maximise the potential of tourism to promote gender equality, empower women and achieve sustainability.

3.2 Legislation dealing with Women in southern Africa

Another relevant piece of legislation in the SADC region that specifically deals with women is the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which was adopted in August 1998³⁶ and was revised in 2016.³⁷ It looks into integration and main streaming of gender issues in the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building initiatives which are important for the sustainable development of the SADC region.³⁸

Unlike the above discussed Protocol, this legislation does not specifically put HCT at the forefront, but it aims to provide for empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality by encouraging and harmonising the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies and programmes and projects by all SADC member states.³⁹ The Protocol was revised so that its objectives are aligned to various global targets and emerging issues. For example, some of the global targets are contained in the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁴⁰ SDG Goal 5, for

³⁶The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 1997.

³⁷SADC Agreement Amending the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

³⁸Peace Women: Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, N.d. SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (2008). <<https://www.peacewomen.org>. >Accessed: 19 August 2022.

³⁹SADC. N.d. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development 2008 < <https://www.sadc.int/documents/protocol-gender-and-development-2008>. > Accessed: 02 July 2024.

⁴⁰Tralac: Building Capacity to Help Africa Trade Better. 20 August 2018. Revised SADC Gender Protocol Enter into Force. <<https://www.tralac.org>. >Accessed: 18 August 2022.

example, deals with the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, and sets targets to be met by the global community by 2030.⁴¹

Despite southern African countries being signatory to the SADC protocol on Gender and Development, which requires women representation in all spheres of development, women in this region continue to face various barriers, particularly in the workplace. Many southern African countries governments hardly have gender equal representation in all spheres of development, even though this Protocol advances gender equality by ensuring accountability by all SADC member states. For instance, in the HCT industry, women across the southern Africa region face more barriers to being engaged in tourism endeavours than their male counterparts despite being shown that women constitute a large proportion of the tourism workforce. For example, women labourers face staff exploitation in the industry, including aspects ranging from low wages; long hours; work under pressure without breaks and unhealthy conditions for live-in staff as well as inappropriate sexual behaviour by bosses or clients.⁴² Also, poverty and limited options for employment keep many women in unfair conditions if not inhumane/cruel ones at worst. In as far as tourism is concerned, issues involving the well-being of those that this niche is built around have been overlooked especially as far as the extent of exploitation is concerned.

In conclusion, it is evident that the relationship between tourism and gender has been afforded little attention particularly in policymaking circles in the southern African region. An analysis of these various SADC Protocols reveals that they have not lived up to their expectation. Implementation still falls short of the stated commitments. Now that there are more women employed in this industry, it is significant that more light needs to be

⁴¹Tralac: Building Capacity to Help Africa Trade Better. 20 August 2018. Revised SADC Gender Protocol Enter into Force. <<https://www.tralac.org>. >Accessed: 18 August 2022.

⁴²C. S. Jones. December. July 2022. Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. <<https://www.itmustbenow.com/feature/our-big-questions/exploitation-travel-tourism>.> Accessed: 16 June 2021.

shed on their status in the industry in the 21st century. This could result in the development of strategies which could lead to (more) promotion of greater gender equality in the HCT space in the southern African countries.

3.3 Effectiveness of Development Programmes and Organisation

RETOSA as the tourism implementing agency of the SADC also facilitated and promoted growth and development in southern Africa by targeting women as a critical component in the sustainable development of tourism in the region.⁴³ In striving to achieve this goal, in 2013 it founded the Southern Africa Women in Tourism Program (SAWIT) which instituted a forum that offers women from the SADC region access to business skills, training, financial services, networking and self-confidence as they enable themselves.⁴⁴

Under the umbrella of RETOSA, SAWIT has hosted several annual conferences for women in tourism in the southern African region. The conferences mainly provided an opportunity for women in the sector to network and share ideas on how to embark on new businesses and how to grow existing businesses.⁴⁵ Agencies argue that SAWIT was unique in the sense that it focuses on different programmes to ensure successful development and empowerment of women in tourism business.⁴⁶ For example, some of the issues that were discussed during their third annual conference in 2016 involved: religious tourism in southern Africa and the opportunities for women; sustainable tourism, arts, crafts and culture opportunities; sustainable tourism development value chain linkages with opportunities for women in both the rural and urban areas; access to the market through social media marketing; and digital marketing and lastly, access to

⁴³Green economy. Media. n.d. RETOSA to Host 2nd Annual Southern Africa Women in Tourism Conference in Malawi's Capital. <<https://www.greeneconomy.media>.>Accessed: 01 August 2022.

⁴⁴Green economy. Media. n.d. RETOSA to Host 2nd Annual Southern Africa Women in Tourism Conference in Malawi's Capital. <<https://www.greeneconomy.media>.> Accessed: 01 August 2022.

⁴⁵Green economy. Media. n.d. RETOSA to Host 2nd Annual Southern Africa Women in Tourism Conference in Malawi's Capital. <<https://www.greeneconomy.media>.> Accessed: 01 August 2022.

⁴⁶Agencies. 29 November 2016. RETOSA Run 3rd Southern Africa Annual Women in Tourism Conference. <<https://www.bulawayo24.com>.>Accessed: 23 August 2022.

funding opportunities for SAWIT.⁴⁷ Conferences such as these have been helpful in enhancing the positive impact of HCT development on women’s lives in southern Africa.

It is also worth noting that at a stage RETOSA, being the responsible body for the formation of SAWIT, experienced cash flow problems following the failure by most SADC states to pay their subscription fees.⁴⁸ Moreover, there were also disagreements among SADC member states that threatened the existence of the organisation.⁴⁹ This eventually led to the organisation being disbanded in 2018.⁵⁰ In consequence, most of the targets were not met due to various challenges including lack of capacity and limited resources.⁵¹ Despite this issue, many women in southern African countries in the HCT domain are still continuing to challenge gender stereotypes through these empowerment programmes and are gradually assuming roles once dominated by men. For instance, the tourist guide sector is increasingly dominated by women.

Other than RETOSA’s SAWIT initiative, there is another organisation called Women of Value Southern Africa (WOVSA). This organisation forms part of the UNWTO “Women in Tourism Leadership Africa Committee” in promoting the UNWTO Women in Tourism Empowerment Programme.⁵² Under the auspices of SADC, the Women of Value SA hosted the first ever Annual Women in Tourism Southern Africa Summit and exhibition in Ekurhuleni in September 2022.⁵³ Tourism professionals from all walks of life from across the sub-region who were passionate about sharing, learning, challenging and forging

⁴⁷Agencies. 29 November 2016. RETOSA Run 3rd Southern Africa Annual Women in Tourism Conference. <<https://www.bulawayo24.com>.>Accessed: 23 August 2022.

⁴⁸Online Editor. 17 December 2012. Cash-Strapped RETOSA Pulls the Plug on Board Meetings. <<https://www.sundaystandard.info>.>Accessed: 23 August 2022.

⁴⁹New Zimbabwe Com. 12 August 2014. Zimbabwe: Regional Tourism Body under Threat. <<https://allafrica.com>.>Accessed: 23 August 2022.

⁵⁰SADC: Southern African Development Community SADC Tourism Programme 2020 -2030. Final Draft 2019.

⁵¹Southern Africa Today: SADC. August 2019. 39th SADC Summit Towards Inclusive, Sustainable Industrial Development.

⁵²Women of Value Southern Africa (WOVSA). >Accessed: 16 February 2023.

⁵³City of Ekurhuleni: Public Engagement. 15 September 2022. First Ever Women in Tourism Southern Africa Summit and Exhibitions Opens in Ekurhuleni <<https://ekurhuleni.gov.za>.> Accessed: 16 February 2022.

strategic partnerships and contributors to the regional economic growth in the tourism sector were attendees. The aim of the summit and exhibition was to tackle issues relating to women empowerment in the tourism value chain sector.⁵⁴ Also, the summit was held with the objective of supporting; empowering and accelerating women in the SADC region who have, in diverse ways, contributed significantly towards the development of the tourism sector while contributing to the future recovery of this vital, dynamic and resilient industry.⁵⁵ It was argued at this summit that the SADC has engendered women empowerment and gender equality across sectors at regional and national level and pointed out that in 2019 it adopted a regional Multi-Dimensional Women’s Economic Empowerment forum aimed at promoting women’s economic empowerment and gender – responsive development.⁵⁶ Despite this initiative, it appears that the majority of southern African women are still found at the bottom end of the HCT economic value chain.

3.4 Policies and Programmes at National Level

As seen above, being member states of SADC, southern African countries should adhere to the SADC tourism protocols including the SADC gender policy. Though tourism growth is at its infancy for most of these countries, the members of the SADC have recognized the importance of tourism in promoting economic development and regional integration in the region. As a result, each member state has established its own policies, if not programmes and priorities on tourism. Consequently, as women’s employment in tourism in many countries has been higher than in the overall economy, this section of the Chapter investigates the tourism legal framework’s influence on women across the

⁵⁴City of Ekurhuleni: Public Engagement. 15 September 2022. First Ever Women in Tourism Southern Africa Summit and Exhibitions Opens in Ekurhuleni <<https://ekurhuleni.gov.za>.> Accessed: 16 February 2022.

⁵⁵City of Ekurhuleni: Public Engagement. 15 September 2022. First Ever Women in Tourism Southern Africa Summit and Exhibitions Opens in Ekurhuleni, <<https://ekurhuleni.gov.za>.> Accessed: 16 February 2022.

⁵⁶City of Ekurhuleni: Public Engagement. 15 September 2022. First Ever Women in Tourism Southern Africa Summit and Exhibitions Opens in Ekurhuleni, <<https://ekurhuleni.gov.za>.> Accessed: 16 February 2022.

following selected leading southern African countries: South Africa; Botswana; Namibia; Zimbabwe; Mozambique; Lesotho and Swaziland which are the focus of this study (See Table 5)

Table 5: Tourism Policies of southern African Countries and Impact on Women

Country	Tourism Legislation	Inclusion of Women
South Africa	Tourism Act of South Africa (No. 3 of 2014)	Does not specifically address women. It focuses on sustainable tourism development for the benefit of all residents and visitors.
Botswana	Tourism Act of Botswana (No. 22 of 1992)	Does not specifically address women's rights or gender equality within the context of tourism
Namibia	Namibia Tourism Board Act (No. 21 of 2000)	Does not address women in its key provisions
Zimbabwe	Tourism Act of Zimbabwe (No. 22 of 2001)	Does not specifically address women.
Mozambique	New Tourism Law of Mozambique (No. 4 of 2004)	Does not specifically address women.
Lesotho	Tourism Act of Lesotho (No. 4 of 2002)	Does not specifically address women.
Eswatini	Eswatini Tourism Authority Act of 2001	Does not specifically address women.

Source: Adapted from 2014 -2015 NDT Report.⁵⁷

⁵⁷Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria. "Harmonisation of Tourist Guide Training in Southern Africa (Phase III)". Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2014-2015.

As evidenced above, when it comes to the issue of women in the tourism domain, these pieces of legislation, hardly have women included. It is well established that a wide range of legal impediments in countries' domestic laws have prevented women from achieving full economic empowerment, which in turn has negative macro-economic implications.

While these tourism laws do not specifically focus on women, it is noteworthy to mention that certain southern African countries have implemented more extensive initiatives and guidelines aimed at promoting women's empowerment across various sectors. A pertinent example is South Africa, which according to the UN, women are considered as, "all state departments are required to comply with the Gender-Responsive Planning; Budgeting; Monitoring; Evaluation and Auditing Framework (GRPBMEA)".⁵⁸ As a result of this policy framework, established in 2019⁵⁹ the South African Department of Tourism is required to ensure that women's empowerment and gender equality are at the centre of policy priorities, results-based planning, budgeting and accountability.⁶⁰ This has consequently enabled South Africa to become one of the leading southern African countries with a significant number of organisations which are related to empowerment through tourism, some of which have a special focus on women. For example, the main organisation, Women in Tourism (WIT), was established in 2013 with the purpose of supporting the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector.⁶¹ WIT brings together women from various backgrounds to collaborate towards common goals and interests, ensuring their success in the industry. Program participants include

⁵⁸UN Women: Covid Response. Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment in the Tourism Sector in Covid-19 Response and Recovery. <<https://www.unwomen.org>. > Accessed: 01 Feb 2022.

⁵⁹Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. 26 May 2020. The Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework (GRPBMEA).<https://www.static.pmg.org.za/200528Senior_Researcher_GRPBMEA_Framework.doc. >Accessed:19 August 2024.

⁶⁰UN Women: Covid Response. Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment in the Tourism Sector in Covid-19 Response and Recovery. <<https://www.unwomen.org>. > Accessed: 01 Feb 2022.

⁶¹Tourism Department: Republic of South Africa. N.d. Women's Development Programmes. <<https://www.tourism.gov.za> >Accessed: 15 February 2023.

entrepreneurs, women currently employed in the sector, students, and employee and employers in the sector, students, and women aspiring to enter the tourism value chain from the informal sector.⁶² The program aims to enhance the status of women in tourism by offering training, empowerment, and networking opportunities that strengthen their competitiveness as entrepreneurs, professionals, and leaders. WIT has chapters in all provinces of South Africa, as well as a presence in some countries within the SADC region.⁶³

The objectives of WIT encompass ensuring that women in the sector are respected, recognized, represented, and rewarded. It also aims to address the barriers faced by women in tourism, promote transformation aligned with the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBB-EE) Tourism Sector Code and UNWTO Sustainable Development Goals; advocate for government and stakeholder support; facilitate access to resources and opportunities for women entrepreneurs; provide networking platforms; celebrate the success of women in the sector; and serve as leaders and role models for women entering tourism. Additionally, WIT seeks to collaborate with similar organizations to maximize opportunities.⁶⁴ Women involved in the tourism industry can register as members of the organization and this provides them with the opportunity to share experiences and ideas, fostering identification and collaboration for the benefit of all participants.⁶⁵

There is also the earlier referred to Women in Tourism Programme developed by Nedbank in partnership with SA Tourism and its implementing partner, McGerals

⁶²Department of Tourism: Republic of South Africa. N.d., Women in Tourism.
<https://www.tourism.gov.za/CurrentProjects/Pages/Women_in_Tourism.aspx. >Accessed: 02 July 2024.

⁶³Department of Tourism: Republic of South Africa. N.d., Women in Tourism.
<https://www.tourism.gov.za/CurrentProjects/Pages/Women_in_Tourism.aspx. >Accessed: 02 July 2024.

⁶⁴Department of Tourism: Republic of South Africa. N.d., Women in Tourism.
https://www.tourism.gov.za/CurrentProjects/Pages/Women_in_Tourism.aspx. >Accessed: 02 July 2024.

⁶⁵Department of Tourism: Republic of South Africa. N.d., Women in Tourism.
https://www.tourism.gov.za/CurrentProjects/Pages/Women_in_Tourism.aspx. >Accessed: 02 July 2024.

Entrepreneurship Centre.⁶⁶ The Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship Training Programme is designed to create a knowledge foundation, provide mentorship and also eventually open markets to black-women-owned small, medium and micro-enterprises operating in the tourism sector.⁶⁷

There is also the Women Economic Assembly (WECONA) sector established by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2021 to drive female economic empowerment in South Africa.⁶⁸ Aligning with WECONA's mission to empower women's participation in the economy, the programme also deals with issues relating to women's empowerment in the tourism value chain sector. It sets the objective of supporting, empowering and celebrating women in the SADC region who have contributed significantly towards the development of the tourism sector while developing the future recovery of the industry.⁶⁹ These are some of the few programmes in South Africa that are improving connectivity and presenting a range of opportunities for women in the field of tourism.

In the case of Botswana, in an effort to provide benefits to disadvantaged groups, including women, the Botswana government implemented a community-based cultural tourism policy. Community-based tourism initiatives are managed under the auspices of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Program which was established in 2007.⁷⁰ This policy aims to divert the focus away from luxury safaris and instead promote village-based cultural tourism.⁷¹ As indicated in the literature review, N.

⁶⁶South Africa, 14 October 2021, <<https://www.southafrica.net/gl/en/corporate/press/nedbank> > Accessed: 08 March 2022.

⁶⁷South Africa, 14 October 2021, <<https://www.southafrica.net/gl/en/corporate/press/nedbank>,>Accessed: 08 March 2022.

⁶⁸Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update. 13 September 2022. Female Empowerment Takes Another Step Forward. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>>Accessed: 15 February 2023.

⁶⁹Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update. 13 September 2022. Female Empowerment Takes Another Step Forward. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za> >Accessed: 15 February 2023.

⁷⁰Government of Botswana. 2007. Community Based Natural Resources Management Policy. Government Paper No. 2 of 2007, Gaborone, Botswana.

⁷¹N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

Moswete and G. Lacey conclude that Botswana's emphasis on village-based cultural tourism is opening doors for women, but argue that there are still barriers that need to be addressed.⁷² The authors note that first, it is essential to provide women with increased educational opportunities and financial assistance to support their involvement in successful entrepreneurial activities and promote greater freedom and agency. Second, there is a need to improve supply chains to enhance the success of women's enterprises.⁷³ Additionally, the government should consider decentralizing control of village tourism attractions to assess its feasibility. Third, it is crucial for the government to continue developing alternative forms of tourism, such as cultural heritage tourism, which can provide more benefits to disadvantaged communities compared to the current wildlife-based tourism model.⁷⁴ Fourth, women should actively participate in the formulation, implementation, and review of tourism policies, with a particular focus on arts and culture-based tourism development in Botswana and beyond. Fifth, training programmes for women in the tourism sector should cover entrepreneurial, management, empowerment (motivation/confidence), and leadership skills.⁷⁵ Finally, both women and men should have equal access to information on credit and other cultural heritage tourism resources, in their localities, particularly in areas abundant in heritage resources but with lower concentrations of charismatic game.⁷⁶

⁷²N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷³N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷⁴N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷⁵N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷⁶N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

In short, the Botswana government has implemented proactive measures to empower women through cultural tourism.⁷⁷ They have implemented a policy for community-based cultural tourism, which allows women to become entrepreneurs. Also, due to the dominance of foreigners in both the ownership and management of tourism companies in Botswana, generally, the benefits to the communities are small because locals are mainly employed in junior jobs and are paid low wages.⁷⁸ This policy aims to address these historical imbalances caused by the focus on safari tourism in development policies.⁷⁹ Most importantly, the main goal of this transition is to address past gender disparities and promote the empowerment of women in the tourism industry.⁸⁰

Namibia's commitment to women's empowerment is clearly reflected in the National Gender Policy. This policy has a specific goal of fostering a more equitable society, where women have the opportunity to succeed and contribute to all areas of life. Launched in 2008,⁸¹ it addresses various important areas, including legal affairs and human rights, education and training, poverty and rural development, as well as issues related to the well-being of young girls.⁸²

Other than this National Gender Policy, Namibia also has tourism empowering programmes for women. In 2013, the patron of Women in Tourism, Foreign Affairs Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah pointed out at the Women in Tourism indaba organised by Team Destination Namibia, that there were very few statistics available in

⁷⁷N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷⁸N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁷⁹N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁸⁰N. Moswete & G. Lacey. 2015. 'Women Cannot Lead': Empowering Women Through Cultural Tourism in Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23(4), pp. 600-617.

⁸¹Republic of Namibia: Ministry of Gender Policy (2008 – 2018). National Gender Policy. Windhoek, Namibia.

⁸²National Gender Policy – Government. N.d., National Gender Policy. <
<https://mgepesw.gov.na/documents/792320/918990>. > Accessed: 06 July 2024.

the Namibian tourism industry. For instance, she pointed out that there was no information as to how many women worked in tourism; how many in managerial roles; how many women own tourism businesses; and how many women are receiving training and education.⁸³ Nandi-Ndaitwah did however applaud the Namibia Conservancy movement and joint ventures for spearheading change in rural areas. With this being in place, she pointed out that the tourism industry in Namibia had embraced women and given them opportunities to live empowered lives.⁸⁴ The Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program which started in 1994 explicitly encourages women's participation in different kinds of resource use activities, with the creation of Community Resource Monitor (CRM) posts.⁸⁵ This followed a period of CBNRM development where women had not been taken into consideration.⁸⁶ The CRM gave women an opportunity to become involved in CBNRM and manage the resources from which they derive direct income, as well as giving women a means of accessing information and a forum for influencing decision making.⁸⁷ The program remains active and some of the activities implemented by the program include: linking local craft producers to markets and exposure to public speaking training to build confidence and assertiveness when executing their work.⁸⁸ Nandi-Ndaitwah concluded by stressing that there was a need to have a clear strategy to advance women in the tourism industry as there seemed to be a low number of women in management in the tourism industry.⁸⁹

⁸³Namibian Sun: W.E, Smit. 2013. Tourism: Tourism Industry for Women. < <https://www.namibiasun.com> >Accessed: 07 February 2023.

⁸⁴Namibian Sun: W. E. Smit. 2013. Tourism: Tourism Industry for Women. <<https://www.namibiasun.com> >Accessed: 07 February 2023.

⁸⁵M. Jacobsohn & G. Owen-Smith. 2003. "Integrating Conservation and Development: A Namibian Case Study". *Nomadic Peoples* 7(1), pp. 92-109.

⁸⁶F. Flintan. 2001. Women and CBNRM in Namibia. A Case Study of the IRDNC Community Resource Monitor Project. Engendering Eden Project Working Paper No. 2, The International Famine, Ireland.

⁸⁷F. Flintan. 2001. Women and CBNRM in Namibia. A Case Study of the IRDNC Community Resource Monitor Project. Engendering Eden Project Working Paper No. 2, The International Famine, Ireland.

⁸⁸S. Lendelvo, F. Munyebvu & H. Smith. 2012. Linking Women's Participation and Benefits within the Namibian Community Based Natural Resource Management Program. *Journal of Sustainable Development* 5(12), pp. 1-13.

⁸⁹Namibian Sun: W.E, Smit. 2013. Tourism: Tourism Industry for Women. <<https://www.namibiasun.com> >Accessed: 07 February 2023.

In 2013, in the area of tourism, the Zimbabwean government released a new economic blueprint, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim-Asset) with the vision and mission to provide an enabling environment for sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation to the people of Zimbabwe.⁹⁰ Tourism was identified as one of the key sector clusters where empowerment was called for.⁹¹ First Lady Auxillian Mnangagwa, in partnership with the Zimbabwe Tourism Association and the National Parks, through her charity foundation, launched a training programme called “Young Women in Tourism Entrepreneurship”, aimed at ensuring that young women from disadvantaged backgrounds gain entrepreneur skills that will empower and capacitate them to be self-reliant.⁹² In this programme, young women who ordinarily are not exposed, or do not have access to opportunities, are trained in various disciplines in work readiness and have exposure to tourism opportunities. Women undertaking the programme are awarded a certificate upon completion of the training,⁹³ and these young women have been able to be absorbed into the tourism sector.⁹⁴

The Zimbabwe National Review Report of 2019 indicates that within the last five years, Zimbabwe has experienced shifts in the political arena which have shaped the landscape of the country and the application of gender equality has begun to manifest.⁹⁵ For example, the country revised its National Gender Policy which was launched in 2017 as a broad framework to guide and coordinate, amongst other, efforts for addressing gender

⁹⁰B. Chikonyora. “Indiginisation of the Tourism Sector in Zimbabwe.” Draft: Government White Paper and Acts of Development and Sustainability of the Tourism Sector in Zimbabwe.

⁹¹B. Chikonyora. “Indiginisation of the Tourism Sector in Zimbabwe.” Draft: Government White Paper and Acts of Development and Sustainability of the Tourism Sector in Zimbabwe.

⁹²CEOAFRICA. 12 April 2019. Zimbabwe First Lady Launches Tourism Program for Young Ladies. > Accessed: 06 February 2023.

⁹³Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

⁹⁴Organization African First Ladies for Development (OAFILD). 1 February 2021. Flagship Project on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment – Zimbabwe. <<https://oafild.org>>Accessed: 05 February 2023.

⁹⁵Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

inequality and discrimination.⁹⁶ This policy was aligned to the targets set in the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda and at the heart of this are those targets set out in SDG 5 which gives room for a more comprehensive approach to the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment.⁹⁷ Among others, also, the Zimbabwean government developed the “Girls and Young Women’s Empowerment Framework” with the aim of guiding all interventions aimed at empowering (young) women. It recognises that empowering girls and young women contributes to the transformation of the country’s economic future as well as the development of its peoples.⁹⁸ Despite the creation for the large base of the women workforce in the sector, the First Lady Auxillian Mnangagwa voiced her concern regarding the exclusion of women in tourism and condemned the low representation of women in decision-making positions in the industry. Mnangagwa indicated that the government should incorporate the inclusion of women in the tourism sector and has supported the creation of “the women in Tourism National Chapter”.⁹⁹

Zimbabwe has also established the Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) in conjunction with other organizations established in 2016.¹⁰⁰ The ZGC's primary responsibility lies in overseeing issues pertaining to gender equality, as mandated by the Zimbabwean Constitution. This aligns directly with SDG 5 (gender equality). Apart from investigating

⁹⁶Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

⁹⁷Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

⁹⁸Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

⁹⁹Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprise Development. May 2019. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the world Conference on Women and Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Zimbabwe National Review report 2014 – 2019.

¹⁰⁰ZGC: Zimbabwe Gender Commission. Welcome to Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC). N.d., <<https://www.zgc.co.zw>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

potential violations of gender equality rights, the ZGC also accepts and assesses public complaints and takes appropriate measures to address these concerns.¹⁰¹

In Mozambique, an initiative known as MUVA, or Ligada, was implemented in 2015 to economically empower adolescent girls and young women residing in urban areas. MUVA, short for "Mujeres Vencedoras" in Portuguese, which translates to "Victorious Women", focuses on enhancing the recruitment and retention of Mozambican women in stable and lucrative employment opportunities.¹⁰² To achieve this objective, the program identifies, tests, and disseminates effective strategies aimed at reducing obstacles to obtaining quality work.¹⁰³

Lesotho also has a policy called the Gender and Development Policy 2018-2030 which is a comprehensive framework that outlines strategies to promote gender equality in Lesotho. It reinforces legislation that supports gender equality and aligns with the National Strategic Plan II.¹⁰⁴ The policy specifically focuses on empowering and protecting women's rights. One of the primary objectives of the policy is to enhance women's economic participation. This involves promoting equal access to resources, financial services, and employment opportunities.¹⁰⁵ The policy also aims to foster entrepreneurship and skills development for women. Furthermore, the policy places significant emphasis on improving women's health. The policy advocates for equal educational opportunities for girls and women, with the goal of eliminating gender

¹⁰¹ZGC: Zimbabwe Gender Commission. Welcome to Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC). N.d., <<https://www.zgc.co.zw>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰²Oxford Policy management. N.d., MUVA: Female Economic Empowerment in Mozambique. <<https://www.opml.co.uk/projects/female-economic-empowerment-Mozambique>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰³Oxford Policy management. N.d., MUVA: Female Economic Empowerment in Mozambique. <<https://www.opml.co.uk/projects/female-economic-empowerment-Mozambique>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰⁴Lesotho. N.d., Gender and Development Policy 2018 -2030. Final Draft. <<https://www.genderlinks.org.za>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰⁵Lesotho. N.d., Gender and Development Policy 2018 -2030. Final Draft. <<https://www.genderlinks.org.za>. > Accessed: 05 July 2024.

disparities in education and promoting lifelong learning.¹⁰⁶ These both align with SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality). Moreover, the policy recognizes the importance of increasing women's representation in leadership roles. It supports initiatives that enhance women's participation in decision-making processes, both in the public and private sectors. Overall, the Lesotho Gender and Development Policy 2018-2030 is a comprehensive and ambitious document that provides a clear roadmap for advancing gender equality in Lesotho.¹⁰⁷

As for Eswatini, it established Women Unlimited Eswatini (WUE), a registered non-profit organization that has been at the forefront of advocating for women's rights and development since 2017.¹⁰⁸ WUE focuses on education, gender equality, and community building aligning with SDGs 4 and 5 as well as SDG 11 (sustainable communities). Their core belief is to provide equal educational opportunities for girls and boys, aiming to address gender imbalances in education. In addition, WUE works towards increasing women's representation in decision-making processes.¹⁰⁹

Evidently, countries such as Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe have tourism programmes for women though not to the same degree as South Africa. However, there is comparatively little apparent in Lesotho, Mozambique and Eswatini. Within these latter states, it is very hard to find any organisation or programme specifically empowering women particularly in the field of tourism, like in South Africa. Hence, the majority of the women in these six southern African countries still do not have better positions in society and particularly in the HCT domain. Consequently, many of these women in the southern

¹⁰⁶Lesotho. N.d., Gender and Development Policy 2018 -2030. Final Draft. <<https://www.genderlinks.org.za>.>Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰⁷Lesotho. N.d., Gender and Development Policy 2018 -2030. Final Draft. <<https://www.genderlinks.org.za>.>Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰⁸Women's Rights in Eswatini -Women Unlimited. N.d. <<https://www.womenunlimited.africa>.> Accessed: 05 July 2024.

¹⁰⁹Women's Rights in Eswatini -Women Unlimited. N.d. <<https://www.womenunlimited.africa>.> Accessed: 05 July 2024.

African countries remain at risk, face challenges at workplaces and find it difficult to achieve equal social and economic status as their male counter parts.

Table 6 illustrates that many countries in southern Africa remain patriarchal societies in which women suffer serious discrimination, particularly in the labour markets. It authorises the labour force participation by gender and is apparent that regardless of country, men remain dominant.

Table 6: Labour Force Participation by Gender from 2000 to 2014 in SADC.

Country	2000		2006		2009		2012		2014	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
South Africa	46.9	63.1	51.9	64.8	50.2	65.2	49.4	63.3	50.7	63.7
Namibia	49.9	65.0	52.2	63.9	53.5	63.9	63.2	69.1	66.9	71.6
Botswana	71.8	81.7	74.2	81.7	56.2	68.2	-	-	69.1	81.4
Zimbabwe	69.0	81.7	84.3	90.7	84.3	90.4	84.6	90.6	89.4	92.3
Lesotho	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mozambique	86.5	87.2	-	-	86.3	86.4	75.2	71.1	73.3	72.5
Eswatini	50.4	79.0	53.3	76.5	55.5	75.8	45.2	72.5	43.8	60.8

Source: SADC Statistics Yearbook 2014¹¹⁰

From Table 6, it can be seen that in the years 2000, 2006, 2009 and 2014 gender inequality in labour market generally persisted among many member states, whereby more men were represented in the SADC labour market. Exceptional cases was Mozambique in 2012

¹¹⁰N. Moshoeshe & B. Yu. 2021. "Economic Growth and Participation of Women in Labour Markets: The Case of Southern Africa". *International Journal of Science and Business* 5(1), pp. 30 – 41.

and 2014. Labour Force Participation Rate in Sub Saharan Africa as of 2021, by Gender is available in Statistica Account.¹¹¹

It is crucial to highlight that there is currently a lack of real-time data on the gender breakdown of labour force participation in the southern African region. Nevertheless, data from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region indicates that the SADC labour force increased from around 104 million in 2009 to over 142 million in 2019.¹¹² Despite this growth, women in all member states encountered significant obstacles in entering the labour market, as reflected by lower rates of labour force participation among women.¹¹³

ILO argues that if women are employed, they are usually employed in vulnerable employment usually characterised by inadequate earnings; low productivity and difficult work conditions with improvement prospects being limited, compared to men.¹¹⁴ In spite of the adoption of gender equality laws and tourism policies by some southern African countries and all programmes geared towards bridging the gender gap, the region's employment landscape still has not transformed. The labour market continues to favour men and shows no sign of making real progress towards improving prospects for women. The tourism industry is no exception in this.

¹¹¹An updated statistics on Labour force participation rate at least in in Sub Saharan Africa as of 2021, by gender is available in Statistica Account but inaccessible as it required a paid Statica Account costing almost R3000.00 - Statista Research Department. 2024. Labour Force Participation Rate in Sub Saharan Africa as of 2021, by Gender. <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1286366/labour-participation-rate-in-sub-saharan-africa-by-gender>.>Accessed: 15 August 2024

¹¹²SADC: Southern Africa Development Community. N.d. Employment and Labour. <<https://www.sadc.int/pilars/employment-labour-0>.> Accessed: 01 July 2024

¹¹³SADC: Southern Africa Development Community. N.d. Employment and Labour. <<https://www.sadc.int/pilars/employment-labour-0>.>Accessed: 01 July 2024

¹¹⁴ILO 2022

Chapter Four: General Overview of the Tourism Heritage Industry

It is generally accepted that the HCT industry has attained increasing importance as part of the cultural offerings presented by a growing number of destinations. As indicated in the concept definitions in Chapter 1, HCT is a branch of tourism oriented towards the cultural heritage of the “location” where tourism is occurring¹ and is an interest in the “lifestyle/heritage offering of a community; region; group or institution.”² I. O. Ezeuduji *et al.*, also defines HCT as the type of tourism that attracts tourists to visit a destination to experience “local culture”.³ Presently, HCT is a worldwide mass trend as people travel to experience other cultures.⁴ Consequently, A. Correia *at al.*, maintain that “culture” has become an important tourist motivation that influences destination choice.⁵ In fact, culture, has become a source of profitable differentiation for many destinations that take advantage of a particular past and present industrial resource (a destination’s culture, a feature of what the particular locality was, is and perhaps what it will be) to generate potentially distinctive and memorable experiences.⁶ As a result, there have been a number of successful cases globally demonstrating the benefits of exploiting this potential and countries in southern Africa are no exception.

This Chapter presents a brief general overview of HCT in southern Africa, that is, its development and the cultural services it provides. It analyses southern Africa’s HCT

¹IGI Global Publisher of Timely Knowledge, Nd. “What is Cultural Heritage Tourism.” <<https://www.igb-global.com>.>Dictionary/challenges-for-promotion-of-heritage-tourism/56429. > Accessed: 28 July 2021.

²T. Silberberg. “Cultural Tourism and Business Opportunities for Museums and Heritage Sites.” *Tourism Management* 16/5,1995, pp. 361–365.

³I.O. Ezeuduji, J.M. Mdiniso & A. T. Nzama. 2011. Assessing Nature Conservation and Tourism Development Effectiveness Towards Local Economic Development in South Africa: Nuanced by the Perceptions of Local Communities? *Acta Universitatis Danubius Economica* 13 (6), pp. 1-18.

⁴G.D. Loird. 17 September 1999. The Power of Cultural Tourism. Keynote Presentation: Winsconsin Heritage Tourism conference Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin.

⁵A. Correia, M. Kozak & J. Ferradeira. 2013. “From Tourist Motivation to Tourist Satisfaction”, *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 7(4), pp. 411- 424.

⁶A. Correia, M. Kozak & J. Ferradeira. 2013. “From Tourist Motivation to Tourist Satisfaction”, *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 7(4), pp. 411- 424.

market and its economic value. It considers the history of women in HCT; their role; contribution and HCT benefits to women generally. Lastly, it also assesses HCT employment structures which involve the formal and informal labour market as far as women are concerned.

4.1 HCT in southern Africa

According to D. J. Timothy, heritage is one of the most pervasive tourism assets in Africa and lies at the foundations of the tourism in many localities of the African region.⁷ Consequently, HCT has become a significant sector within the tourism economy of the global South,⁸ and is regarded by many scholars as a new niche or market of tourism.⁹ C. David and C.D van der Marwe indicate that the HCT sector is more popular than other types of tourism,¹⁰ and it sets to represent one of the major future growth activities of global tourism demand. Hence, culture is increasingly becoming a tool for marketing and branding tourism destinations.¹¹ For this reason, C.M. Rogerson stipulates that many southern African countries are using HCT as a niche product in order to diversify their tourism economies.¹²

Nonetheless, despite the southern African region having abundant tourism resources, W.E.A. van Beek and A. M. Schmidt indicated in 2012 that generally, tourism on the continent of Africa is unevenly distributed.¹³ For instance, they argue that the distribution

⁷D. J. Timothy. 2023. *Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Africa*. Routledge. London.

⁸D.J. Timothy & G.P. Nyaupane. 2006. (eds) 2009. *Cultural Heritage and Tourism in the Developing World – A Regional Perspective*. London: Routledge.

⁹H. Yu Park. 2014. *Heritage Tourism*. London: Routledge.

¹⁰C. David & van der Merwe, C.D. 2016. "Tourist Guides' Perceptions of Cultural Heritage Tourism in South Africa". *Bulletin of Geography. Socio Economic Series*, 34, pp. 117-130.

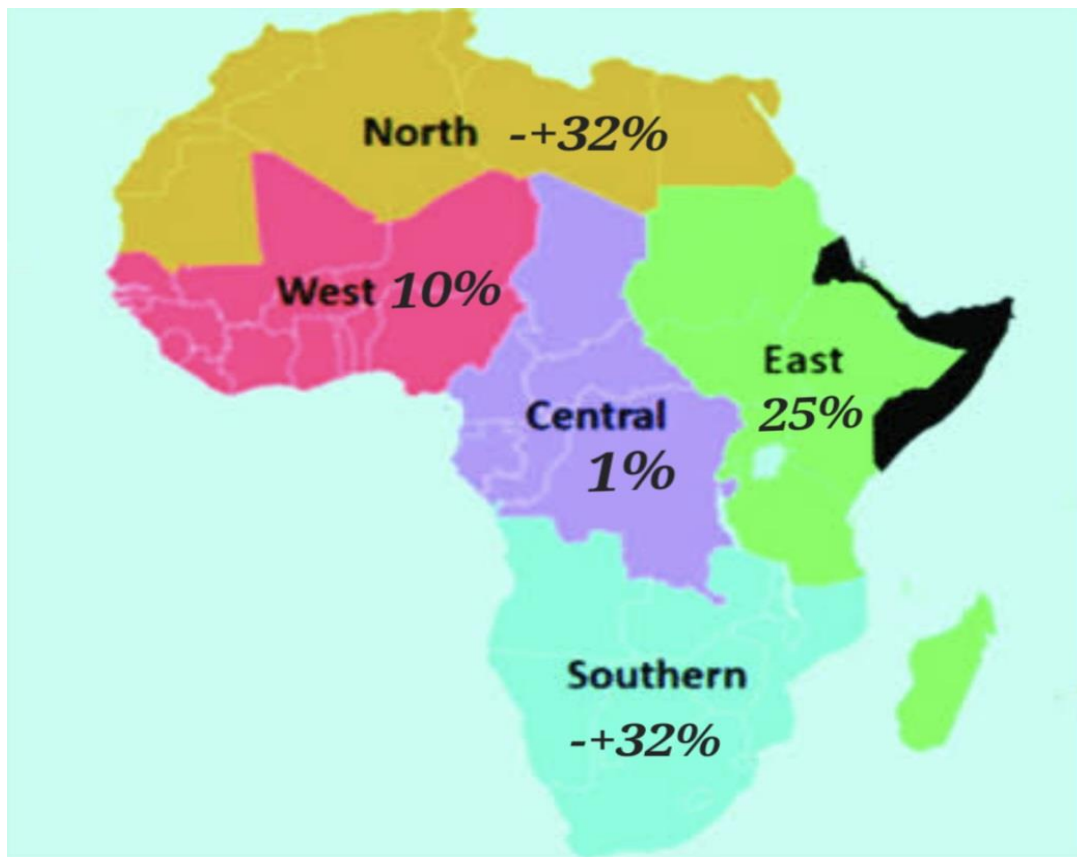
¹¹A. Ramires, F. Brandao & A.C. Sousa. 2018. "Motivation-based Cluster Analysis of International Tourists Visiting World Heritage City: The Case of Porto, Portugal". *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management* 8, pp. 49-60.

¹²C.M. Rogerson. 2012. The Tourism Development Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa: Progress and Prospects. *Africa Insight* 42(2), pp. 28-45.

¹³W. E. A. Van Beek & A. M. Schmidt (eds.), *African Hosts and Their Guests: Cultural Dynamics of Tourism*. Boydell & Brewer. 2012, pp. 1-34.

of tourists between sub-regions and countries is extremely skewed, and this includes southern Africa. They roughly estimate that Northern Africa takes (+-32%) one third of the tourism market share, Eastern Africa a quarter (25%), Western Africa (10%, the whole of Central Africa has to do with the remaining (1%) and lastly, southern Africa one third (+-32%).¹⁴ (See Map 2)

Map 2: A Map of Africa Sub-Regions



Source: <https://image.app.goo.gl/HEh115jU1nAymMNC7>. <Accessed: 15 June 2024.

¹⁴W. E. A. Van Beek & A. M. Schmidt (eds.), *African Hosts and Their Guests: Cultural Dynamics of Tourism*. Boydell & Brewer. 2012, pp. 1-34.

The northern and southern region are the top destinations for both international tourists and regional tourists from other countries.¹⁵

The World Economic Forum’s Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report of southern African countries ranks only five of the seven countries used in this study. The five Sub-Saharan African Countries in the index of 2024, rank South Africa, Namibia and Botswana in the top 100, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in the 100 brackets while Lesotho and Eswatini are not ranked. See Table 7).

Table 7: World Economic Forum’s Travel and Tourism Rankings of southern African countries.¹⁶

Country	WEF T&T Ranking
South Africa	55
Namibia	95
Botswana	75
Zimbabwe	110
Mozambique	127
Lesotho	Not ranked
Eswatini	Not Ranked

Source: The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2024.¹⁷

¹⁵J. J. Mongaka, J. M. Tsoka-Gwegweni. L. M. Mupara & T. Mashamba-Thompson. 2017. “Role, Structure and effects of Medical Tourism in Africa: A Systematic Scoping Review Protocol”. *British Medical Journal (BMJ) Open: e013021*.doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2016-013021.

¹⁶World Economic Forum. 2024. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2024: Travel and Tourism at a Tipping Point. Insight Report.

¹⁷World Economic Forum. 2024. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2024: Travel and Tourism at a Tipping Point. Insight Report.

As it stands, South Africa has, by far, the largest travel and tourism industry in Sub-Saharan Africa ranking second regionally,¹⁸ and 55th globally on the index.¹⁹ Also, Global Economy.com presently shows that there is no African country that appears in the global top 20, when it comes to tourist arrivals in 2024 and country rankings.²⁰ This proves that the proportions and rankings alleged by van Beek and Schmidt in 2012 have hardly changed over the past decade.

Despite tourism being regarded as a powerful vehicle for economic growth and job creation all over the world, Africa Finance and Private Sector Development (World Bank) (AFTFP) argue that there is a deep-rooted scepticism prevailing about the economic and social benefits of tourism in many African countries. This is mainly due to a lack of accurate economic data about the sector; genuine concern about the environment; discomfort with foreign investors and visitors.²¹ Also, this could also point to the lack of critical research on tourism in the global South, if not globally, concerning the issue of possible exploitation concerning the vulnerable groups in the production of tourism – this issue that this study is concerned with.

One distinctive competence of the southern African countries lies in their multi-dimensional cultural profiles and historically layered landscapes which in turn provide rich cultural/heritage tourism resources. Consequently, global southern countries have been developing and commodifying their (selected) tangible, intangible and natural heritage assets. According to A. M. Sullivan, tangible heritage assets involve “buildings;

¹⁸F. Olokesusi, B. Afolabi & O. B. Awoyemi. 2019. “Determinants of Sub-Saharan African Countries’ Travel and Tourism Competitiveness”. *International Journal of Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism* 3(1), pp. 1-16.

¹⁹World Economic Forum. 2024. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2024: Travel and Tourism at a Tipping Point. Insight Report.

²⁰The Global Economy.com: Tourist Arrival-Country rankings. n.d. <<https://www.theglobaleconomy.com>> Accessed: 07 December 2022.

²¹I. Christie, E. Fernandes, H. Messerli & L. Twinning-Ward. 2014. *Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods*. World Bank Publications.

monuments; landscapes; books; works of art and artifacts”, while intangible heritage assets involve “folklore; traditions; language and knowledge that have been inherited from past generations of their societies”. Lastly, natural heritage involves “culturally significant landscapes and biodiversity.”²²

With heritage and culture forming the basis of tourism in many countries,²³ and in an attempt to develop cultural tourism, the governments in the southern African countries have to some degree instituted changes in their various policies to support the HCT domain. For instance, the majority of southern African countries have been increasingly embracing cultural tourism with many heritage attractions being promoted as anchor destinations for local economic development initiatives. Table 8 lists a selection of key popular heritage/cultural and natural attraction sites in the seven southern African countries found in the region.

²²A. M. Sullivan. 2016. Cultural Heritage and New Media: A Future for the Past. *The John Marshall Review of Intellectual Property Law* (15) pp. 604-646.

²³A. Leask, Fyall, A. & Garrod, B. 2002. “Heritage Visitor Attractions: Managing Revenue in the New Millennium”. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 8(3), pp. 247 -265.

Table 8: Heritage/Cultural and Natural Attraction Sites Popular in ten southern African Countries.

Country	Heritage/Cultural Site	Natural Site
South Africa	Robben Island Museum	Table Mountain
Namibia	Independence Memorial Museum	Namib Desert
Botswana	Tsodilo Hills	Okavango Delta
Zimbabwe	Great Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls
Lesotho	Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village	Sehlabathebe National Park
Mozambique	Ilha de Mozambique	Gorongosa National Park
Eswatini	Swazi Cultural village	Hlane Royal National Park

Source: M. Matsoso, 2024.

Table 8 illustrates only a fraction of the key cultural and natural products that have a great abundance of features of tourist interest in the region. Almost all the seven southern African countries are found to each have their own unique natural and historical/heritage sites preserved, thus becoming an anchor for the global tourism industry and in the process becoming a major contributor of economic value to local communities. It was made apparent in the HCT literature review (Chapter two) how the ten southern African countries have been scaling up their tourism industry with particular reference to heritage tourism. These all point to the acknowledgement that HCT has, to some extent, grown or is growing in stature in many of these countries, even though as shown in Chapter 3, more dedication from the respective governments is still needed in some of them.

Thus, with southern African countries focusing on the potential to maximise cultural/heritage and natural assets in order to promote local economic development through tourism,²⁴ the HCT development has resulted in the sector becoming most of these government's leading source of revenue and most importantly, source of employment, particularly for women. Moswete *et al.*, argue that cultural tourism in southern Africa has been found to be beneficial for local communities and has the possibility to improve the livelihoods and well-being of people, especially in the remote or peripheral regions where there are limited alternative economic options to tourism.²⁵ Nonetheless, despite the cultural/heritage development and services being in place in many of the southern African countries, the value and impact of this tourism development and services have not been fully realised. This is particularly the case as regards the economic potential of heritage and cultural tourism products.

Numerous studies point out that the tourism sector is a significant tool in economic growth through job creation; Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution; generating foreign exchange and other economic benefits all over the world.²⁶ According to the latest annual research report from the World Travel Tourism Council (WTTC), the Travel and Tourism sector made up 9.1% of the global GDP in 2023. This marks a significant increase of 23.2% from 2022 and is only 4.1% lower than the 2019 level. Additionally, in 2023, the sector generated 27 million new jobs, showing a 9.1% increase compared to 2022 and only 1.4% below the 2019 level.²⁷ In the SADC region, the UNWTO shows that the tourism

²⁴C. M. Rogerson & C. D. Van der Marwe. 2016. Heritage Tourism in the Global South: Development Impacts of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site, South Africa. *Local Economy*, 3(1-2), pp. 234-248

²⁵H. Manwa, N. Moswete & J. Saarinen (eds.), *Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa*, Bristol: Channel View Press, 2016, pp. 31-46,

²⁶B. Krstic, V. Radivojevic & T. Stanisic. "Tourism Industry and National Competitiveness: A Sub-Saharan Africa Countries Perspective". *EKHOMNKA*, 63(1), 2017, pp. 1-7.

²⁷WTTC. N.d., Economic Impact research. <<https://wttc.org/research/economic-impact>. > Accessed: 09 July 2023.

sector directly contributing around 2.8% (US\$19.4 billion) of the total GDP in 2017²⁸ and, when considering its indirect and induced impacts, the sector contributes as much as 8% (US\$56 billion) of SADC GDP.²⁹ According to SADC, the sector directly sustained around 2.5 million jobs in the region in 2017; and in total (including direct, indirect and induced employment effects) more than 6.3 million jobs that depended on tourism.³⁰ These are all pre-Covid figures, but subsequently there has been a rejuvenation and a return to these levels again.

Table 9 provides the ranking for the top three southern African Countries by travel and tourism sectors total contribution to GDP for 2021. Of the ten countries in southern Africa, South Africa ranked number one with a total contribution of US\$13.2 billion, followed by Botswana with US\$1.4 billion and then Namibia with US\$1.3 billion. The remaining four countries do not feature such figures indicating they are either not captured or are of no real consequences.

²⁸SADC. N.d. Tourism. < <https://www.sadc.int/pillars/tourism>. >Accessed: 18 Jan 2023

²⁹SADC. N.d. Tourism. < <https://www.sadc.int/pillars/tourism>. >Accessed: 18 Jan 2023

³⁰No update available. SADC. N.d. Tourism. < <https://www.sadc.int/pillars/tourism>. >Accessed: 18 January 2023

Table 9: Total Contribution to GDP: 2021

Country	Rank: 2021	Total contribution to GDP	T&T of GDP 2021
South Africa	1	13.2	3.2%
Botswana	4	1.4	8.0%
Namibia	5	1.3	11.0%
Zimbabwe	-	-	-
Mozambique	-	-	-
Lesotho	-	-	-
Eswatini	-	-	-

Source: World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) South Africa, 2021.³¹

Despite southern African countries having an immense travel potential, M. Bogale et al., indicate that the countries achieve only a small part of the global and African travel and tourism marketplace.³² Many tourism experts are suggesting that African countries, which traditionally rely on foreign visitors, should instead target domestic tourists to help rejuvenate the sector. However, due to poor economic conditions across many southern African countries this may be difficult to realise.³³

4.2 Women in the HCT: Role and Contribution in southern Africa

The optimization of the role of women in tourism in southern Africa is encapsulated in the Protocol of Tourism Development which emphasises the participation of women in the tourism industry.³⁴ In addition, achieving gender equality and empowering women

³¹World Travel & Tourism Council. N.d. Africa Travel & Tourism Economic Impact factsheet. <<https://researchhub.wttc.org/factsheets/Africa>. > Accessed: 15 August 2024.

³²Department: Tourism Republic of South Africa. 2020/21 State of Tourism Report.

³³Department: Tourism Republic of South Africa. 2020/21 State of Tourism Report.

³⁴Southern African Development Community: Towards a Common Future (SADC). 1998. Protocol on the Development of Tourism in the Southern African Development Community. < <https://www.Sadc.int/document>. > Accessed: 19 august 2024.

constitutes the fifth goal of the United Nations empowerment on tourism development agenda (UN-SDGs).³⁵ Despite these international and regional enforcements, women have long been found playing roles in the HCT for a range of purposes but the nature of their participation has always been different from men. For example, promotional material designed by the tourist industry, has always depicted women more often than men. Women would appear in tourism brochures as a means of marketing the country and more often than not would be portrayed as an “exotic commodity”.³⁶ M. Opperman and S. Mickey postulate that indigenous people, particularly women, are usually depicted as young and beautiful, clothed in traditional attire and presented in such a way that they appear exotic and objectified for the gaze of the tourists.³⁷ In their study, M. Schellhorn and H. C. Perkins also argue that it is the solitary female, who is used to promote the destination and is portrayed as a submissive “other”.³⁸

At another level, T. Tristanti *et al.*, argue that women are the key to HCT sustainability as they are critical in disseminating knowledge about cultural values.³⁹ In particular, women in rural areas with strong community ties contribute to the expansion of cultural tourism products. According to Manwa, this can be carried out through the display of wearing traditional dresses, speaking local dialects and performing traditional songs and dances and so on.⁴⁰ While on the other hand, R. Scheyvens stipulates that women are more connected to the environment than men owing to their continuous interactions with

³⁵M. Abou – Shouk, M. Taha Mannaa & A. Mohamed Elbaz. 2021. “Women’s Empowerment and Tourism Development: A Cross-Country Study”. *Tourism Management Perspective* (37). p. 100782.

³⁶M. Opperman & S. McKinnley. 1997. ‘Sexual Imagery in the Marketing of Pacific Tourism Destinations’. pp.117-127. In M. Oppermann Pacific, Rim Tourism, ed., Wallingford, UK. CAP International.

³⁷M. Opperman & S. McKinnley. 1997. ‘Sexual Imagery in the Marketing of Pacific Tourism Destinations’. pp.117-127. In M. Oppermann Pacific, Rim Tourism, ed., Wallingford, UK. CAP International.

³⁸M. Schellhorn, M. & H. C. Perkins. 2004.” The Stuff of Which Dreams are Made: Representations of the South Sea in German- Language Tourist Brochures”. *Current Issues in Tourism* 7(2), pp. 95-133.

³⁹T. Tristanti, I. Dwi Astuti Nurhaeni, M. Mulyanto & R. Devi Sakuntalawiti. 2021. “The Role of Women in Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review”. IAPA: Annual Conference of Indonesian for Public Administration. *Knowledge Engaging (KnE) Social Sciences*. vol 22.

⁴⁰J. Saarinen, (ed.), *Sustainable Tourism in Southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*. Channel View Publication. 2009.

nature.⁴¹ In support of Scheyvens, Manwa argues that women, more than men, are dependent on natural resource products and crafts made from reeds and grasses. In addition, women have special knowledge of walking routes, useful plants and are involved in craft production,⁴² that provide cultural artifacts, which add to the variety of tourism services and products sold from within their houses or neighbourhoods. Furthermore, L. Ferguson postulates that women's participation in handicraft production for the tourism market enhances cultural awareness and local conditions as they offer tourist attractions to potential visitors to rural communities.⁴³ All of this can be related to the development of HCT products and services. Also, S.F. Dunn points out that women's work in HCT domain has often been similar to women's domestic roles and argues that typically this does not challenge their existing gender roles.⁴⁴ For instance, W. B. Lama points out that tourism generates jobs such as guiding, providing accommodation and food, roles which can very well be carried out by female folk rather than male folk given the former's traditional place in societies.⁴⁵

UN Women, the UN organisation which is a global champion for gender equality,⁴⁶ points out that the tourism sector is made up of a number of industries, such as accommodation which includes homestay services; food and beverages services; transport equipment and rental; travel agencies and other reservation services; cultural activities; sports and recreation activities; retail trade of country-specific tourism characteristic goods and

⁴¹R. Scheyvens. 2000. Promoting Women's Empowerment through Involvement in Ecotourism: Experiences from the Third World. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 8(3), pp.232-249.

⁴²J. Saarinen, (ed.), *Sustainable Tourism in Southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition*. Channel View Publication. 2009.

⁴³L. Ferguson. 2009. "Analyzing the Gender Dimensions of Tourism as a Development strategy". *Policy Papers del Instituto Complutense de Madrid, Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales (ICEI)*. paper: 03-09.

⁴⁴S. F. Dunn. 2007. Toward Empowerment: Women and Community-Based Tourism in Thailand. Master of Arts, International School and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon.

⁴⁵W. B. Lama. 2000. Community-based Tourism for Conservation and Women's Development in Mountains Regions. pp.221-238

⁴⁶UN-Women: Covid -19 Response. 2022. Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment in the Tourism Sector in covid-19 Response Recovery. Unwomen.org. Accessed: 13 September 2022.

other country- specific tourism activities.⁴⁷ This being the case, in southern African countries, most women's employment in the sector has been concentrated in accommodation/homestay; food and beverage serving activities; educational institutions; tour operation businesses; cultural and heritage events; recreation and retail which involves the making of souvenirs and opening of stalls. In this manner, women have been found to be playing a side role in supporting the HCT sector, that is, by maintaining culture and tourism development. Not only are women playing a vital role in maintaining tourism development, but it is also evident that tourism is a driver of women's workforce participation. However, L. N. Duffy *et al.*, argue that assumptions regarding whether this is positive are being questioned.⁴⁸ Irrespective of the women's role and strong representation in the HCT labour market, due to the domestic and caring nature of women's labour, their work in this industry is often invisible.

Taking this position of women further, tourism is not only known to energise economies of specific countries, but it is mostly known to also empower women. Many women usually face difficulty in entering the labour market as a result of domestic duties or cultural norms which may detain them in their homes or localities. Cultural tourism therefore creates employment opportunities that women can pursue while retaining their traditional societal domestic roles.

S. Chant indicates that despite the structural inequalities of women's participation in HCT production, such work has some benefits for the empowerment of the women worker. She argues that the bringing together of women in such a way, has the potential to lead to women tourism workers acting by themselves, for themselves, to demand fairer

⁴⁷UN-Women: Covid -19 Response. 2022. Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment in the Tourism Sector in covid-19 Response Recovery. <<https://www.Unwomen.org>. >Accessed: 13 September 2022.

⁴⁸L. N. Duffy, C. S. Kline, R. A. Mowatt & H. C. Chancellor. 2015. "Women in Tourism: Shifting Gender Ideology in the DR". *Annals of Tourism Research* 52, pp.72-86.

treatment in the workplace, the home and in wider society.⁴⁹ Furthermore, Sinclair indicates that women working in tourism leads to greater status in the household and consequently potentially increased bargaining power in the broader household context.⁵⁰

Also, the fact that tourism is mostly carried out as a part-time or shift-based employment in most parts of the world, women with household responsibilities are able to manage to earn part of their livelihood by engaging in these jobs in their “leisure” hours.⁵¹ S. F. Dunn indicates that with small-scale tourism development, women have been afforded opportunities to run their own small business such as guest/accommodation/homestays or craft production. She argues that it is this small-scale development that potentially challenges gender roles by providing women with more economic independence and increased self-efficacy.⁵² Obviously, HCT plays an essential role in economic and personal empowerment of women. Sinclair however points out that it is less clear whether such individual gains have been translated into broader social and political influence in society.⁵³

4.3 HCT Employment: Women in the Formal and Informal Labour Market

HCT employment is diverse in the range of job types and skills it includes due to the fact that it is located across very different sub-sectors. These include events (cultural), food services, homestays, tour operations businesses, educational institutions, crafts and heritage at multiple levels within micro, medium and large organisations both at the local

⁴⁹ S. Chant. 1997. “Gender and Tourism Employment in Mexico and the Philippines”, in Sinclair (ed) *Gender, Work and Tourism*. London: Routledge

⁵⁰ M. T. Sinclair. 1997. ‘Gendered Work in Tourism: Comparative Perspectives’ in Sinclair (ed) *Gender, Work and Tourism*. London: Routledge.

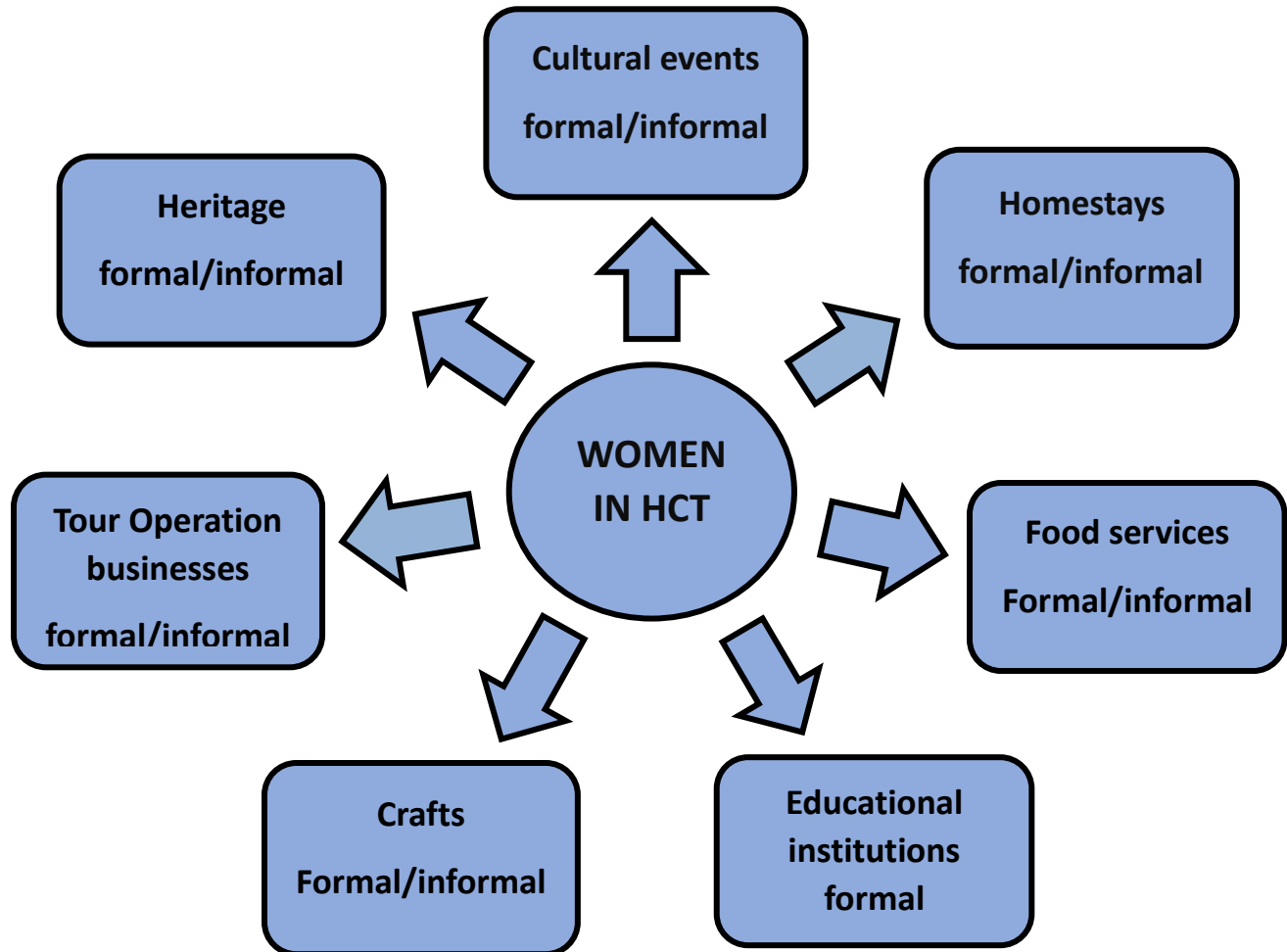
⁵¹T. Tristanti, I. D. A. Nurhaeni, M. Mulyanto & R. D. Sakuntalawati. 2022. “The role of women in Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review”. 2021 Annual Conference of Indonesian Association for Public Administration, *KnE Social Sciences*, pp. 545-554.

⁵²S. F. Dunn. 2007. *Toward Empowerment: Women and Community-Based Tourism in Thailand*. Master of Arts, International School and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon.

⁵³M.T. Sinclair (ed.), *Gender, Work and Tourism*. London: Routledge. 1997.

and national levels⁵⁴ (See diagram 1). The industry therefore comprises of formal and informal work with a broad range of workers at all levels.

Diagram 1: Women in HCT Subsector



As regards to the formal work, employment in the HCT can take place in direct tourism services where there is a possibility to progress from a junior to a senior level. Such examples include the positions of archivists; archaeologists; conservationists; museum curators; cultural event coordinators and educators and so on. Within each of these areas, there are a number of different roles and specialisations, many of which require different

⁵⁴R. Robinson, R. Martins, A. Solnet & T. Baum. 2018. "Sustaining Precarity: Critically Examining Tourism and Employment". *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. pp. 1-34.

training, skills and experience.⁵⁵ While on the other hand, there are also locals not formally employed in the sector, but who have nonetheless carved out livelihoods based on their resourcefulness and steady interaction with tourists. Examples of this include informal employment opportunities which usually involve innumerable numbers of local employees both illiterate and semi-illiterate, serving as guides, translators, porters and cooks. Many women are however often concentrated in lower levels of employment. For example, a good deal of women's work in the sector is taking place in the informal economy, such as handicrafts; food production while many work as 'contributing family workers' in family tourism enterprises (homestays in various local tourism destination).

As indicated, the WTTC indicates that tourism contributes to employment for 275 million persons globally.⁵⁶ The industry is known to have a high employment multiplier effect,⁵⁷ but it is also argued that generally, the tourism industry is characterised by low level barriers, hence it is for this reason that the industry is believed to employ more women and minority groups.⁵⁸ This situation results in each cohort encountering, among others, issues of inequality, wage disparity and exploitation.⁵⁹ The last section of this Chapter takes a brief look at excerpts from the various southern African countries that reflect on a range of initiatives as well as responses that appeared in the popular press. These publications in the media are indicative of the prevalence of an awareness regarding the place and importance of the dire situation women find themselves in.

⁵⁵CRC: Centre for Research Collections. N.d. Careers in Heritage: How to Kick start Your Career in the Heritage Sector. The University of Edinburgh. <https://www.ed.ac.uk>.> Accessed: Sept 2022.

⁵⁶WTTC. 2017. Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2017 World. <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2017/world2017>. Accessed: 04 November 2022.

⁵⁷D.C. Frechtling & E. Horvath. 1999. Estimating the Multiplier Effects of Tourism Expenditures on a Local Economy through Regional Input Model. *Journal Travel Research*, 37(4). pp. 3-24.

⁵⁸M. Hollick. 2003. No Barriers to Failure: Rethinking Tourism Business Entry. Riding the Wave *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, p. 562.

⁵⁹M. Yildirim. 2021. "Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an 'Unsustainable' Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry". *Tourism Management* 84, pp. 104-260.

In an online newspaper, *The Daily Southern and East African Tourism Update*, a 2018 article titled “Tourism in South Africa: Women Play a Vital Role” reported on the tourism celebration in Tourism Month in September of that year. It examined the tourism industry in South Africa and interviewed a number of women working in the tourism domain about their role in the industry. Amongst these women were the likes of Gillian Saunders who was a special advisor to the then South African Tourism Minister, Minister Derek Hanekom. Saunders indicated that things in the industry have definitely “progressed” from when she started working in it in the 1980s. She revealed that initially there were no female general managers at hotels as the sector was very male dominated. She noted that now almost two to three decades later on a service level, hospitality and tourism are often dominated by women. She posed a question as to why it was that women were running the lower echelons of the industry, but not featuring enough in management. She noted also that worldwide, the travel and tourism industry, continues to be dominated by white males.⁶⁰ Another prominent woman in the industry who was cited in the article was Jane Edge, the managing director of Fair-Trade Tourism.⁶¹ Edge also agreed that top management in the tourism sector was still male dominated. She said that “the tourism industry is largely populated by women but are often not in the decision-making or CEO positions and tend to be viewed as supporters rather than leaders”.⁶² She concluded that despite the lack of representation, it is largely agreed that women in the industry bring vital characteristics to help grow tourism.⁶³ Saunders summed up by pointing out that the tourism industry, particularly in Africa, needs “diverse thinking”. She argued that having women involved in strategy means the industry is embracing diverse

⁶⁰*Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update*: C, Bower. 14 Sept 2018. Tourism in SA: Women Play a Vital Role. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>.> Accessed: 29 May 2023.

⁶¹*Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update*: C, Bower. 14 Sept 2018. Tourism in SA: Women Play a Vital Role. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>.> Accessed: 29 May 2023.

⁶²*Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update*: C, Bower. 14 Sept 2018. Tourism in SA: Women Play a Vital Role. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>.> Accessed: 29 May 2023.

⁶³*Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update*: C, Bower. 14 Sept 2018. Tourism in SA: Women Play a Vital Role. <<https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>.> Accessed: 29 May 2023.

thought and experiences. She also commented that women are better represented in South Africa's public sector and key tourism associations than in the private sector. Both Sanders and Edge showed that due to a lack of women in key positions, there is no aspiration for young women who need role models to aspire to and usually the industry is seen as a last resort for a career.⁶⁴

In Botswana, women in the tourism and hospitality sector hosted a conference on the 22nd of March 2021 in collaboration with the Hilton Garden Inn Gaborone. The theme was "Choose to Challenge", and featured women of stature across the tourism and hospitality sector as well as other well-wishers of the industry.⁶⁵ The aim of the event was to challenge key players in the tourism sector to promote women empowerment, as well as to encourage women to up-skill themselves in order to compete in the male dominated sector. In other words, the discussion focussed on the advancement of women in the tourism sector. So, WIT Botswana challenged the tourism and the business community as a whole, to choose the advancement of women and choose to be organisations that advocate for equality. As a consequence, WIT aimed at seeing women at the forefront of the tourism industry, advancing from holding ordinary positions to becoming key stakeholders and owning establishments.⁶⁶

Turning to Namibia, in 2014, a tourism conference was held which was attended by women from several countries from the SADC region themed "Spotlight on Women in Tourism".⁶⁷ The *Namibian Sun* reported that the then Deputy Minister of Environment

⁶⁴*Daily Southern & East African Tourism Update*: C, Bower. 14 Sept 2018. Tourism in SA: Women Play a Vital Role. <https://www.tourismupdate.co.za>.> Accessed: 29 May 2023.

⁶⁵Echo Newspaper Botswana. 23 March 2021. WIT Hold Roundtable Tourism and Hospitality Discussion to Celebrate Women's Month. Facebook.

⁶⁶Echo Newspaper Botswana. 23 March 2021. WIT Hold Roundtable Tourism and Hospitality Discussion to Celebrate Women's Month. Facebook.

⁶⁷W. E. Smit: *Namibian Sun*. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. < <https://www.namibiansun.com>. > Accessed: 22 May 2023.

and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta, argued that the issue of women in tourism brings to the fore a number of policy issues that should be considered if they are to be empowered fully, in order to contribute to tourism growth and development in the region. Also, Shifeta indicated that the inclusion of women and the youth in many economic sectors still remains a challenge in the sub-region and had implications for gender mainstreaming, including the tourism sector. Further, he pointed out that there are some major policy issues facing women in tourism which should be addressed by a policy framework on a regional or national level. Shifeta argued that there was a need to consider what major barriers are prevalent in the tourism sector that negatively affects the empowerment of women.⁶⁸

As regards to Namibia, among the several barriers that he pointed to as affecting the women in tourism was the seasonal nature of tourism. He said seasonality was a main challenge to investments, since income in the sector may be secured only for a few months in the year. He mentioned the lack of access to funding for small scale tourism enterprises, which are the backbone of many rural communities in their sub region.⁶⁹ Also, land tenure and land ownership were a concern as it affected women especially in the rural areas, where land tenure may not be secure or land ownership not clear. Again, human resource capacity, skills and training, amongst others, were also stipulated as a problem for women in tourism. Shifeta argued that these serious barriers to tourism growth and development curbed the multiplier effect from benefiting all stakeholders, including women.⁷⁰

⁶⁸W. E. Smit: Namibian Sun. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. <<https://www.namibiansun.com>.>Accessed: 22 May 2023.

⁶⁹W. E. Smit: Namibian Sun. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. <<https://www.namibiansun.com>.>Accessed: 22 May 2023.

⁷⁰W. E. Smit: Namibian Sun. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. <<https://www.namibiansun.com>.>Accessed: 22 May 2023.

At this conference in Namibia, it was concluded that a platform was to be created where women in tourism could create a voice for the voiceless and an advocacy movement.⁷¹ Moreover, it was agreed that there would be an annual exchange of ideas and experiences, so that strategies could be agreed upon to advance women tourism programmes and projects. Also, there was a need to identify specific gaps and barriers and then agree on policy frameworks and embark on capacity building programmes at a national and regional level.⁷²

The Herald, a Zimbabwean newspaper, reported in 2011 that when it comes to entrepreneurship, very few women own large tourism enterprises such as lodges and or wild life reserves.⁷³ Instead, it argued, that women dominated the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector of tourism, participating primarily in less lucrative supply chains including homestays, crafts and marketing.⁷⁴ The report further indicated that the more that women dominate the SME sector of HCT, they are then participating in less lucrative supply chains. It stated that these supply chains remain small, operate in isolation from the global value chains and have limited potential for growth.⁷⁵ In addition, *the Herald* highlighted that the assessment of the status of women in the sector reveals that women's representation in the decision-making positions remains well below 50 percent, despite their immense contribution to the sector.⁷⁶

⁷¹W. E. Smit: Namibian Sun. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. <<https://www.namibiansun.com>.>Accessed: 22 May 2023.

⁷²W. E. Smit: Namibian Sun. 21. 10. 2014. Spotlight On Women in Tourism. <<https://www.namibiansun.com>.>Accessed: 22 May 2023.

⁷³*The Herald*. 30 October 2011. Is Zim Tourism Industry Female or Male? <<https://www.herald.co.zw>.>Accessed: 08 November 2022.

⁷⁴*The Herald*. 30 October 2011. Is Zim Tourism Industry Female or Male? <<https://www.herald.co.zw>.> Accessed: 08 November 2022.

⁷⁵*The Herald*. 30 October 2011. Is Zim Tourism Industry Female or Male? <<https://www.herald.co.zw>.> Accessed: 08 November 2022.

⁷⁶*The Herald*. 30 October 2011. Is Zim Tourism Industry Female or Male? <<https://www.herald.co.zw>.> Accessed: 08 November 2022.

The Mozambican online platform, “Club of Mozambique”, published an article titled “Women, Art, and Tourism on Ilha de Moçambique.”⁷⁷ The article highlighted the collaboration between a group of women and the esteemed ethical textiles company from Maputo, resulting in the creation of 'Ilha Unique capulana.’⁷⁸ The platform acknowledged that the tourism industry in Mozambique was predominantly male-dominated. As a response to the decline in tourism caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, it was stated that the the women of Mozambique took action to showcase the strength of Ilha to the rest of the country and the world.

According to an online platform, Karinga Textiles conducted a series of workshops spanning over a year, aimed at enhancing the women's skills in textile arts. These workshops covered various techniques such as natural dyeing, fabric painting, block painting, and product finishing⁷⁹ all of which have craft and HCT potential. The article concluded that collaborating with Karinga Textiles provided the women with exposure to new ideas and markets, ultimately leading to economic independence. Additionally, it created a supportive social environment that emphasized the core values of culture, society, creativity, and sustainability.⁸⁰

As for the country of Lesotho, the reporter of an online newspaper the *Reporter* included an article titled “A Summit to Empower Women in Tourism” in 2023, which reported that the three-day Women in Tourism Southern African Summit in Maseru, recognised women

⁷⁷MozParks: *Club of Mozambique*. 5th November 2020. Women Art and Tourism on Ilha de Mocambique. <<https://clubofmozambique.com/news/women-art-and-tourism-on-ilha-de-mocambique-176415>> Accessed: 1 July 2023.

⁷⁸MozParks: *Club of Mozambique*. 5th November 2020. Women Art and Tourism on Ilha de Mocambique. <<https://clubofmozambique.com/news/women-art-and-tourism-on-ilha-de-mocambique-176415>> Accessed: 1 July 2023.

⁷⁹MozParks: *Club of Mozambique*. 5th November 2020. Women Art and Tourism on Ilha de Mocambique. <<https://clubofmozambique.com/news/women-art-and-tourism-on-ilha-de-mocambique-176415>> Accessed: 1 July 2023.

⁸⁰MozParks: *Club of Mozambique*. 5th November 2020. Women Art and Tourism on Ilha de Mocambique. <<https://clubofmozambique.com/news/women-art-and-tourism-on-ilha-de-mocambique-176415>> Accessed: 1 July 2023.

and other stakeholders for the role they played in regional tourism through annual awards. The rationale was to create awareness of the SADC industrialisation programme with specific focus on women in the region.⁸¹ Topics discussed included how to grow businesses, “boundless Africa” (which is a session on the One Africa Visa idea for tourism) and investment opportunities available in Lesotho. In this summit, the acting chief executive officer of Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC), Mr Tebello Thoola, acknowledged that the LTDC rallies behind the private sector efforts to host tourism summits like the WITSA conference. He indicated that the tourism industry of Lesotho was largely driven by women and maintained that “the event would ensure that it uplifts Basotho women for giving them a platform to promote and transact their business, expose them to available business opportunities that they can utilise.”⁸² He also added that the summit was going to play a big role in achieving the milestone of SDG 5 of gender equality.⁸³ He concluded by mentioning that by bringing together key stakeholders, sharing knowledge and fostering collaboration, the conference aimed to create a roadmap for a more inclusive, diverse, and prosperous tourism sector where women could thrive.⁸⁴

An online digital paper, *The Press Reader, Times of Eswatini* reported the celebration of women in tourism in Eswatini which took place in Woman’s Month (August 2021) following the lead of their neighbouring country, South Africa. They honoured the achievements and contribution of women in their society, particularly women playing an

⁸¹*The Reporter*. 15 August 2023. Summit to Empower Women in Tourism. < <https://www.thereporter.co.ls>. >Accessed: 20 November 2023.

⁸²*The Reporter*. 15 August 2023. Summit to Empower Women in Tourism. < <https://www.thereporter.co.ls>. > Accessed: 20 November 2023.

⁸³*The Reporter*. 15 August 2023. Summit to Empower Women in Tourism. < <https://www.thereporter.co.ls>. >Accessed: 20 November 2023.

⁸⁴*The Reporter*. 15 August 2023. Summit to Empower Women in Tourism. < <https://www.thereporter.co.ls>. >Accessed: 20 November 2023.

important role in the transport industry.⁸⁵ The report indicated that there were many women who move tourists locally and regionally. It was pointed out that they have done well in this sphere, which was largely dominated by men.⁸⁶ It added that with women playing a role in the transportation businesses, it had boosted them. But more than that, it indicated that these women's presence in this transport sphere had brought a calmness to the situation which had encountered friction in the past especially between the tourism transport sector and public transport.⁸⁷

This selection of media reports provides a varied perspective on the state of the female workforce in the southern African region. It can be assumed that women's place and performance in the tourism industry is evident, despite the slow progress to achieve gender equality. Also, the influence that these women-led tourism organisations play in spite of their size, is indisputable. Conversely, the reports uncover that there still remains a gap in terms of women's access to and control over proceeds from the sector⁸⁸ as well as high positions. This inability, or failure, of the industry to transform and include women hints at the necessity for robust policies to ensure women are not left isolated in the service of this industry.

⁸⁵*Press Reader Times of Eswatini*. 22 August 2021. Women in Tourism.

<https://www.pressreader.com/eswatini/times-of-eswatini/20210822/282132114526216>. >Accessed: 20 July 2023.

⁸⁶*Press Reader Times of Eswatini*. 22 August 2021. Women in Tourism. <https://www.pressreader.com>. >Accessed: 12 June 2023.

⁸⁷*Press Reader Times of Eswatini*. 22 August 2021. Women in Tourism. <<https://www.pressreader.com>. >Accessed: 12 June 2023.

⁸⁸*The Herald*. 30 October 2011. Is Zim Tourism Industry Female or Male? <<https://www.herald.co.zw>.

>Accessed: 08 November 2022.

Chapter Five: The Voices of the southern African Female Tourism Workforce.

In recent decades, J. M. Cheer has highlighted the extensive research and commentary on "modern slavery" in industries like textiles, mining, agriculture, domestic services, and the sex trade. However, Cheer argues that the global tourism and heritage sectors, as well as their supply chains, have not received the same level of scrutiny and criticism as these other industries.¹ He argues that although the UNWTO is renowned for its promotion of the tourism industry, it has not explicitly forged these associations. Its emphasis has been primarily on emphasizing the sector's capacity to foster development, without thoroughly assessing its ramifications on the global tourism enterprises and supply chains.² Conversely, Cheer argues that "tourism is inherently labour intensive, and for this reason, provides ideal conditions for potential transgression that leverage human exploitation, especially concerning labour and human rights".³

Over the past few decades, southern African countries have focused on the potential to maximise cultural and heritage assets in order to promote local economic development through tourism.⁴ Researchers have also asserted that tourism should be used for socio-economic developments and empowerment of local people or communities which both explicitly and implicitly places strong emphasis on cultural tourism providing possibilities for inclusive business models.⁵ In this context, more women have been actively playing a major role in building tourism. This has however not been without challenges. Though women constitute a great source of human power for sustainable development, in

¹J. M. Cheer. 2018. "Geographies of Marginalization: Encountering Modern Slavery in Tourism". *Tourism Geographies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1477171>.

²J. M. Cheer. 2018. "Geographies of Marginalization: Encountering Modern Slavery in Tourism". *Tourism Geographies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1477171>.

³J. M. Cheer. 2018. "Geographies of Marginalization: Encountering Modern Slavery in Tourism". *Tourism Geographies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1477171>.

⁴C. M. Rogerson & C.D. Van Der Merwe. 2016. "Heritage Tourism in the global South: Developments Impacts of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site, South Africa", *Local Economy*, 31(1-2), pp. 234-248.

⁵J. Saarinen & C. M. Rogerson, 2015. "Setting Cultural Tourism in Southern Africa", *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 24 (3&4), pp. 14-14.

particular, in tourism, hardly any attention is paid to the possible exploitation of female service providers in the domain.

Cheer pointed out that relating “modern slavery” to tourism might seem excessive and an exaggeration to what are seemingly unrelated concerns.⁶ However, he argues that this is not entirely far-fetched in the context of the extensive attention that has been paid to the magnitude and distribution of economic benefits derived from tourism employment. As was made evident in the literature review in Chapter 2, that research on the HCT tourism labour market has been seriously overlooked and has certainly not featured much on the well-being of HCT labourers in this domain, particularly, in southern Africa. In this Chapter, in order to assess information regarding women’s well-being as the workforce in southern Africa, qualitative research was carried out by means of semi-structured interviews (See Annexure A). The Chapter begins with a brief look of the labour force in southern Africa as well as gender in this domain. Thereafter it sets out to reveal the women’s “voices” with an analysis of the interviewees’ responses.

5.1 Southern Africa Tourism Labour Force

The World Tourism Council indicates that “the tourism industry is one of the industries in the world that has shown a higher proportion of growth in the developing or underdeveloped world areas which constitutes the highest number of poor in the world”.⁷ The industry is considered as one of the sectors that relies very heavily on the human element in the provision of services. ILO makes it clear that 60-70% of all the people who derive their jobs from tourism are women or are involved in allied activities.⁸ As a

⁶J. M. Cheer. 2018. “Geographies of Marginalization: Encountering Modern Slavery in Tourism”. *Tourism Geographies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1477171> (Pending)

⁷World Travel & Tourism Council. 2015. Economic impacts 2015. <<https://www.wttc.org>.>Accessed:16 May 2023.

⁸International Labour Organisation. 2008. Gender. <<https://www.ilo.org>.>Accessed: 16 May 2023.

consequence, it is argued that “tourism has provided a ‘ray of hope’ by empowering women economically, socially and politically”.⁹ This is due to the fact that tourism creates a lot of value chains that increase the opportunities for women to achieve both formal and informal employment.¹⁰ Another important feature that enhances women’s employment is the fact that it requires a relatively low entry. L. Ferguson underscores this and adds that most of the work in tourism development has been done in connection with women empowerment.¹¹ For this reason, tourism is considered to be high on the agenda for solving problems which are mostly faced by women and hence the ILO referred to it as the “vehicle for gender equality and women empowerment.”¹²

In southern Africa, although women perform a fair share of work in the tourism domain, there is hardly any tourism-specific data available regarding their participation regionally. The only reference to women is the very general mention that women are said to make up the majority of those in precarious work, including the informal sector.¹³ As a consequence, little to nothing is usually mentioned of the “harsh” conditions that many who service the HCT industry face in southern Africa.

5.2 Southern Africa Region and Gender

As outlined at the onset of this thesis, southern Africa is the southern-most region of the African continent and comprises ten countries (See appendix A).¹⁴ It is worth noting again,

⁹R. Scheyvens. 2007. “Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus”. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 10(2-3), pp. 231-254.

¹⁰A.M. Hjalager & S. Andersen. 2001. “Tourism Employment: Contingent Work or Professional Career?” *Employee Relations*, 23(2), pp. 115-129.

¹¹L. Ferguson. 2010. “Interrogating ‘Gender’ in Development Policy and Practice: The World Bank, Tourism and Microenterprise in Honduras”. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 12 (1), pp. 3-24.

¹²UN Reports: Tourism a Vehicle for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.

<<http://europe.unwto.org/ne/ws/2011-03-11/tourism-vehicle-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-un-reports>> Accessed: 11 March 2011.

¹³International Labor Organization. 25 – 29 April 2022. The Future of Work in the Tourism Sector: Sustainable and Safe Recovery and Decent Work in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Report for the Technical Meeting on Covid-19 and Sustainable Recovery in the Tourism Sector, Geneva.

¹⁴S. E. Marks. Geography & Travel: Southern Africa. N.d. <[https://www.britannica.com/place/Southern Africa](https://www.britannica.com/place/Southern%20Africa)> Accessed: 05 September 2023.

however, that for the purpose of this research, the study focused on the following seven countries, namely, Botswana; Lesotho; Mozambique; Namibia; South Africa; Swaziland; and Zimbabwe. All seven countries share a common membership of SADC and RETOSA, which prior to its disbandment, was mandated to market and promote the region in terms of forging a concrete destination identity in the tourism market.¹⁵

It has become an established fact that if the world has to grow at a steady and sustainable pace, it is inevitable that women must join the workforce and take opportunities created in this regard.¹⁶ SADC does recognise the important role of women in society, yet there are still challenges the female labour force faces in the region. As shown in Chapter 3, the region's commitment to addressing women empowerment and ensure gender equity dates back to 1997 when SADC Heads of State and governments acknowledged that gender equality is a fundamental right through the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development.¹⁷ They committed to ensuring the equal representation of women and men in the decision-making positions at all levels. Also, they assured full access to women to the control of productive resources as well as and formal employment.¹⁸

Globally, "gender equity" has become the buzz word of development.¹⁹ If one considers the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) adopted in 2015, the one main purpose was a universal call to action to end all poverty and, amongst others stop exploitation.²⁰

¹⁵Southern African Development Community: Towards A Common Future. 31 August 2021. SADC Has Promoted Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Across all Sectors. <[sadc.int/latest news](http://sadc.int/latest-news)> Accessed: 12 May 2023.

¹⁶P. Mohanty, S. K. Swain & S. Besra. "Women at Work: Exploring the Issues and Challenges of Women Employees in Travel and Tourism". *Indian Journal of Economics and Development* 6(1), 2018, pp. 1-5.

¹⁷Southern African Development Community: Towards A Common Future. 31 August 2021. SADC Has Promoted Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Across all Sectors. <[sadc.int/latest news](http://sadc.int/latest-news)> Accessed: 12 May 2023.

¹⁸Southern African Development Community: Towards A Common Future. 31 August 2021. SADC Has Promoted Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Across all Sectors. <[sadc.int/latest news](http://sadc.int/latest-news)> Accessed: 12 May 2023.

¹⁹P. Mohanty, S. K. Swain & S. Besra. "Women at Work: Exploring the Issues and Challenges of Women Employees in Travel and Tourism". *Indian Journal of Economics and Development* 6(1), 2018, pp. 1-5.

²⁰UN Women. SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls. <<https://www.unwomen.org/en/node/36060>> Accessed: 12 October 2023.

Goal 5 specifically called for equality and to empower all women and girls.²¹ These UN SDGs are intrinsic to the region's development strategy. According to SADC "member states have made notable strides towards ensuring equal representation by women and men at various levels, across institutions".²² Yet although progress is being made, women still face significant disadvantages relative to men, globally. Even in the southern African region, there is slight progress but persistent fluctuation.²³ In essence, the status of women's success remains limited despite laudable efforts to promote their status in society as gender inequality is still a major hindrance to development, and women remain disadvantaged.

At a continental level, O. O. Idowu and T. Owoeye state that socio-economic and cultural background has proven to exert (an important) influence on women's life cycle.²⁴ For instance, African women face a chain of barriers to achieving their full potential ranging from environment that may be unfriendly; to female membership of the workforce; vulnerability and weak bargaining power; interruption of labour force participation related to fertility and child rearing; gender norms and restrictive cultural practices; and discriminatory laws.²⁵ As a consequence, the majority of the female labour force still generally faces a lot of inequality and hardship in the southern Africa labour market.

²¹UN Women. SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls. <<https://www.unwomen.org/en/node/36060>. >Accessed: 12 October 2023.

²²Southern African Development Community: Towards A Common Future. 31 August 2021. SADC Has Promoted Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Across all Sectors. <[sadc.int/latest news](http://sadc.int/latest-news). > Accessed: 12 May 2023.

²³Southern African Development Community: Towards A Common Future. 31 August 2021. SADC Has Promoted Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Across all Sectors. <[sadc.int/latest news](http://sadc.int/latest-news)> Accessed: 12 May 2023.

²⁴O. O. Idowu & T. Owoeye. "The Supply of Female Labor Force Participation in Selected African Countries". *Business Social Science Journal* 4(1), 2019, pp. 14-30.

²⁵O. O. Idowu & T. Owoeye. "The Supply of Female Labor Force Participation in Selected African Countries". *Business Social Science Journal* 4(1), 2019, pp. 14-30.

5.3 Voices of Female Service Providers across the southern African region in the HCT

Tourism Watch maintains that “tourism is people’s business”.²⁶ They point out that it is not only true for guests – but includes all the people all over the world, who ensure, that travellers get safely from point A to point B, provide good food and arrange interesting excursions, acquire of proper/convenient accommodations, and have access to handicraft producers selling souvenirs with the aim of ensuring that guests visitation to destinations remain memorable.²⁷ As a consequence, it becomes apparent that this industry is considered as one of the sectors that relies excessively on the human element in the provision of services. Hence, labour force becomes the most important asset for any kind of tourism institution.

As shown earlier, the majority of women occupy a larger share than men as labourers in the sector. Many women have become part of the HCT industry through various roles and contributions, for example, women in southern Africa are service providers in various tourism institutions such as educational institutions and museums. Women also participate in tourism in the entrepreneurial arena through creation of self-employment by running small business enterprises, micro and medium enterprises such as homestays; traditional cuisine and catering businesses; and other tour operation businesses. At the community level, women create jobs through the sale of traditional crafts in the form of woven, embroidered and beaded products, dancers, musicians (artists) and as story tellers. Amid positive work and wealth of experience, this research also uncovered difficulties these female workforces face in the domain. Key role players working in the cultural-tourism-related sphere, both in the formal and informal sector, were consulted in the region through face-to-face and telephonic interviews. Also, purposive and

²⁶Tourism Watch: Brot Frur Dier Welt. N.d. <<https://www.tourism-watch.de/en/topics/human-rights> > Accessed: 10 November 2023.

²⁷Tourism Watch: Brot Frur Dier Welt. N.d. <<https://www.tourism-watch.de/en/topics/human-rights> > Accessed: 10 November 2023.

snowball sampling were employed to identify key and relevant participants. The open-ended questions developed for the interviews correspond with the research main objective, which implies that the research considers if there is any degree of exploitation and to establish to what extent this exploitation is prevalent in the HCT sector based on the interviewees' experiences (See Annexure B). As indicated, the interviewees identities have been kept confidential. Also, while most of the interviews were conducted in English, most were not first languages speakers, others were conducted in the vernacular. In both cases these have been transcribed and translated so as to best capture the essence and the tone of the responses. The section that follows thus reflects on the interviewed female workforce across the southern African region, according to the index rankings.

5.3.1 South Africa

(i) South Africa interviewee A was a former museum guide who presently runs a tour operating company with another two women. They established this SME about a decade ago. Their tour operating business offers heritage walking tours in Orlando West in Soweto, South Africa. This includes giving talks about the events that characterised South Africa's liberation struggle, such as the student uprising on the 16 June 1976,²⁸ and the homes of struggle stalwarts former President Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu in Vilakazi street.

Interviewee A maintains that her experience as a player in the sector for almost two decades has been a "pleasant one". She pointed out that many opportunities have presented themselves to her. One key opportunity she flagged was that she is in a position to give a first-hand account of the events of 1976 in South Africa to the current generation. She has also visited numerous countries abroad such as Germany to experience dark tourism sites. She was invited to the United States of America and

²⁸South Africa Interviewee A Interviewed on the 8th May 2023.

Netherlands to give a lecture about the SA history of 1976 to university students. Education wise, she indicated that she received sponsorship from the institution she was working for in the public sector to advance her education by studying heritage courses, public speaking courses as well as event and project management courses.

Though her experiences have for the most of the time been positive, she argues that her work did not come without challenges. She claims that her biggest challenge/issue has been “exploitation”. She indicated that media outlets, both locally and globally, would interview her only to go and write and make money out of her testimonies regarding for example the historic events of 1976. She indicated that she never in turn received any reward from these media outlets. This happened as result of lack of awareness on her side, of her rights over her content which in essence is her intellectual property. Before she established her own enterprise, her former workplace provided her with decent and productive work for both men and woman. She pointed out however that there were more men than women in her institution and they were the only ones holding the leading positions.

She indicated that she was aware of the many tourism organisation/programmes that target the empowerment of women in the tourism sector in South Africa but did not take part in them. Her reason was that she has never really seen their effectiveness and felt they were “a waste of time”. When it comes to the tourism policy of the country, she was not aware of the policy content and had hardly any knowledge on how it could possibly influence women who are service providers in the industry. She concluded by indicating that her tour operating business is the only source of her income and through it she was able to support even her extended family and this she found empowered her.²⁹

²⁹South Africa Interviewee A Interviewed on the 8th May 2023.

(ii) South Africa interviewee B was a former supervisor and cultural guide at a cultural village in the Northwest Province. She is currently a founder of a Cultural Project in Mahikeng, which among others specialises in hosting cultural events, festivals and conducts tours for tourists in the area. She has been a service provider in the sector since 2009.³⁰ She describes her situation as a service provider in the sector as “empowering”, but also “difficult”. In this journey, with the help of the community, they are able to preserve the identity of the Tswana people. Also, through events such as festivals they organise, SME’s, local artists and story tellers and many others benefit members of the community economically. Education wise, she indicated that she would occasionally receive sponsorship from the local municipality and the Department of Tourism to go on short courses in order to enhance her skills. For instance, she did business management, a first aid course and occupational and health hygiene.³¹

The main drawback she pointed out was the lack of support in the form of funding. This has brought her plans of building establishments for her Cultural Project to a standstill. This is an establishment that intends to work on preserving the Tswana culture in the area as there is a threat to this culture being diminished or lost. She believes that one of the reasons for this is the influx of (illegal) foreigners in the area. She pointed out that key resources that could work as collateral to acquire loans for this Project are under her spouse’s name, and as such, this fact has restricted her from securing start-up capital.³² She also indicated that her former workplace, which was in the Northwest Province, did not provide her with decent and productive work. She indicated that women, for example, who were entertainers were simply paid menial wages. She claimed that it would seem like the owner/employer believed he was doing them a favour for such service providers solely because they were using their natural talents. She argued that

³⁰South Africa Interviewee B Interviewed on the 13th June 2023.

³¹South Africa Interviewee B Interviewed on the 13th June 2023.

³²South Africa Interviewee B Interviewed on the 13th June 2023.

such service providers would usually operate without any written contracts and there were hardly any fair labour practices and social security at all for such individuals. Also, as a cultural tourist guide of her area, she pointed out that sites of great importance are decaying due to the lack of maintenance from those in authority. This she said demoralises and frustrates her daily, particularly because these are the sites that she has no choice but to take her tourists to.

She said she was aware of the policies in place, but alleges they are hardly implemented so she argues they are as good as not being there because they are not fully utilised. She indicated that she is fully invested in her sphere of work as a cultural and heritage practitioner, however due to tourism being seasonal in nature, she found herself being forced to have “a side hassle” in order for her and her family to survive. Covid-19 also became an eye opener for her as this exposed to her just how fragile the industry is as it was brought to a stand-still.³³

(iii) South Africa interviewee C was an ambassador of Pedi heritage through writing (poems) and singing and has been a service provider in the sector since 2018. She runs a small company that sells her own poetry books, and she has written in Pedi and composes her own music. She described her journey as “fulfilling”. With the help of the local municipality, she has been to several workshops that equipped her to successfully run her own SME. Also, she gets invited to exhibitions where she is able to display her books. She also received sponsorship from the local municipality to have her Pedi books published.³⁴

Despite her journey being fulfilling, she faces the following challenges. First and foremost, her books are not widely distributed. She is receiving little support from her colleagues who are mainly male and already successful in the area, but she believes they view her as a “competitor”. Instead of her male counterparts supporting her, they make sexual

³³South Africa Interviewee B Interviewed on the 13th June 2023.

³⁴South Africa Interviewee C Interviewed on the 20th June 2023.

advances towards her. She felt like in order to pave her way up in the industry successfully, as a woman she is obligated to first “sell herself as woman”. As a result of not complying to these men’s advances, her progress towards being recognised as a well-established Pedi author has been restricted. Additionally, as a Pedi singer, her music has not been sufficiently played on local radios. As such, she lacks an audience. Also, as a heritage activist whenever they bring awareness to their community particularly regarding the impact of mines in her areas, they face the fear of being “eliminated” because they are seen as opposers of development. She points out that profits are always prioritised above the well-being of the community.³⁵

She is self-employed, so experiences no work issues as she works from the comfort of her home. She was not aware of the content of the tourism/heritage policies. She had also only recently joined the WIT in Limpopo. As a new member of the organisation, she said she was being “empowered and supported” as far as her endeavours in the tourism sector were concerned.³⁶

(iv) South Africa interviewee D is a vibrant tourist guide and tour operator in Cape Town and the Western Cape for more than 13 years and is also an office bearer for WIT in Western Cape. As a woman of colour, she finds her working conditions harder as she has to continually prove herself in the industry that is mainly dominated by white males.³⁷ She maintains that the industry is still vastly dominated by the latter who also control the decision-making positions in this domain in the Western Cape. Also, as a female manager of a tour operation company, having male employees as tourist guides, she pointed out that she is usually undermined by them. For example, in the middle of their business duties, some male employees would run their own personal business within her own company. In other words, these male employees would start serving clients at their own

³⁵South Africa Interviewee C Interviewed on the 20th June 2023.

³⁶South Africa Interviewee C Interviewed on the 20th June 2023.

³⁷South Africa Interviewee D Interviewed on the 7th August 2023.

personal capacity rather than for the interest of the company they are employed at. In this way, she felt exploited because her workers would be using the resources of her tour operation business and her contacts and clientele for their own personal gain.³⁸

As regards to opportunities, such as the Tourism Indaba shows, she has been able to show case and market her company nationally and internationally. She was also sponsored by Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) to have her company website created. However, she described the labour conditions “as brutal” particularly for tourist guides and tour operators. She indicated that super hard work is imposed on the workforce because they work long hours with little pay. On other occasions, they freelance, which is no guarantee for a secure income. In fact, she pointed out that in the tourism sector, the most prominent concerns range from excessively long working hours, low wages, a lack of social protection and gender-based discrimination. Also, there are unfair labour practices. She also pointed out that they get exploited by international travel agents stating that: “they negotiate them to the bones and because they are desperate to keep the business relationship, they simply agree to the little they are offered”.³⁹ She also indicated that during Covid, when the industry came to a standstill, there was hardly any social security afforded by the sector.⁴⁰ She mentioned the tourism policy is good, but only on paper because implementation is never carried out.

(v) South Africa interviewee E is a former tourism specialist for the Eastern Cape’s government having worked in the sector for over 10 years. She is now a prominent WIT member in the province and a tourism planning consultant. She describes her situation as “challenging” particularly as a new entrepreneur in the sector.⁴¹

³⁸South Africa Interviewee D Interviewed on the 7th August 2023.

³⁹South Africa Interviewee D Interviewed on the 7th August 2023.

⁴⁰South Africa Interviewee D Interviewed on the 7th August 2023.

⁴¹South Africa Interviewee E Interviewed on the 9th August 2023.

As a small player, she is faced with the challenge of securing funds because her business is still at its infancy stage and is thus unable to provide security. She maintains that this is an issue also faced by other women particularly those in the rural area, and more specifically, the illiterate. Another challenge she pointed out was the process for applying for loans which is a cumbersome process with little support from those with knowledge. Due to limited support, awareness and empowerment, some women fail to abide by the sponsors or legislative requirements even when granted funding. Also, they are faced with the challenge of having to compete with the bigger companies and this slows the growth of the SMEs. Another challenge is a lack of technology in the rural areas. For some women who are players in the domain in order to access information which could benefit them for the development of their services/products. Lastly, there are various tailor-made programs for women by the government, but due to lack of awareness, the services are not fully utilized by those who are supposed to benefit from them. She believes that the lack of commitment on the government's part to bring the services closer to the ordinary citizens renders their efforts useless.⁴²

On the positive side, she indicated that there are international platforms such as the UN Women Tourism Project and national platforms that favour the development of women in various forms, such as WIT. For example, this platform provides women with training programs that ensure that tourism businesses are developed to be viable and sustainable. Also, these programs bring about self-development and empower women and in the process boost women's self-esteem.⁴³ During her time as a public servant, she never experienced any unfair labour practices. She was afforded social security and protection, which are regarded as fundamental to the alleviation of poverty. But she argued that now as an upcoming businesswoman, she is forced to continuously work super hard to prove

⁴²South Africa Interviewee E Interviewed on the 9th August 2023.

⁴³South Africa Interviewee E Interviewed on the 9th August 2023.

her brand in order for her business to be sustained and this she finds to be “mentally exhausting”.⁴⁴

With regard to the policies, she maintains that they are good, but argued that they are not fully implemented. Her work in the sector is an add-on because her business is still in the infancy stage, and she has not been able to live off it. As a member of WIT in the Eastern Cape, her profile was elevated, self-esteem boosted, and the platform proved to be advantageous for her business. Women who are members, also gain information which otherwise they would not have access to if they were not members. For instance, they get to know where to access funding and also are granted market access for their products and services.⁴⁵

5.3.2 Botswana

(i) Botswana interviewee A has been a member of WIT in Botswana for the past three years. As a homestay entrepreneur in the sector, she has come across many opportunities though not without challenges. She considers herself as a “shy individual”, but since her involvement in the industry she feels her self-esteem has been boosted. Due to the nature of the service she provides, she also gets the opportunity to interact with people from all walks of life, both nationally and internationally. Most importantly, her business is generating income for her and her family.⁴⁶

However, she notes that the issue of funding is a big problem as the women do not receive enough support from the government. Like many other women across the southern African region, she is also faced with the hinderance of securing a loan due to lack of collateral. She pointed out that this demoralises them as SMEs, as it makes it difficult for them to expand their businesses. She had no issues with labour conditions and decent

⁴⁴South Africa Interviewee E Interviewed on the 9th August 2023.

⁴⁵South Africa Interviewee E Interviewed on the 9th August 2023.

⁴⁶Botswana Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th August 2023.

work as she is self-employed. Her country's tourism policy serves her country well and she indicated that the policy is "straight forward". She added that she has other businesses on the side to complement her tourism business. The programmes WIT offers have been beneficial to many women who are members of the organisation. For example, from time to time, empowerment sessions were provided by the tourism service providers and the organisation helped to enhance their businesses marketability in the domain.⁴⁷

(ii) Botswana Interviewee B formerly owned a lodge and at the present, is a travel agent. She has been in the industry for over a decade. She specialises in creating custom, local-led itineraries for visitors to Gaborone, Botswana.⁴⁸ She pointed out that when she started in the industry, she struggled to find her footing in the domain mainly because the industry was predominantly in the hands of white people. She pointed out that gender was never an issue, but race was an issue.⁴⁹ Amongst the many problems she encountered was the difficulty in securing clients for her business – as a black woman, the services her company provided were overlooked simply because of her race. This resulted in her having to put more effort in order to prove her capabilities in the industry.⁵⁰

She ran an accommodation business on a rented property, but was later forced to close down due conflicts she had with the owner of the land. She could not personally secure a loan in order to purchase her own land to establish her accommodation business because her business idea was undermined. Because of her love for the industry, after failing in running an accommodation business, she resorted to becoming a travel agent.⁵¹ Also, she noted that Botswana is famous for safari tourism, so currently, cultural tourism does not make a lot of money as compared to the former, despite the growing recognition of the

⁴⁷Botswana Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th August 2023.

⁴⁸Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

⁴⁹Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

⁵⁰Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

⁵¹Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

importance of cultural and heritage attractions in the country. Hence, she maintains that this new niche does not yield much economic benefits to the women who are relying on the cultural heritage resources as their products for the industry.⁵²

She specified that the services that her company offers requires her to be friendly to her clients, so clients most of the time want to take advantage of that and walk all over her. She therefore constantly finds herself having to rebuke and set strong boundaries against some undisciplined individuals. This however results in her being called all sorts of names, including being called “a spinster”. She hinted also that scamming is a big issue for her, particularly coming from some “black African brothers and sisters from Nigeria”. On several occasion, she was approached by the specified people to help secure tourist visas for them in order to enter Botswana – but only to learn later that their intention to enter her country were “impure”. So, sometimes, she found herself being forced to withdraw some visa applications in order to avoid her company being red-zoned. Sometimes she would be consulted by the same people of the said country to prepare packages for them as her clients, but they would later refuse to pay for the services or totally disappear into the thin air. Other than being abused and exploited by some of her clients, she commented that as a travel agent, she finds herself struggling with her team which most of the time lack dedication and this results in the values of her company being compromised.⁵³

On the positive side, due to the amount of effort she placed in the industry, she was afforded recognition and was able to be featured in a prestigious magazine and on an international television programme. She has also trained women in some rural areas on how they can commercialise some of their cultural/heritage related activities in order to

⁵²Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

⁵³Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th of January 2024.

generate income for themselves and also on how they should treat the guests whenever they are visited by tourists.⁵⁴

She described labour conditions in her workplace as being fair, she alluded to the fact that staff welfare came first and that when staff is happy – they deliver. When it comes to decent work issues, she indicated that in the past the tourism industry was solely in the hands of white people with little opportunities being afforded to the black people, but labour laws have been strengthened – now things turned around and black people hold managing positions. When it comes to the tourism policy of Botswana, she praised it and indicated that it is well implemented and it is “not lacking”. She pointed out that she has no other work except for being a tourism service provider. She is a member of the Hospitality and Tourism in Botswana and a member of the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA). The latter, she explained plays a crucial role in promoting entrepreneurship and developing small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).⁵⁵

(iii) Botswana interviewee C was a travel agent and was also educating the community about the significance of cultural tourism. She has been doing this work for over a decade.⁵⁶ She hinted that she was not only part of the industry out of passion, but she has also acquired formal education in tourism. She valued the fact that she manages to take care of her household through the income generated through her work. Moreover, she appreciated the industry for enabling her to work with different clients from all walks of life daily. On that account, she noted that she was forever learning. She acknowledged further that it is usually rewarding to see clients satisfied after providing service to them.⁵⁷

On the flip side, she pinpointed that she struggled to obtain a tourist enterprise licence/permit which was to legalise the operation of her travel agency. She indicated

⁵⁴Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th January 2024.

⁵⁵Botswana Interviewee B Interviewed on the 29th of January 2024.

⁵⁶Botswana Interviewee C Interviewed on the 17th of February 2024.

⁵⁷Botswana Interviewee C Interviewed on the 17th February 2024.

that it took her eleven months before she could be granted the permit which ought to have taken only 30 days to process. Conversely, she noted that for non-citizens, such as Indians and Chinese, they receive preferential treatment when going through the same processes of applying for the said permit. She argued that this discourages citizens that would want to partake in the tourism business. She mentioned also that as a travel agent, she has been scammed by dishonest clients who would for some unknown reason decide to go behind her back after providing services for them. She indicated that as a result of such acts, she has felt cheated. Also, due the nature of the industry being seasonal, she said that from the month of December to March, there was usually no bookings for business and as such was forced to live on a strict budget. Another challenging issue she mentioned was that of untrustworthy travel agencies that survive on scamming clients. She bemoaned that this tainted the images of their well-regulated businesses, as a consequence, clients were resorting to doing the travel planning themselves because of the lack of trust from travel agencies and so they were losing business.⁵⁸

Labour conditions were of no concern to her as she was working from the comfort of her own space. She also had no comment concerning decent work issues. As far as the tourism policy is concerned, she indicated that the government had by far, paid more attention to the development of the Okavango delta. As for the other areas, there was a huge neglect. However, she praised the government for the huge support it was granting women. For example, she pointed out that now women can hold management positions in the industry.⁵⁹

This was her main job, however, she indicated that she had a side job. She mentioned that she was a member of one tourism organisation from the time she started in the industry until 2020 when Covid hit. Thereafter her membership expired, but she never

⁵⁸Botswana Interviewee C Interviewed on the 17th February 2024.

⁵⁹Botswana Interviewee C Interviewed on the 17th February 2024.

felt the need to have it renewed. She pointed out she got disappointed when the association could not grant them support during the pandemic, yet they had been paying an annual fee of about 2 800 Pula.⁶⁰

5.3.3 Namibia

(i) Namibian interviewee A is a curator at the National Museum and has worked in the sector for over six years. She explained that the heritage sector in her country is still in the early stages of development, which has presented many opportunities. As a graduate, she quickly found employment after completing her first degree. She has had numerous opportunities to attend workshops, conferences, and done field work, both locally and internationally, which has allowed her to further enhance her skills and knowledge in the sector.⁶¹

On the downside, she mentioned that in the early stages of her career as an archaeologist, men were often preferred over women. She pointed out that she would be questioned about her ability to handle the physically demanding work, especially in the desert areas of Namibia. Another challenge she faced was working on projects that sometimes lack funding, resulting in poor organisation. Again, given the predominantly male nature of her field, she has highlighted instances in which she feels hesitant to address personal discomfort, specifically menstrual pain, while working in the field which is often characterised by harsh conditions such as desolation, hostility, and extreme heat. This hesitance arises from a concern of being misinterpreted and potentially not being understood due to her gender. Additionally, she noted that her discipline is still predominantly foreign in her country, with much of the research coming from Europe.⁶²

⁶⁰Botswana Interviewee C Interviewed on the 17th February 2024.

⁶¹Namibia Interview A Interviewed on the 14th March 2024.

⁶²Namibia Interview A Interviewed on the 14th March 2024.

She highlighted that labour conditions in Namibia are well-defined and regulated by the Labor Act of 2007. Employers in institutions and companies adhere to the Act's regulations, and she has encountered no issues as an employee. Furthermore, she has not experienced any problems related to decent work.⁶³ She mentioned that the Namibia Arts, Culture, and Heritage Policy has been revised to better serve the country, with input from various stakeholders, including employees. Although the policy does not specifically focus on women, it recognizes their significant contributions and emphasizes gender equality. This is her sole occupation, and she does not have a side job. She is a member of Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA), an organization that raises awareness about available projects, conferences, and workshops.⁶⁴

(ii) Namibia interviewee B is a former librarian who now works as a curator at the National Museum of Namibia. She has been in the industry for seven years. She described her work in the industry as normal, but what she appreciated the most is the opportunity to collaborate with local and sometimes foreign institutions of higher education. She also mentioned government-funded opportunities that sponsor exchange programs, which enhance her skills and knowledge in the field. However, she expressed frustration with the infrastructure issues in her country's display centers, which demoralizes her. Additionally, she noted that overtime work is typically unpaid.⁶⁵

Fortunately, her workplace labour conditions comply with the Namibia Labour Act 2007,⁶⁶ so she is satisfied. She clarified that she has not experienced any issues related to decent work. As for the heritage policy, she stated that it is generally practiced well, although she is not fully familiar with its contents. Her job at the museum is her main source of income for her family. She is a member of the Museum Association of Namibia and holds an

⁶³Namibia Interview A Interviewed on the 14th March 2024.

⁶⁴Namibia Interview A Interviewed on the 14th March 2024.

⁶⁵Namibia Interview B Interviewed on the 28th March 2024.

⁶⁶University of Namibia Press: P. Collins. 2012. Labour Law in Namibia.
<<https://www.repository.unam.edu.na/items>. > Accessed: 20 August 2024.

International Council of Museums (ICOM) membership, which provide various advantages for her professional development. For instance, they offer access to conferences, events and sometimes international meetings.⁶⁷

(iii) Namibia Interviewee C is a former teacher who currently holds a senior heritage position in the region. She has been working in the industry for about eight years and is passionate about her job. She believes that raising awareness about the significance of the heritage sector is crucial, especially because it is still in its early stages in her country. She mentioned that finding employment after completing her first degree was relatively easy in this sector. It has provided her with opportunities to advance her career, and she has now reached a higher management position.⁶⁸

However, she also pointed out that the profession in the heritage industry is not well understood because it is still new. She emphasized the need for education and awareness regarding the value of the sector. She used the mining industry as an example of another industry that undermines the heritage sector. As a result, the heritage resources in her region are under threat. She also highlighted the issue of over-tourism, which creates pressure on the heritage sector. She mentioned that at present, economic benefits are prioritized over conservation measures, and this lack of balance puts heritage resources at risk. Personally, she finds it burdensome to keep up with global heritage policies, as the sector is still growing. She mentioned that she often finds herself being needed by multiple sectors simultaneously, such as tourism and mining, which sometimes affects the quality of her work due to exhaustion. Another concern she raised is the government's lack of support for the heritage tourism sector. She noted that insufficient funding and a lack of efficient management and human resources.⁶⁹

⁶⁷Namibia Interview B Interviewed on the 28th March 2024.

⁶⁸Namibia Interviewed on the 19th April 2024.

⁶⁹Namibia Interviewed on the 19th April 2024.

Regarding labour conditions, she stated that there are clear policies in place, and fair employment practices are followed. There are also trade unions that address decent work issues. The Namibian heritage policy was developed in 2008, and amendments have been made since then. This is her main source of income, which helps her support her family. She is a member of the Namibia Heritage Committee and the Culture Committee, and she values these memberships because they bring together people from various backgrounds, allowing for the exchange of skills and knowledge.⁷⁰

5.3.4 Zimbabwe

(i) Zimbabwe interviewee A was an office-bearer in WIT in Zimbabwe and specialises in craft work and has been in the industry for 25 years. She says her journey has not been “without the ups and downs”. The biggest opportunities that came her way, were meeting new people, as this platform enabled networking and, in the process, new ideas were presented to her. Additionally, with the assistance of the Ministry of SMEs, as women in the industry, they were afforded training via workshops which enhanced their knowledge in the space. Such training involved, amongst others, teaching the use of technology, for instance, use of online markets via websites and social media platforms.⁷¹

However, she indicated that as women in small businesses, they struggled to secure loans to expand their businesses. She argued many women are unable to provide collateral because household property is usually under the husband’s name. She pointed out that this makes a lot of women feel “side-lined”. She indicated that many women have also resorted to selling their products from home because renting a space in the urban area is costly. As a result of this, they miss out on a number of tourists from accessing them easily. Also, they find themselves being forced to travel to SA in order to get good quality material for their products and this has proven to be costly mainly due to the tax that is

⁷⁰Namibia Interviewed on the 19th April 2024.

⁷¹Zimbabwe Interviewee A Interviewed on the 21st August 2023.

paid at the border gate. Again, their small businesses suffer because they find themselves competing with bigger enterprises. When the weather is bad, there is no business for them as SME's, because they are usually situated in the open air.⁷²

She pointed out that as women in tourism in Zimbabwe, they were involved when their tourism policy was amended, as such they had an input in the policy implementation. The WIT in Zimbabwe was established in 2014. As a consequence, the organisation has seen more exhibitors each year coming through to have their products/services displayed during the annual trade fair held in Bulawayo.⁷³

(ii) Zimbabwe interviewee B was the manufacturer of leather products and a home stay entrepreneur who is also an office bearer in the WIT in Zimbabwe and has been in the sector for almost a decade.⁷⁴ She described her journey as “challenging”, particularly, as a manufacturer of leather products. As such this work placed her in a male-dominated industry and for most of the time she faced resistance from her male counterparts. Even joining their association, she explained, it “was a mission”. Additionally, those that she has employed, have been exploiting her. She mentioned that they would steal the materials used for making her products. This happened for the longest time in her business until she made a decision to formally acquire education to enhance her natural talents. Now that her male employees can no longer rob her of the material for her products – she still finds cooperation with them hard though. As a homestay owner, as a result of Covid since 2020 to date, she explained that there has been low rate of incoming tourists. As a result, her accommodation business has not been making her profits. Another issue she has experience of is that of poor signage to her accommodation facility. She pointed out that the City Council is not co-operative when being approached to assist with proper signages. But she said with the males in the same business, it is different. Due

⁷²Zimbabwe Interviewee A Interviewed on the 21st August 2023.

⁷³Zimbabwe Interviewee A Interviewed on the 21st August 2023.

⁷⁴Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

to their financial muscles, when they ask for the same service from the City Council, they get assisted quickly. Also, she has been wanting to expand this business, but has been unable to do so, due to lack funds. She argued that accessing loans is made more difficult for women in comparison to men.⁷⁵

Speaking on behalf of the female service providers in Zimbabwe, she indicated that the issue of funding is at the forefront. Potentials of many tourism businesses to perform better has been restricted as a result of this issue. Also, she indicated that in the informal sector, artists, particularly, in the arts and culture, are the most exploited. She indicated that they are usually awarded little money simply because they are seen as using a “mere talent”. As for female service providers who are married, they are not allowed to attend late night events, workshops, meetings and so on, without being called “names by their spouses”. Women owning accommodation businesses struggle even more, when communicating with male clients and some men even call their spouses “prostitutes”. Some males go as far as sexually harassing workers working for their spouse’s tourism businesses. Another issue is lack of markets for the services and products produced by women. She mentioned that many areas are still lagging behind as far as digitization is concerned. So, for many, online marketing is still an impossible task for them.⁷⁶

On the brighter side, she indicated that due to the low level of entry into the tourism industry, many women with natural talents have found a way to enhance their knowledge and benefit from their talents. For instance, beading, crafting and those who specialise in herbal medicines. Again, women with bigger houses with many rooms are able to rent some rooms in order to make money from them. Those with bigger lands are also building gazebos and renting such spaces for activities such as special events, conferences or any

⁷⁵Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

⁷⁶Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

form of celebration. Moreover, those who specialise in cooking traditional food have been able to showcase their talents and make money from such a skill.⁷⁷

She mentioned that there were no decent work issues experienced in the sector. She did claim however that despite many organisations advocating for equality, many still preferred male rather than female workers. Not only this, but men were still mostly found in the decision-making positions rather than females. She indicated that the tourism policy of the country was good, though silent in promoting women to decision-making positions.⁷⁸ As a member of WIT Zimbabwe, she indicated that the organisation had been successfully launched. Each province of Zimbabwe has a chapter of its own. Many women have received this organisation well and are making use of its benefits. She also has other businesses outside this one involving tourism.⁷⁹

(iii) Zimbabwe interviewee C was a creative consultant and also held a position of a cultural attaché for a certain organisation in Zimbabwe. She has been with the organisation for just over a year and has been given this position of a cultural attaché recently. Her key roles in this organisation include amongst others, to research certain cultural protocols throughout the continent; establish cultural networks; and facilitate cultural events and workshops.⁸⁰

She described her positioning in this organisation as “life changing”. As a spoken word artist, she has learnt to leverage her skills set to help custodians of culture to use their cultural resources to be entrepreneurs. She travels a lot, especially to inaccessible villages with deep cultural practices. As a person who only attended private school, she maintained that she was learning a lot. She indicated that issues of funding for the organisation is inevitable, mainly because she believes that many people do not view

⁷⁷Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

⁷⁸Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

⁷⁹Zimbabwe Interviewee B Interviewed on the 19th September 2023.

⁸⁰Zimbabwe Interviewee C Interviewed on the 19th October 2023.

culture as that significant. Another issue regarding what she does, is she must always be prepared to shoulder some push back from people due to misunderstanding of some traditions/cultures. There were no labour conditions issues as she was mostly working remotely. She was unaware about the (cultural) policy of her country. She was also not a member of any organisation.⁸¹

5.3.5 Mozambique

(i) Mozambique interviewee A was an ethnic cuisine caterer and has been a service provider in the sector for about six years. As proud as she is of the work she does, she has experienced “ups and downs” like any other small business owner. By far, her biggest breakthrough was when she was invited to come and cook at an event in South Africa. This opened doors for her business. Locally, she is provided with business opportunities to cater for events such as weddings and birthdays. She pointed out that since the licencing of her business, more meaningful opportunities have come about. For example, government companies and primary schools have sought for her services.⁸²

The local government of her area, from time to time, also provide SME’s owners opportunities to have their products and or services marketed during workshops. Another big event, known as “Feira International de Maputo Exhibition”, also enables their services and products to be in the spotlight to access larger audiences. She indicated that even nearby countries such as South Africa and Eswatini partake in this event. She claimed that it is through this big event that their products and services reach larger audience.⁸³

Her challenge in running this business has been the inability to expand it because of the difficulty of obtaining a loan from the bank. She pointed out that regardless of how successfully one runs the business, the banks would still impose on women some

⁸¹Zimbabwe Interviewee C Interviewed on the 19th October 2023.

⁸²Mozambique Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th October 2023.

⁸³Mozambique Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th October 2023.

“ridiculous demands”. She indicated that “She feels like banks do not believe in women capabilities nor have the best interest of women at heart”.⁸⁴ Due to lack of sufficient funds, she lacks a place for her business as well as enough equipment in order to run her day-to-day business smoothly.

As a woman doing business, she felt like women are obligated to always have a male figure on standby for security reasons. At one event that was hosted in her local community, she had a table and food displayed alongside her other colleagues displaying their handicrafts – some drunk men who were in the vicinity, crushed her table and food, as well as one displaying craft work. When they confronted the men, they used drunkardness as an excuse. As a result of this unfortunate event, they lost on making money as almost everything got spoiled. The men were reported to the police but up to today, the women never received any recompense. In another case, she provided a service to a daughter-in-law of some big political figure in the country, but until today this individual refused point blank to pay her for the service she provided. She indicated that she felt exploited by this other woman.⁸⁵

She described the labour conditions as “perfectly fine” and experience no “decent work” issues. She was not aware of the policy governing her workspace. She described the business as an add-on because as she has been unable to make sufficient profits to live off it. She argued that this kind of work is usually seasonal. She was not a member of any organisation, but intends to join *Chefes de conzinha Mozambique* once she has secured the membership fee.⁸⁶

(ii) Interviewee B was a Mozambican young lady who is a tourist guide and also works for the National Park in her country. She has been in the tourism industry for a period of five

⁸⁴Mozambique Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th October 2023.

⁸⁵Mozambique Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th October 2023.

⁸⁶Mozambique Interviewee A Interviewed on the 18th October 2023.

years. She described her situation in the industry as “challenging”. As a young woman who aspires to have a family one day, she pointed out that people have installed a fear in her that she might not find a partner to settle with because the nature of work she does makes her move a lot from one place to another. She indicated also that being a tourist guide is “not seen as having a real job”, but rather as something one can engage in “for fun”. She pointed out that as a female tourist guide, there are times when she would instinctively just feel unsafe around some clients, particularly female tourists. This was simply because she would not have an idea of who they really are outside of being perceived as tourists.⁸⁷

On the contrary, her job enables her to come across tourists from many different countries and she usually learns a lot from the interactions. Even though people do not perceive being a tourist guide as having a real job, she indicated that she earns enough income as a basic, although it is not sufficient for living. She described her labour conditions as generally safe. However, she explained that they do experience decent work issues not only in the tourism domain, but also at a national level due to the high level of corruption in her country. She noted the majority of workers barely make it with the meagre salaries they earn. This has resulted in a high level of poverty.⁸⁸

She was not aware of the tourism policy of her country, but she was aware that a lot of tourists complain about the authorities, particularly the police who subject them to some heavy and unnecessary penalties based on laws that many tourists are not aware of to begin with. She indicated that this is usually brought to their attention as service providers by visitors, but unfortunately they have little say on the matter. She was not a member

⁸⁷Mozambique Interviewee B Interviewed on the 21st November 2023.

⁸⁸Mozambique Interviewee B Interviewed on the 21st November 2023.

of any organisation. She claimed that this was her main job, but she does however have a side job of selling clothes to supplement her income.⁸⁹

(iii) Mozambican interviewee C was the manager of one of the 5-star hotels in her country. She has been providing service in the tourism sector for almost seven years. She feels fulfilled serving the industry and has plans to do more as she has seen many gaps in this industry in Mozambique. As the manager, she enjoys running workshops to provide internal training for her staff. Also, she has received opportunities to attend tourism fairs such as South Africa's Tourism Indaba which has provided her with networking opportunities.⁹⁰

She described her biggest challenge as having to work closely with “big people” in the Ministry of Tourism with a lack of expertise of the industry. She noted that that more often than not, such individuals impose their decision on their subordinates. She noted that it is even worse when one is a woman because one is hardly given an ear. She pointed out that this is one major challenge in her country that is hindering the growth of the industry. Prior to being the manager, she worked as a receptionist. She indicated that there were times when clients would handle her like she was a prostitute, simply because she would be at work to enable them as guests to check in during late hours. This, they would do by inviting her to their rooms. She explained that this would usually leave her “feeling small”.⁹¹

She indicated that her present labour conditions were totally fine, but added that decent work is lacking, and this might be the reason why the society at large is even failing to see a career in tourism as nothing but “having fun”. She has had an instance in a previous job, in the accommodation business, where she was never paid for her services on time until

⁸⁹Mozambique Interviewee B Interviewed on the 21st November 2023.

⁹⁰Mozambique Interviewee C Interviewed on the 25th November 2023.

⁹¹Mozambique Interviewee C Interviewed on the 25th of November 2023.

she quit the job. When it comes to the tourism policy of Mozambique, she said that they are “well put on paper”, however, she felt that the content of the policy is usually undermined due to the high rate of corruption. She gave an example of the allocation of tenders. As a result of this, she found the policy not to be helpful. She has other side jobs even though this one is the main job that is bringing food to the table. She was not a member of any tourism organisation, but has hopes of establishing WIT in Mozambique soon as she believes it could help empower many women in her country.⁹²

5.3.6 Lesotho

(i) Lesotho interviewee A was an archivist for over a decade and also was a senior heritage project assistant in her community. She described her role as “fine”.⁹³ Challenges she encountered as a young female manager in her institution came from her subordinates, in particular, the male menial labourers. She described them to be difficult and found herself mostly undermined by them simply because she was a young woman. Also, she pointed out there were times, not always though, that she would be forced to provide clients with her personal phone number because their telephone at work would be dysfunctional. This would result in some men misusing this contact or they would make sexual advances towards her.⁹⁴

As a senior heritage project assistant in her community, she pointed out that whenever she would engage in events such as sensitising the community about the importance of safeguarding their heritage sources, as a woman, she would struggle to be accepted by the community that she would be addressing - simply because she was not a male. She argued that this was due to the well-known saying in her country that says “*monna ke hlooho*”, loosely translated “man is the head” and this would usually result in her

⁹²Mozambique Interviewee C Interviewed on the 25th of November 2023.

⁹³Lesotho Interviewee A Interviewed on the 13th July 2023.

⁹⁴Lesotho Interviewee A Interviewed on the 13th July 2023.

becoming demotivated and doubting her capabilities. To overcome this issue, she indicated that whenever she was to hold *Pitsos* (traditional gatherings), she was forced to bring along a male figure in order to be taken seriously by those she was to address. She encountered challenges with other women also when she was doing oral history research. Unfortunately, she also had to be aware of her dress code whenever she was to address her community: One is expected to cover your head, have something on the shoulder and trousers were not allowed. She found this to be an unnecessary burden, as she felt how one is dressed does not impact on the content to be delivered. Also, she indicated that women she would be trying to approach would simply sell themselves short and totally avoid being interviewed, but rather refer her to the so-called “heads of the communities” which without fail would be men. She argued that a lot of women seem to be less confident and mostly have their knowledge unused and hide behind the principle (stereotype) that “*monna ke hlooho*” because they lack self-confidence and assertiveness as a result of this gender stereotyping.⁹⁵

As a service provider in the HCT sector, she never experienced any decent work issues. Her labour conditions were generally acceptable. She explained that the tourism and heritage policies are there, but not fully implemented and also the content of these policies are never readily available for the public at large. She argued that they serve “little purpose” in the sector. Her service in the industry is her bread and butter. She is not part of any organisation nor are there any she is aware of.⁹⁶

(ii) Lesotho interviewee B has been in the Ministry of Tourism in Lesotho for over two decades. She explained that she is in this industry because of the passion she has for the sector, despite her discontentment about how things are run by those in power. She claimed that for most part she is demoralised by the fact that the sector is still lagging

⁹⁵Lesotho Interviewee A Interviewed on the 13th July 2023.

⁹⁶Lesotho Interviewee A Interviewed on the 13th July 2023.

behind. They are faced with issues of budget, and this brings constraints in the development of the sector. She also argues that the government does not understand the benefits of the sector and this lack of interest by those in leadership roles results in the industry being not prioritised. As a female service provider in the industry, she has never seen a female being given a leadership role. Moreover, those in charge often lack the expertise due to a lack of educational background in this field. She indicated that whenever she applies for a higher position, her immediate boss would play delay tactics when he was required to appraise her until she could not apply anymore and this, she explains has happened several times.⁹⁷

When it comes to opportunities, she was able to self-develop due to short courses she was afforded by the Ministry. Also, she travelled to various countries abroad and this exposed her to many things which she otherwise would not have known about. She described labour condition in the public sector as generally fine. She indicated that the country's tourism policy is good, but implementation is poor. She believed policies were not well communicated to the public and thus many people are not aware of the policy's content. This is the only job she does, as a consequence, it is vital for her survival. Presently, she is not a member of any organisation and added WIT is yet to be launched in her country.

(iii) Lesotho interviewee C belonged to a group of women who are weavers in the streets of Maseru. She has been part of the industry for over two decades. She described their life situation as a "difficult one" as they are faced with more challenges than opportunities. She mentioned there is hardly any progress or opportunities for them. Sometimes they go for months without their products being sold. On many occasions, they find themselves being forced to smuggle their finished products out of the country in order to avoid South African Revenue Service (SARS) taxing them. They indicated that

⁹⁷Lesotho Interviewee B Interviewed on the 10th August 2023.

SARS taxes their products regardless of whether they get bought or not, so their hard-earned income gets affected because still, they fail to create a sustainable source of income. Already, they live from hand to mouth, so, it never gets easier for them.⁹⁸ What makes matters worse, is that they find themselves competing with bigger companies in the country that are specialising in selling the same products as theirs (souvenirs) to the tourists. What frustrates them the most, is that they have no idea where the company sources the products because it does not buy from them. The little support they get from the Lesotho government comes in the form of an event whereby they are granted an opportunity to exhibit their work in Botswana and or Swaziland annually (August). This enables them to market their products regionally. However, this year it did not happen as they were told that there were not enough funds to sponsor their travelling to the event.⁹⁹

According to interviewee C, women in the Lesotho creative and craft sector play a huge role and are instrumental in showcasing the beauty of the country and enabling tourists to explore and experience the best that the country has to offer, but they work under the most challenging if not “horrible” environment. Their working conditions do not come with the provisions of stalls, so, if the weather is bad, there is no business. They are not part of any organisation and not aware of the tourism policies of the country. This job is their livelihood, even though it is not yielding them any profits. According to her it is the passion that the women have for the industry that motivates them to keep going despite all the hardships they face daily.¹⁰⁰

5.3.7 Eswatini

(i) Eswatini interviewee A was a craft shop owner and also a traditional dresser for the Swazi people and has been in this business for three years. She indicated that the industry

⁹⁸Lesotho Interviewee C Interviewed on the 12th August 2023.

⁹⁹Lesotho Interviewee C Interviewed on the 12th August 2023.

¹⁰⁰Lesotho Interviewee C Interviewed on the 12th August 2023.

has its “ups and downs”. However, she enjoys her work. Since she started her business, she has had many women and young girls following her. Her business enables her to generate income for her family. Not only this, but she is also providing education and training for primary and high school students. She pointed out that when she started in the industry, there were mainly elderly women, so, the presence of young people like herself in the industry is helping these women to know how to communicate effectively with tourists via emails. Also, she assists them in the use of online markets.¹⁰¹

As a young woman she wishes to expand her business, but there is the issue of securing loans from the banks. Even women who are married, find it hard to obtain loans from the banks without their husband’s consent. She argued that she feels like banks prefer assisting men than women. Due to this, many women have found it hard to progress in the industry. She indicated also that as a young woman, men she considered as clients, have been disrespectful, and some have even harassed her. For instance, because she self-delivers her products to clients, some male clients direct her to awkward and unsafe locations. Also, she has pointed out that more often than not, her contact details have been abused by males. Overall, she feels that the industry is mainly dominated by males and most women are found at the bottom of the ladder.¹⁰²

She described the labour conditions of her workplace as fine and experienced no decent work issues in the HCT industry. She gave credit to the policy makers of her country. As players in the industry, they were consulted during the formulation of the policy. She believed that to this day, the government makes efforts to promote their handiwork. For example, every year their products from around the country are shipped to India for free to be sold. Also, they are usually given training to improve on what they do and afforded certificates afterwards. This was her main work, though she has a side hassle. She was a

¹⁰¹ Eswatini Interviewee A Interviewed on the 11th October 2023

¹⁰² Eswatini Interviewee A Interviewed on the 11th October 2023

member of an organisation known as *Kwakha Indvodza*¹⁰³ which simply means “building a man”. *Kwakha Indvodza* is Eswatini first male mentoring organisation. Its mission is to mentor men and boys as allies for gender equality, social justice and well-being.¹⁰⁴

(ii) Eswatini interview B was a young woman who has been in the industry for almost two years, running a tour operation company in Eswatini. She specialises in inbound and outbound tourism and this business created her various opportunities, such as being able to provide jobs for others in order to earn income. She noted that there were issues as far as she was concerned as more men dominate the industry than women. For instance, out of the ten tour operation agencies in Eswatini, only two are run by women. Other than that, she complained that she hardly had knowledge of how the industry works but was able to develop and enhance her knowledge through formal training in order to “function well” in this endeavour.¹⁰⁵

She faced many challenges such as dealing with difficult tourists. As a female, her clients make it clear to her that they require a male tourist guide and a male driver and not a female. She explained that some of these demands from her clients become unnecessary. As a woman, she feels undermined and devalued. As the “customer is always right”, she finds herself being obligated to meet their needs despite her being capable of carrying out the same tasks that are carried out by a male. She pointed out that this takes her out of her budget especially because her company is still at an infancy stage. In her view, issues of discrimination are still dire in her space of work.¹⁰⁶

She indicated also that making use of the opportunities presented in the industry is most of the time hard especially for females. She said this because a lot of time as a woman, relevant people when approached, ask sexual favours in return. She believes this might

¹⁰³Eswatini Interviewee A Interviewed on the 11th October 2023.

¹⁰⁴Kwakha Indvodza. N.d. <https://kwakwainvodza.com>. Accessed: 04 June 2024.

¹⁰⁵Eswatini Interviewee B Interviewed on the 12th October 2023.

¹⁰⁶Eswatini Interviewee B Interviewed on the 12th October 2023.

be the reason the industry in her country is dominated by males – the lack of security for women. She mentioned that even male clients sometimes make sexual advances to her, particularly the “African brothers”. Most of the time, her contact details get abused. She indicated that sometimes when she leaves the booking in the hands of her subordinates, they mishandle clients and, in the process, she loses on business. Another challenge, is when she takes her clients to the neighbouring countries outside of Eswatini, due to foreign registration in some of these countries, they get harassed by corrupt policemen and find themselves paying bribes from point A to point Z. This cost her company a lot. Difficult to obtain loans as a young female business owner and thus it was difficult to expand one’s business. As such, one is expected to work twice as hard in order to generate more money to finance the company. As a female tour operator, they also face the challenge of being hijacked, particularly in some neighbouring countries where she takes her clients.¹⁰⁷

Labour conditions are fine and she experienced no decent work issues. Government policy frameworks are supportive, except for the financial part. Her service in this industry is an add-on. She pointed out that this is due to the seasonal nature of the industry and the fact that her business is still developing. She is a member of the Hospitality and Tourism of Eswatini which she regards as an effective organisation. Through it, her company was able to be marketed widely and an opportunity to network was also afforded.¹⁰⁸

(iii) Eswatini interviewee C was a cultural promoter and a crafter running an online craft shop. She is also part of the committee that organises and hosts cultural beauty pageants for girls in her country. She teaches these girls about the importance of culture of the

¹⁰⁷Eswatini Interviewee B Interviewed on the 12th October 2023.

¹⁰⁸Eswatini Interviewee B Interviewed on the 12th October 2023.

Eswatini people. As a crafter, she has been doing this craft work from an early age up to now as this skill was passed on to her through her mother.¹⁰⁹

She pointed out that she began creating an income for herself early in life as this work only required her talent without formal education. Other than selling to tourists, she indicated that her country is big on hosting cultural festivals, so, markets for their products is easily accessible. In addition to this, cultural days at schools open businesses for them. Another significant role she plays, is teaching girls from all walks of life on how to do beaded work. She noted that online marketing is enabling her to have access to international clients without a hassle.¹¹⁰

On the contrary, she stated that the craft market in her country is dominated by elderly women and when you are a young woman venturing into this business, you get to be called names, such as being referred to as “backward”. Another issue she referred to was that the Westernised mindset of doing things is overpowering their own traditional way of doing things. On top of that, the craft market business was perceived as an informal business and this has led to many people not taking it as a serious business. The support from the government was hardly present. She mentioned also that raw materials are costly and sometimes they are forced to travel to South Africa to obtain them. As a young, educated woman in the craft market, she finds it to be a futile attempt to sell her products at the prices that are worthy of the effort put into the producing of such items. She argued that this is because the elderly women who are the ones dominating the industry, usually sell cheaper. This is because they do not consider their time, energy and effort invested in the produce they sell, and also, ignore health issues such as loss of eyesight and back pains that accompanies this work. She pointed out that they do not consider what they do as a business that should be creating money to sustain them, but see it as something

¹⁰⁹Eswatini Interviewee C Interviewed on the 10th November 2023.

¹¹⁰Eswatini Interviewee C Interviewed on the 10th November 2023.

they do out of passion. As such, these elderly peoples' products are usually preferred over the young women because of the price differences. So, all in all, their creation of touristic products does not result in "proper" financial gain.¹¹¹

She maintains that because this is an informal business, their labour conditions are never a concern to the authorities. Where there are stalls, they are not properly maintained. There are no decent work issues in her country. As for the tourism policy, it is "well put on paper", but implementation is non-existent. This work is an add on, but she intends to grow her business so that it can be in a position to sustain her after retirement. She is not a member of any tourism/heritage association.¹¹²

5. 4 Interpretation of Interviews

This section reflects on the results of the interviews conducted with interviewees and is structured according to the open-ended questions posed (See Annexure A). As seen from the above, the information collected was presented in a narrative form. Structured interviews with open-ended questions were carried out with the female workforce working in or for the HCT industry southern Africa. The main purpose was to explore whether there was exploitation imposed on or experienced by them and if so, to what extent. The interviews were concerned primarily with their experiences in the HCT sector in their respective countries.

The following table (Table 10) presents an overview of the demographics of the interviewees:

¹¹¹Eswatini Interviewee C Interviewed on the 10th November 2023.

¹¹²Eswatini Interviewee C Interviewed on the 10th November 2023.

Table 10: Participants Demographics

Race	Count
Black Africans	22
Mixed race/Coloured African	1
Age	
25+	1
30 – 4+0	16
50 – 60+	6
Marital status	
Married	13
Single	9
No response	1
Children	
Yes	18
No	5

Most of the HCT female workforce interviewed were black African. Only one interviewed was of mixed race. Most of these participants' age ranged from 25 to 60+ years and most of them had families of their own, with only five without children.

What is your place/role in this HCT institution?

The female workforce interviewed were found to be both from the formal and informal economy in the region. Those belonging to the formal economy included: institutional educators; archivists; tour operators; homestay entrepreneurs and cultural attachés. The informal sector involved the following: tourist guides; heritage activists; musical artists;

crafters; traditional cuisine caterers and story tellers. Table 11 gives a summary of the positions held by the various participants. As seen, the diversity of HCT workforce was apparent, with the majority being found in the informal sector.

How long have you been part of the HCT sector?

A couple of participants had between one to five years of experience, while the majority had roughly 10 years to 20 plus years of work experience in the HCT industry. (See Table 11)

Table 11: Job profiles mostly held by women and their years of experience in heritage and cultural tourism in Southern Africa in the informal and formal sectors.

Formal sector	Years of Work experience
Educators	<5
Archivists	>10
Tour Operators/Travel agents	<2-10+
Homestay entrepreneurs	3
Cultural attaché	<1
Archaeologist	7
Curator	7
Heritage officer	7

Informal sector	Years of Work experience
Tourist guides	>10
Heritage Activists	>5
Musical: Artists	>5
Crafting: Weavers, Embroiders and Beaders	10 – 25+
Traditional Cuisine Caterers	5
Play: Story tellers	<5

What has the situation been like for you as a service provider in the HCT sector?

Any opportunities or limitations?

The majority of the interviewees indicated that they were mainly attached to the industry due to “a passion”. Apart from being able to generate a bit of income from the work they did as service providers, as far as reaping the rewards of serving the industry is concerned, there were mixed reactions. In contrast to what the industry is generally believed to bring for a destination, most of the female service providers pointed out that they were suffering as they felt unsupported or invisible in the workplace. Many issues ranging from poor wages, lack of security, sexual harassment, lack of sufficient support from the rightful authorities and exploitation were made apparent.

How can you describe the labour condition of your workplace?

Those interviewees in the formal sector generally had no issues with the labour conditions. However, as regards those in the informal sector, their case was different. The latter workforce felt that they were mostly left to fend for themselves as most of the time they lacked the support from the government authorities and tourism agencies.

What are the “decent work” issues facing HCT service providers in your country?

In the informal sector, many interviewees experienced issues regarding not having “decent work”. For instance, they lacked security in the industry, as most of the time they worked without contracts. While those in the formal sector hardly mentioned any issues with decent work.

As a service provider in HCT, does the heritage and cultural tourism policy of your country serve you/assist you in any way? If yes, how? If no, where is it lacking?

Overall the female workforce in the formal sector were aware of the existence of the tourism policies in their countries. However, many rendered them ineffective as most indicated that they were only “good on paper”. They pointed out that there was no proper follow-up on the policy objectives, strategies and the roles of key players. Despite this issue, it is worth noting however that both workforce in the formal and informal sector could not indicate whether the policies catered for the female workforce. Henceforth, they could not clearly elaborate if they were lacking or not.

How important is this work to the survival of your family or is it an add on?

For those respondents in the formal sector and the positions they held therein, most of their livelihood depended on it though there were a few who also had side jobs in order to supplement their incomes. For those even in the informal sector, the majority of the female workforce pointed out that what they did for the industry was what solely brought bread to their tables.

Are you a member of any HCT organisations/programmes, if yes, how effective are they?

Some female workers mentioned that they were part of a tourism organisation and experienced some benefits, such as increased visibility in the market. However, there were also female workers who saw women-led forums like these as a total waste of time. They believed that these forums did not bring any concrete changes to their lives. This lack of progress silences voices and demotivates participants since no solutions are being offered.

General synopsis

As shown, the respondents sampled were classified into two categories based on the nature of the work they were engaged in, which is: the formal and informal economy. Key to the study was to investigate if there was exploitation of the female workforce and if so, what this was. The research presented a window into the prevailing realities of the female workforce in a sample of the HCT industry in southern Africa. As powerful as the HCT industry has been shown to contribute to women's employment, much of the results indicate the harsh realities of those that service the HCT industry in southern Africa have to deal with on a daily basis. Though there were some positive impacts, the majority of the female workforces in the tourism industry grappled with what could be perceived of as contradictions in the sector: it is celebrated as a contributor to development, yet also provides ideal conditions for potential transgression that leverage human exploitation.

The female workforces engaged in informal employment, in particular craft production, based in the deep rural areas are mostly exploited. For example, owners of well-established craft shops literally "take" these products for very little payment from these poor women from the rural areas. They go on to rebrand the finished products and typically resell them at a much higher price in the city centres, like airports and malls. As

for the original producers, the direct economic impacts are hardly achieved in monetary terms, and these are the poor women who suffer from severe backpain and even have their eyesight negatively affected during the production of these heritage/cultural products. Despite many women playing a vital role in the production of these cultural items, most, if not the majority, are not adequately empowered to participate and profit in the tourism domain. These service providers lacked a sense of understanding that they are participating in a project with long term benefits. Despite tourism being expected to change their financial gain, if not the entire overall of their being, most of these women have the quality of their life barely changing for the better.

Many employers in institutions such as cultural villages treat their female workers (artists, story tellers) as if they are doing them favours, simply, because such individuals rely exclusively on their talents, rather than on a skill acquired from formal education. They believe they are not taken seriously, but rather are made to overwork with little pay and sometimes no pay at all. This was also the case with some tourist guides who sometimes, freelance. These service providers can barely gain from such initiatives.

Based on the scenario provided, it is evident that female service providers in craft production and cultural villages are facing significant challenges. These challenges include not only heavy workloads, but also inadequate compensation for their efforts, leading to economic exploitation.

Also, the research shows that sometimes tour operators are negotiated “to the bones” by some overseas travel agencies. Due to the desperation to maintain business relationships, some tour operators find themselves having to agree to terms and conditions of these overseas travel agencies and in the process run at a loss in terms of profits. As was seen with the craft producers, this kind of bullying also extends to the tour operators. As a result, larger and more established companies place significant pressure

on small businesses in the region, such as tour operators and craftswomen, to enter into long-term contracts in order to control transaction arrangements. It is therefore evident that there are certain industries and segments within the system that hold more power to exert control than others.¹¹³

Additionally, some tour agents face challenges emanating from customers' behaviour when they serve them. They pointed out that sometimes they deal with untrustworthy clients who try to steal from them. In some instances, some tour operators who have recently entered the industry feel pressured to give bribes to higher-ranking officials in the tourism ministry in order to improve their chances of getting better job opportunities. This aligns with what A. S. Vucetic indicates and that is a noticeable presence of oppressive supervision in tourism workplaces.¹¹⁴

The above cases present an impression of an asymmetrical relationships between female service employees; clients; managers; owners of big businesses in the HCT industry. Many female service providers are forced to accept any terms for job opportunities. It is in this instance that it could be observed that the labour market also operates according to productivity-oriented regulations, rather than legal rights. A. Nilsen claims that "exploitation begins with the terms on which workers sell their labour power to capital" indicating that Karl Marx wrote about this almost a century and a half ago and argues that this has not changed.¹¹⁵ According to Marx and more recent interpreters of his theories, "exploitation is not so much an individual condition as a collective and systemic status".¹¹⁶

¹¹³S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism". *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 9, 1991, pp. 451-478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

¹¹⁴A. S. Vucetic. "Influence of Specialised Hotels on Employees' Perception of Abuse in the Selective Tourism Destination". *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 2(30), 2018, pp. 740-756.

¹¹⁵Open Democracy: A. Nilsen. 23 November 2020. Marx on Exploitation: An ABC for an unequal world. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/marx-exploitation-abc-unequal-world/> > Accessed: 19 August 2024.

¹¹⁶Open Democracy: U. Baxi. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation under the Palermo Protocol. <https://www.opendemocracy.net>. > Accessed: 18 August 2024.

These are “situations of dominance/subservience which relate to status asymmetries which routinely result in coercion and exploitation”. He terms it “dominance and authority exploitation”.¹¹⁷

As for traditional cuisine caterers, most feel they are under acknowledged and are not protected, even though they represent a significant component of the tourist infrastructure which contributes to the tourist products.

Some respondents reported incidence of sexual harassment at the workplace. They shared instances where certain male clients crossed professional boundaries during their interactions, which compromised the working relationship and violated professional decorum. It is important to note, however, that the majority of those who experienced such incidents were subjected to sexual harassment, mostly in the form of verbal flirtation or offensive remarks. Only one tour operator, who was also acting as a guide, reported experiencing physical harassment. This person claimed to have been touched and groped by a client during a tour. Another respondent mentioned that she is facing a situation where her poetry books are being denied placement in schools due to a person in a position of authority demanding a sexual relationship. None of the respondents in this study reported instances of blatant sexual harassment. They explained that they did not perceive these incidents as being significant. Instead, their primary reaction to unwelcome sexual advances was to resist and maintain a distance from the perpetrator. These findings provide evidence to suggest that employees within the tourism industry may possess a higher degree of insensitivity and resilience towards instances of sexual harassment.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, A. Gouws notes that women also would not want their families to know about sexual incidences because families also blame victims. So, the

¹¹⁷Open Democracy: U. Baxi. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation under the Palermo Protocol. <<https://www.opendemocracy.net>. > Accessed: 18 August 2024.

¹¹⁸P. A. Giuffre & C. L. Williams. “Boundary Lines: Labelling Sexual Harassment in Restaurants”. *Gender and Society* 8(3), 1994, pp. 378 - 401.

majority of the victims would wilfully choose to forget or deny what had happened because of the “blowback”.¹¹⁹ She argues that women are therefore silenced by a “culture of respectability”.¹²⁰

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides a clear definition of sexual exploitation. According to the UNHCR, sexual exploitation refers to any actual or attempted abuse of power, vulnerability, or trust for sexual purposes. This can involve various forms of exploitation, such as gaining monetary, social, or political advantages from the sexual exploitation of another person.¹²¹ It also includes situations where sex is coerced or demanded through the withholding of goods or services or through blackmail.¹²² It is worth noting that the study respondents reported instances of sexual harassment. In one case, a service was withheld from a respondent due to non-compliance.

As for the accommodation sector, some interviewees who owned and ran accommodation businesses were shown to have been harassed by their own spouses. Some were not receiving any support from their spouses. Instead, they were referred to as “prostitutes” on the basis of being subjected to dealing with different clients in the course of their businesses at all times of the day and night. This issue was also encountered by female front office staff, who frequently appear to be highly groomed for the nature of their job when interacting with clients. They too faced disrespect and

¹¹⁹A. Gouws, 2019. ‘#MeToo Isn’t Big in Africa: But Women Have Launched their Own Versions’ *The Conversation*, 7 March <<https://www.theconversation.com>> Accessed: 30 November 2019.

¹²⁰A. Gouws, 2019. ‘#MeToo Isn’t Big in Africa: But Women Have Launched their Own Versions’ *The Conversation*, 7 March <<https://www.theconversation.com>> Accessed: 30 November 2019.

¹²¹UNHCR: the UN Refugee Agency. N.d., “Defining Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment”. <<https://www.unhcr.org>. > Accessed: 23 July 2024.

¹²²UNHCR: the UN Refugee Agency. N.d., “Defining Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment”. <<https://www.unhcr.org>. > Accessed: 23 July 2024.

harassment from the clients, who in the course of business would assume that front office staff are prostitutes and invite them to their rooms.

Racism is another issue that black women have long been aware of, particularly where the tourism industry is still predominantly controlled by white individuals. As observed earlier, two female participants highlighted how they needed to put in an extra effort when they started in the industry to prove themselves in comparison to their white colleagues in the industry. This research revealed that black and “coloured” women from minority or disadvantaged backgrounds are subjected to higher standards of competence compared to their white peers and often do not receive due recognition for their skills.

B. G. Gumbo’s research also corroborates that there is a limited representation of black individuals who own assets in this sector in Botswana because the majority of local investors in the tourism industry are white individuals who have obtained citizenship in the area.¹²³ He argues that the few black people who do participate in the tourism field mostly focus on less valuable peripheral areas, as opposed to prime locations.¹²⁴ Paradoxically, one of the government's official goals in investing in the tourism industry is to alleviate poverty by promoting various services associated with the sector and empowering citizens. Unfortunately, this issue persists and continues to negatively impact black and “coloured” women, despite some progress being made.

With regard to SME’s, many interviewees pointed out that access to development funds and or loans was almost impossible for small, medium and micro-enterprises and they ascribed this to them being female. Consequently, many have pointed out that they are struggling to expand their businesses. As a result, their businesses are often small in scale

¹²³B. G. Gumbo. “The Negative Impact of Tourism in Africa: The Case of Botswana”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* II (sec 2), 2022, pp. 1750 – 1764.

¹²⁴B. G. Gumbo. “The Negative Impact of Tourism in Africa: The Case of Botswana”. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* II (sec 2), 2022, pp. 1750 – 1764.

or, in some cases, do not survive. The majority of the female respondents also reported that their households rely on the income earned from their tourism activities. However, many service providers in the domain were found to be relying more on additional sources to generate more income in order to effectively support their families.

Overall, many jobs within the HCT sector do not provide adequate economic stability, presenting difficulties in achieving a balance between domestic and productive work responsibilities. The majority of women working in this industry have shown their inability to sustain their livelihoods solely through these HCT related jobs. Consequently, they often seek additional sources of income as they cannot depend solely on tourism-related employment to fully support themselves. According to G. Moscardo, sectors of the tourism industry that are predominantly female driven, such as peripheral tourism, have experienced limited growth due to various factors. These include women's insufficient market analysis skills and understanding of potential customers, as well as a failure to grasp the nuances of product offering.¹²⁵

While female service providers in the formal sector experienced better working and monetary conditions, these groups exhibited that it was harder climbing corporate or other ladders in the domain, as more often than not it would seem like a “deliberate restriction and or a ceiling for career progress” is imposed on women wishing to rank up. It was highlighted further that even those who held high-ranking positions, as women, they would likely be faced with the challenge of not being taken seriously in the boardroom. Sadly, this leaves the majority of women isolated in leadership positions. In some instance, some men have deliberately hindered and discouraged women from progressing in their careers. Once more, employees working in industries primarily dominated by men have highlighted their discomfort in discussing their health issues with

¹²⁵G. Moscardo. “Peripheral Tourism Development: Challenges, Issues and success Factors”. *Tourism Recreation Research* 30 (1), 2005, pp. 27 -43.

male colleagues. They worry that their problems may be perceived as overblown, which hinders women from expressing themselves and forces them to endure their hardships silently.

Concerning legal frameworks and or policies in the industry, it was overwhelmingly shown that they are only “good on paper,” but in reality generally, the industry’s practices do contravene the policies, and this impacts the sustainable development of its workforces. Genç stipulates that policies need to be implemented with respect to increasing the prosperity of women in the social realm.¹²⁶ He argued that merely increasing the job opportunities while paying significantly less than men for the same job would not increase the welfare of women, if not decrease it by degrading their power compared to men.¹²⁷

Some respondents in the formal sector, particularly accommodation and tour operation, also struggled with the negative perception of the industry from the society. They pointed out that this was mainly attributed to anti-social working hours that comes with the job, also the moving from one place to the next and meeting different clients, both male and female, was an issue for many. In countries that are members of the SADC, certain types of occupations are perceived to be unfitting for a woman, so, cultural biases and general negative societal perception of tourism work constrains women’s opportunities to flourish in the domain. As a result of this, negative attitudes towards women serving the HCT sector, many have been seen to have been restricted in advancing in the domain. S. and L.T. Nyaruwata argue that as a common gender stereotype in many African societies, women in SADC countries are expected to direct their energy and attention to childcare, and domestic home-making rather than career growth, to fit within cultural

¹²⁶R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

¹²⁷R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesilktisadiveldariBilimBlerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp. 20-35.

expectations.¹²⁸ Unfortunately, this leads to socio-cultural exploitation, which involves the social conditioning of women. This conditioning encourages them to adopt patriarchal ideas and values that diminish their worth, reinforce their perceived inferiority to men, and make them vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation.¹²⁹

Extensive research has firmly established that African society, with its patriarchal structure, is a fertile ground for various forms of exploitation of women.¹³⁰ As observed above, these primary manifestations include economic; gendered and sexual exploitation; and socio-cultural exploitation. Furthermore, these distinct forms of exploitation are intricately linked, perpetuated by widespread gender inequality, and persistently endured by countless African women.¹³¹ Consequently, a significant number of African women find themselves subjected to the constraints of subordination, dehumanisation, and marginalization both in their homes and in the workplace.¹³²

On the other hand, J. Urry maintains that the challenge for labour in the tourism industry arises from the fact that many tourism products revolve around the creation and enjoyment of social experiences. He argues that these experiences cannot be solely reduced to tangible elements.¹³³ Therefore, the behaviour and attributes of female service providers such as artists, tourist guides, waitresses, room service personnel, or stewards are just as important as the physical labour they provide. Another example can be found in HCT institutions, such as cultural villages, which impose specific appearance

¹²⁸S. Nyaruwata & L. T. Nyaruwata. "Gender and Executive Management in Tourism in tourism: Challenges in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region". *African Journal of Business Management* 7(21), 2013, pp. 2059 – 2070.

¹²⁹M. F. Nutsukpo. "The exploitation of African Women: A Feminist Approach of Darko's Beyond the Horizon". *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 10(2), 2018, pp. 136 -142.

¹³⁰M. F. Nutsukpo. "The exploitation of African Women: A Feminist Approach of Darko's Beyond the Horizon". *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 10(2), 2018, pp. 136 -142.

¹³¹M. F. Nutsukpo. "The exploitation of African Women: A Feminist Approach of Darko's Beyond the Horizon". *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 10(2), 2018, pp. 136 -142.

¹³²M. F. Nutsukpo. "The exploitation of African Women: A Feminist Approach of Darko's Beyond the Horizon". *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 10(2), 2018, pp. 136 -142.

¹³³J. Urry. "The 'Consumption' of Tourism". *Sociology* 24(1), 1990, pp. 23 -35.

criteria on their employees to maintain a particular institutional image. This expectation also applies to specific front desk female service providers in accommodation establishments, who must adhere to certain body shape standards.¹³⁴

S. Britton notes that this highlights the idea that even seemingly ordinary aspects of the tourism industry can compel female service providers to assume a dual role: participating in the tourist experience while simultaneously conforming to social norms influenced by factors such as class, gender, and market-driven dynamics that shape the overall product.¹³⁵ He emphasises that this poses a problem for capital. He argues that management expects employees to have the personal qualities necessary to deliver the desired level of service.¹³⁶ Unfortunately, these sought-after qualities are often not recognised or valued through formal credentials, resulting in the under-pricing of these skills in the market. Feminists consider this as an exploitation and term this “an exploitation of affective labour”.¹³⁷ Female workers, including front desk officers, artists in cultural villages, and occasionally tourist guides, are expected to utilise their emotional and social abilities to accomplish their professional goals.¹³⁸ It has been observed however, in this study that female service providers do not necessarily see an increase in their wages. Although looks and behaviour are essential in shaping the customer experience in service work, where women often provide additional value without compensation, these practices are typically overlooked due to their normalisation. Yet it is these additional practices that encourage clients to return, increasing the organisation's

¹³⁴J. Urry. “The ‘Consumption’ of Tourism”. *Sociology* 24(1), 1990, pp. 23 -35.

¹³⁵S. Britton. “Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a Critical Geography of Tourism”. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 9, 1991, pp. 451 - 478.

¹³⁶S. Britton. “Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a Critical Geography of Tourism”. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 9, 1991, pp. 451 - 478.

¹³⁷M. Hardt & T. Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2000.

¹³⁸J. Oksala holds that this expectation often results in the blurring of personal boundaries, as well as the integration of informal and formal skills resources - J. Oksala. 2016. “Affective Labour and Feminist Politics”. <https://www.researchgate.net/application/285639701>. >Accessed: 17 August 2024.

turnover. By disregarding these supplementary practices, primarily stemming from naturalisation, it leads to the exploitation of women through affective labour.

As was made apparent in this study, the majority of the female workforce indicated that they are in the industry due to a “passion”. Although this female workforce has embraced the notion that insecurity is an integral aspect of their job, it is crucial to acknowledge that this cannot be conducive to their mental well-being. Ultimately, it results in an unhappy and insecure staff. The HCT sector remains largely unstable and heavily depends on short-term, part-time, and economically vulnerable contract workers to carry out most of its tasks. The structure of the tourism industry often creates job insecurity. As a result, individuals find it challenging to make long-term plans for their current employment or workplace. Nevertheless, service providers in the industry seem to be accustomed to this uncertainty and have learned to adjust. Consequently, women from diverse backgrounds who constitute a significant portion of the workforce in the region's primary industry, tourism, often experience a sense of fatalism due to the limited alternative options available to them. Job security holds utmost importance for employees as it provides stability in both their personal and professional lives. Thus, it can be confidently asserted that this situation has detrimental psychological effects on those working in the sector, despite the sector's limited consideration for their long-term well-being.

Based on the aforementioned scenarios, and as reported by the respondents, it is evident that female workers in the southern African region experience exploitation in their daily professional endeavours. However, this exploitation extends beyond labour and includes cases of dominance and subservience resulting from status imbalances. This leads to coercion and further exploitation.¹³⁹ The most prominent form of exploitation experienced by the female workforce in the HCT is the capitalist exploitation and

¹³⁹Open Democracy Free Thinking for the World. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation Under the Palermo Protocol. <<https://www.opendemocracy.net>. >Accessed: 11 July 2024.

domination and authority exploitation. Capitalist exploitation is the practice of capitalists forcibly appropriating the surplus value created by workers.¹⁴⁰ Conversely, domination and authority exploitation entails individuals in positions of power utilising their authority, often through coercion, to gain advantages for themselves at the detriment of others.¹⁴¹ Furthermore, another form of exploitation identified by feminists and emphasized here is the exploitation of affective labour. Affective labour, which is a major aspect of immaterial labour,¹⁴² is mostly performed by women¹⁴³ is addressed. Many other commonly identified forms of exploitation included denial of apical positions; overworked; economic exploitation; sexual exploitation; socio-cultural exploitation; undervalued; gendered exploitation; and psychological exploitation. Unfortunately, instances of such exploitative practices are observed on a daily basis, as substantiated by the cases of the participants in this study. At the core of these forms is the relationship between the exploiters and the female service providers in the HCT industry in the region, who in essence have their fundamental human rights denied in the process.¹⁴⁴

These exploitative aspects align with what E. Di Minico holds. He argues that that despite culture or the class women come from, women are often perceived as the “other” gender and thus women are always marginalised.¹⁴⁵ Di Minico argues that they remain subjects of oppression, despite the demand for equality wave-after-wave in the feminist movements.¹⁴⁶ She argues further that “in a dystopian society, they are doubly oppressed

¹⁴⁰Open Democracy Free Thinking for the World. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation Under the Palermo Protocol. <<https://www.opendemocracy.net>. >Accessed: 11 July 2024.

¹⁴¹Open Democracy Free Thinking for the World. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation Under the Palermo Protocol. <<https://www.opendemocracy.net>. >Accessed: 11 July 2024.

¹⁴²M. Hardt & T Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

¹⁴³J. Oksala. 2016. “Affective Labour and Feminist Politics”.

<<https://www.researchgate.net/application/285639701>. > Accessed: 17 August 2024.

¹⁴⁴Open Democracy Free Thinking for the World. 18 December 2020. Breaking Down Exploitation Under the Palermo Protocol. <<https://www.opendemocracy.net>. >Accessed: 11 July 2024.

¹⁴⁵E. Di Minico, “Ex-Machina and Feminine Body through Human and Posthuman Dystopia”. *Ekphrasis. Images, Cinema, Theory, Media* 17(1), 2017, pp. 67-84.

¹⁴⁶E. Di Minico, “Ex-Machina and Feminine Body through Human and Posthuman Dystopia”. *Ekphrasis. Images, Cinema, Theory, Media* 17(1), 2017, pp. 67-84.

- women can suffer two times: first, because of political/authoritarian power, secondly through a male/sexist oppression.”¹⁴⁷

Table 12 below summarizes contemporary issues experience by the female workforce in both the formal and informal economy of the HCT domain in southern Africa as discussed above. The concerning issues that this research has revealed impact on women’s ability to meaningfully engage in their daily activities and develop careers in HCT. This appears to be a huge problem in the global South for the HCT industry, if not globally.

Table 12: Issues experienced by Women in HCT

Female Workforce in the Formal Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hinderance on professional/career advancement ○ Workplace inequality ○ Discrimination ○ Race ○ Gender segregation ○ Social inequality ○ Negative perception of the industry ○ Lack of data ○ Lack of funding ○ Harassment ○ Non-compliance of tourism legal frameworks

¹⁴⁷E. Di Minico, “Ex-Machina and Feminine Body through Human and Posthuman Dystopia”. *Ekphrasis. Images, Cinema, Theory, Media* 17(1), 2017, pp. 67-84.

Female Workforce in the Informal Sector

- Seasonality of tourism
- Informal employment
- Job uncertainty
- Low paid and Precarious work
- Insecurity
- Poor infrastructure
- Negative perception of the industry
- Lack of data
- Lack of funding
- Invisibility
- Harassment
- Unreliable HCT organisation/programme

Table 13 below presents a summative analysis of the data using the following as criteria: employment, position, specialization, finance, education and training, policies and regulations, membership and work conditions. It is worth stating that these are a few of the commonly held and extensively documented perceptions regarding the tourism and hospitality sector and its workforce. However, the identification of a viable solution to address these perceptions appears to be a challenging task, as clear "solutions" are currently lacking.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸R. D. Iverson & Deery, M. "Turnover Culture in the Hospitality Industry". *Human resource Management Journal* 7(4), 1987, pp. 71 -82.

Table 13: Summary of Data Analysis

SA=South Africa; B=Botswana; N=Nambia; Z=Zimbabwe; M=Mozambique, L=Lesotho;
 E=Eswatini

Notes: Y – Yes

Criteria	SA					Bots			N			Z			M			L			E		
	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Employment																							
Government									Y	Y	Y					Y		Y	Y				Y
Private														Y			Y						
Self employed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y		Y						Y		Y
Informal Employment																				Y			
Position																							
Top Management																							
Management											Y						Y			Y			Y
Administrative				Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y					Y				
Clerical												Y				Y							
Menial	Y	Y	Y		Y										Y					Y	Y	Y	
Specialization																							
Entrepreneur				Y	Y		Y	Y				Y	Y										
Crafter												Y	Y				Y			Y	Y		
Tourist guide	Y	Y		Y												Y						Y	
Creative artist														Y									
Heritage activist			Y						Y	Y	Y												Y
Hospitality						Y											Y						
Caterer															Y								
Educator																		Y	Y				

Criteria	SA					B			N			Z			M			L			E		
Interviewees	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Finance																							
Self-funded	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y				Y	Y		Y					Y	Y	Y	Y
Bank loan				Y																			
No loan																							
Education & Training																							
Self-taught			Y									Y	Y	Y	Y					Y	Y		
Diploma		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y
Short course	Y																						
Policies & regulation																							
Aware		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y
Unaware	Y		Y											Y	Y					Y			
Effective						Y	Y		Y	Y	Y										Y		
Ineffective								Y							Y	Y						Y	Y
Membership																							
WIT		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y						Y	Y										
Local organization							Y		Y	Y	Y							Y			Y		
Not a member	Y							Y						Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y
Work conditions																							
Positive	Y								Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y		
Negative		Y					Y	Y												Y			Y
Gender discrimination			Y						Y				Y		Y			Y				Y	
Sexual harassment			Y																			Y	

5.5 Conclusion

The positions and status of the women working in the HCT sphere in southern Africa has been examined in order to provide a snapshot of the current situation. It is clear that more and more women have become part of the HCT industry through various affiliations and contributions. As a consequence, there is no denying that these jobs created in the HCT sector are of particular importance for women, who make up a large share if not the largest of workers in the sector. Nonetheless, despite these significant roles this female workforce plays in the sector, this research raises issues that still exist for this vulnerable group even in the 21st century.

Almost all the service providers interviewed, reveal the presence of obvious obstacles being experienced by female employees in the HCT sector regionally. When respondents were asked to comment on the status of their well-being in the industry and what they have experienced, many women have pointed to “the struggle to fully actualise self”,¹⁴⁹ despite tourism being seen “as a vehicle for empowerment.”¹⁵⁰ Many acknowledged that their contributions and dedication in serving this industry often goes unnoticed. They argued that if “one does not possess deep love for the industry, then one is likely to feel depressed or withdrawn”¹⁵¹ due to the challenges they experience as tourism service providers.

It is of concern that the same factors hold women back today as in the past. Studies have attended to the local community and on how they should benefit in HCT, but there is no explicit consideration of the tourism workforce,¹⁵² especially as far as women are concerned. Yet it is a well-known fact that women struggle in almost all spheres of

¹⁴⁹Interviews conducted in 2023 and 2024.

¹⁵⁰UN Reports: Tourism a Vehicle for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.

<<http://europe.unwto.org/ne/ws/2011-03-11/tourism-vehicle-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-un-reports>.> Accessed: 11March 2011.

¹⁵¹Interviews conducted in 2023 and 2024.

¹⁵²T. Baum. “Sustainable Human Resource Management as a Driver in Tourism Policy and Planning: A Serious Sin of Omission?” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 26(6), 2018, pp. 873-889.

development. This lack of oversight from industry stakeholders in the southern African region leaves the female tourism labour force vulnerable. With these issues still persisting, it is evident that key decisions shaping tourism investments barely consider the female workforce as they still seem to fail to thrive in the industry. ILO affirms that as far as female labourers in the field are concerned, decent job creation and economic development are hardly fully realised¹⁵³ and this has led to their overall well-being not being attended to.

UNWTO recognises that the tourism industry is largely labour intensive and provides jobs for many people,¹⁵⁴ and argues that tourism activities are highly dependent on the availability and quality of labour, which is a key factor in providing services and enhancing quality.¹⁵⁵ For example, the role of the majority of female workers in the HCT industry is unique as they not only provide labour services but also contribute to the overall product being consumed. This is apparent in the emphasis placed on service quality and staff attitude. But despite this fact, the dominant workforce in the industry seems neglected if not ignored. Progressive sectors are increasingly recognising the need to take the well-being of their workers seriously but by far, the majority of the female labour force in the HCT domain still faces a lot of inequality and hardship in the southern Africa labour market.¹⁵⁶ This implies that the HCT industry is hardly appreciating its most important resources which is the human resource – their people.

¹⁵³International Labour Organization. 25 – 29 April 2022. The Future of Work in the Tourism Sector: Sustainable and Safe Recovery and Decent Work in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Report for the Technical Meeting on Covid-19 and Sustainable Recovery in the Tourism Sector, Geneva.

¹⁵⁴UN Tourism. 14 October 2014. Measuring Employment in the Tourism Industries – Guide with Best Practices. > <https://www.unwto.org/archive/global/publication>. > Accessed: 02 July 2023.

¹⁵⁵White Paper. May 1996. The Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa. Government of South Africa: Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. > <https://www.tourism.gov.za>. > Accessed: 10 January 2024.

¹⁵⁶International Labour Organization. 25 – 29 April 2022. The Future of Work in the Tourism Sector: Sustainable and Safe Recovery and Decent Work in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Report for the Technical Meeting on Covid-19 and Sustainable Recovery in the Tourism Sector, Geneva.

In various studies done that have been carried out on the African continent, the role of women in tourism shows that the involvement of women in the industry has gained momentum after independence. However, it is indicated that the majority of women occupy an informal role in tourism and that most of these women have limitations in carrying out their roles due to a range of several obstacles. For example, much of the research has shown the industry to be providing unfavourable employment conditions for its labourers.

Chapter Six: Reflections¹

With little to no research being done on Africa, and even less on southern Africa, this research study has addressed this lacuna by exploring the exploitation of those that the industry is built on: the women working in the HCT domain in southern Africa. It explored the position of the female workforce in various roles in the HCT domain in southern Africa. It provided the current state of the well-being of the female workforce in the industry in the following seven countries: South Africa; Botswana; Namibia; Zimbabwe; Mozambique; Lesotho and Eswatini. In the process, it investigated mainly whether there was any exploitation imposed on any of these key players (women) in this domain and if so, to what extent this prevailed. It considered if there were any support structures for women in the form of organisations and their effectiveness. Lastly, it appraised the heritage and cultural tourism policies in the region and analysed how these deal with the complex issues of women's exploitation.

In line with Baum *et al.*'s assertion, the research domain of the tourism workforce is not only neglected in terms of its importance, but also suffers from fragmented approaches at various levels: topic, analysis, theory, and methods.² To some extent, this study filled this gap as one of the few that has sought to provide a transnational exposé of the realities faced by women working in the HCT domain within the southern African context to date. As one would imagine, it became very challenging to accomplish due to fact that the study focused on the broader southern African continent. Also, the few female service providers that were willing to participate in the research, most of them if not all, did not feel fully comfortable sharing their experiences openly to an outsider. Lastly, for a country such as Mozambique, a language barrier became an issue and communication with interviewees

¹This chapter is entitled "Reflections" and is essentially the conclusion. The chapter title was used to differentiate between the various chapters made to the respective chapters.

²T. Baum, A. Kralj, R. N. S. Robinson & D. J. Solnet. "Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda". *Annals of Tourism Research* 60, 2016, pp. 1-22.

was often a bit challenging. Notwithstanding these problems, the responses gathered were both adequate and insightful.

WTTC emphasises that tourism contributes positively to GDP and jobs and holds that this would still be the case in the longer term.³ Looking beyond this fact, Seager on the other hand, indicates that though tourism is a significant industry worldwide and plays a vital role in development, the poor third-world countries face an increase in different forms of exploitation of women due to the rapid development of tourism.⁴ Cheer notes that the UNWTO has not explicitly acknowledged the connection between the tourism industry and the presence of exploitation in its supply chain.⁵ However, Touristik Union International (TUI), the largest consolidated travel company in the world, has taken the initiative to formally acknowledge the existence of modern slavery/exploitation in the tourism supply chain.⁶ Simply put, exploitation happens when an employer gains unfair advantages from the work of an employee.

Also, Britton holds that exploitation occurs when international and or national labour standards are not respected, resulting in an unfair advantage being taken of others.⁷ He argues that establishing a legal baseline allows society to recognise that falling below this line causes harm, which is considered unacceptable.⁸ Therefore, Britton maintains that exploitation should be viewed as a spectrum that starts with violations of international and or national labour standards and escalates in both the degree of unfair advantage

³WTTC: A. Bonifaz, D. Hawkins, R. Israel, R. Hilbruner & C. Ignatowski. Guide to Assessing and Designing Tourism Workforce Development Programs. Education Development Center, EQUIP3 Leader Award Agreement. 2010. No.GDA-A-00-03-0000-06.

⁴J. Seager. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World* (4thed,). Penguin Books, New York, 2009.

⁵J. M. Cheer. "Geographies of Marginalization: Encountering Modern Slavery in Tourism". *An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 20 (4), 2018, pp. 728 – 732.

⁶TUI. 2018. Modern Slavery Statement.< <http://www.tuigroup.com/damfiles/default/tuigroup-15/en/sustainability/modern.slavery-statement-290317>.>Accessed: 25 December 2016.

⁷S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

⁸S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism". *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

gained and the harm caused, ultimately leading to servitude or even slavery.⁹ He indicates that researchers in the field of tourism have failed to recognise the significant role it plays in capitalist accumulation, particularly in terms of the capitalist nature of tourism production and consumption.¹⁰ This is where this study fits in. It is important to note that critics of capitalist accumulation highlight several drawbacks associated with it, such as income inequality, exploitation, and social alienation, among others.¹¹ Britton argues that by addressing this oversight, the geographical analysis of tourism could make a valuable contribution to current discussions in the field.¹²

Given the circumstances as seen in the previous Chapter, it is evident that bondage and exploitation are prevalent in both the production and consumption of HCT products. In this study, as indicated in Chapter 1, the term "exploitation" refers to the human exploitation, particularly of women, who work in the HCT industry in southern Africa. M. Yidirin argues that the neoliberal government's normalisation of tourism conditions in workplaces has led to various problems¹³ - and these are evident in this study.

The HCT industry in southern Africa offers valuable insights into the experiences of women in this field. As Sinclair pointed out, women have long encountered obstacles to their economic participation worldwide,¹⁴ and this continues to be true in southern Africa, even in the 21st century. Specifically, the HCT industry, which has received limited scholarly attention compared to other disciplines in the region, presents significant

⁹S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

¹⁰S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

¹¹L. Xue, D. Manuel – Navarrete & C. N. Buzinde. "Theorizing the concept of Alienation in Tourism Studies". *Annals of Tourism research* 44, 2014, pp. 186 - 199.

¹²S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

¹³M. Yildirim. "Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an 'Unsustainable' Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry". *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

¹⁴M. T. Sinclair, *Gender, Work and Tourism*. Routledge, London, 1997.

challenges for female workers. While tourism development may, in theory, contribute to gender equality and empower women, there is still much work to be done to fully utilise the potential of this industry, especially in terms of supporting women who work in this sector. From what has been observed in this thesis, despite the prevailing issues experienced by the female workforce in the industry, women continue to be the backbone of the HCT industry in southern Africa. However, it was detected that for the most part, they were in the industry because of their genuine passion for it, and do not always receive the necessary support or recognition.

This thesis uncovered subtle yet significant indications that imply the organisational environment provides little support for the progress of women. For example, there was a lack of infrastructure in the region to protect the well-being of one of its most valuable assets which is the female service providers in the industry. HCT developments have not significantly contributed to improving the welfare and well-being of women working in the tourism industry. The female workforce, both in the formal and informal sectors, faced tangible issues. For instance, service providers such as tour operators; tourist guides; accommodation providers; food caterers; and producers of items that could be described as cultural heritage (for example, crafters and artists/story-tellers) were largely unaware of the impact of their contribution to the value chain. Consequently, they failed to realise their pivotal role and leverage and were thus generally unaware of their human rights within this domain.

The research uncovered the difficulties faced by the female workers, including being ignored; side-lined; bullied and discriminated against based on their gender and race. The prevalence of sexual harassment (even though apparently limited) across the various employment setting was also a cause of concern. Furthermore, some respondents struggled with limited finances; long working hours; poor labour conditions and seasonal

work without contracts.¹⁵ Iverson and Deery argue that these perceptions about the tourism sector and its workforce are well-known and supported by evidence. They maintain that resolving these issues seems challenging and has potentially decreased interest in research. They argue further that this has resulted in a feeling of fatigue, as no definite “solution” has emerged despite research. In relation to the dimensions of workplace dignity in HCT in the southern Africa region, with particular emphasis on the informal economy, this study underscores the substantial vulnerability experienced by a significant number of HCT female workers operating within this sector, in contrast to their counterparts in more formal employment.

Additionally, the majority of these female workers lacked knowledge on how to mitigate these risks due to a lack of implemented measures or integrated policies or frameworks governing their services. A significant number of casual workers lack access to unions or the necessary support to file work-related complaints. Consequently, this has led to the development of an “industry” that keeps service providers in precarious conditions and vulnerable to exploitation. Many HCT institutions in the region have prioritised competition and self-improvement, but they have overlooked the importance of investing in infrastructure that supports the success and advancement of their female workforce. Regrettably, as Baum *et al.*, point out, the tourism sector frequently falls short in providing fair working conditions and may sometimes disregard the principles of decent work.¹⁶ It is worth noting that this issue is not exclusive to the global South, as it is also prevalent in the global North.¹⁷

¹⁵D. Iverson & Deery, M. “Turnover Culture in the Hospitality Industry”. *Human resource Management Journal* 7(4), 1987, pp. 71 -82.

¹⁶T. Baum, C. Cheung, H. Kong, A. Kralj, S. Mooney, S. Ramachandran & M. L. Siow. “Sustainability and the Tourism and Hospitality workforce: A Thematic Analysis”. *Sustainability* 2016, 8(8) p. 809.

¹⁷D. Freund. “Advances in Gender Research in Tourism”. IQS: School of Management. Zoom Webinar, December 2023.

Despite the progress made in social inclusion for this vulnerable group in the HCT sector, and the sector's potential in narrowing the gap between women and men, the study also identified situations where men have impeded women's quest for self-determination and economic independence. Not only this, but also issues of race. The findings of this thesis are similar to the position taken by Duffy *et al.*, who argue that cultural structures in economically less developed countries discourage women's participation in the labour force. As a result, women are often confined to the private sphere of the household, while men remain active in the public sphere of the community.¹⁸ For instance, when women aim to advance to higher positions within a company, they often encounter the glass ceiling - a situation where they can see opportunities for progression, but face seemingly insurmountable barriers that prevent them from reaching them. Despite efforts to challenge patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory cultural and social obstacles that hinder women's advancement, they often receive minimal support. S. P. Tshabalala and I. O. Ezeuduji contend that even educated South African women grapple with the decision of whether to pursue a career or seek "social acceptance."¹⁹ Despite their qualifications, many female professionals are often relegated to lower-ranking roles instead of being given opportunities to advance to higher positions. Society tends to view men as the ones who take risks, while downplaying the capabilities of women.²⁰ Upon analysing the trajectory of women's advancement, it becomes clear that they frequently work twice as hard in the workplace compared to their male counterparts. In some cases, they even need to acquire additional formal qualifications to advance their careers. N. Okong'o affirms that the "tokenised existence" of African women is common play in many

¹⁸L. N. Duffy, C. S. Kline, R. A. Mowatt, H. C. Chancellor. "Women in Tourism: Shifting Gender Ideology in DR". *Annals of Tourism Research* 52, 2015, pp. 72-86.

¹⁹S. P. Tshabalala & I. O. Ezeuduji. "Women Tourism entrepreneurs in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa: Any way forward?" *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(5), 2016, pp. 19 -32.

²⁰S. P. Tshabalala & I. O. Ezeuduji. "Women Tourism entrepreneurs in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa: Any way forward?" *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(5), 2016, pp. 19 -32.

industries today.²¹ She argues that women are treated as lesser beings and an anomaly in many sectors.²² As a result, few women have been shown to have shattered the glass ceiling in this field. When it comes to racial diversity, E. Branch *et al.*, argue that although many companies have introduced quotas, black women are often considered as mere tokens to meet compliance standards.²³ They emphasize that once race quotas are established, leaders often lose sight of the true goals of diversity and inclusion.²⁴ This raises the question of whether the focus is truly on promoting diversity and inclusion.

Tourism is often portrayed as a force for social inclusion and development, with the ability to reach and empower marginalized groups,²⁵ such as women. Genç stipulates that “social inclusion is an important determinant for the impact of tourism on decreasing gender inequality, and as women participate in the labour force and become visible in the social realm, their social inclusion will be increased”.²⁶ As such, this is one industry which has many women as workers but scholars have shown that women are mainly working in inferior positions, poorly paid jobs²⁷ and are mostly invisible. As noticed in this research, women continue to be subjected to significant exploitation differently by the tourism agencies that employ them and the entire system they are integrated into.²⁸ Moreover, it is impoverished women in developing countries who are particularly susceptible to

²¹N. Okong’o. 2021. “Tokenism, African Women and Extractives.” *Academia Letters*. University of Sheffield, UK. <<https://doi.org/10.20935/al2560>. >Accessed: 12 June 2024.

²²N. Okong’o. 2021. “Tokenism, African Women and Extractives.” *Academia Letters*. University of Sheffield, UK. <<https://doi.org/10.20935/al2560>. >Accessed: 12 June 2024.

²³E. Branch & K. Kasztelnik. “Challenges, Barriers and the Underrepresentation of Black Women in Sustainable Global World Environment”. *Business Ethics and Leadership* 7(2), 2023, pp.2520 - 6761.

²⁴E. Branch & K. Kasztelnik. “Challenges, Barriers and the Underrepresentation of Black Women in Sustainable Global World Environment”. *Business Ethics and Leadership* 7(2), 2023, pp.2520 - 6761.

²⁵A. Arellano. “Tourism in Poor Regions and Social Inclusions: The Porters of the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu”. *World Leisure Journal* 53(2), 2011, pp. 104-118.

²⁶R. Genç. “The Impact of Tourism in the Reduction on Gender Inequality”. *Trakya UniversitesiiiktsadiveldariBilimblerFakultesiDergisi* 7(1), 2018, pp.20-35.

²⁷M. Siguenza, C. Brotons & R. Huete. “The Evolution of Gender Inequality in Tourism Employment in Spain”. Inst. Universitario de Investigaciones Turisticas. Universidad de Alicante, 2013.

²⁸A. Arellano. “Tourism in Poor Regions and Social Inclusions: The Porters of the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu”. *World Leisure Journal* 53(2), 2011, pp. 104-118.

these risks. There is thus a growing awareness of the exploitation perpetuated by the tourism industry, which highlights deep-seated issues of inequality and injustice. As Seager notes, the rapid growth of tourism has led to an increase in various forms of exploitation targeting women in these vulnerable nations.²⁹

Regarding organizations, there are numerous women led forums and organizations both regionally and nationally as witnessed in this study, that specifically enable women in the tourism sector to collectively work together and share their experiences. As many as were aware of such organizations, only a few seemed to have taken part as members and those that had, appeared to have only partly benefited from them. On the other hand, the majority that have ignored such organizations indicated that they found them to not be effective except for taking their membership fee for no return. It was pointed out that after meetings or discussions, more often than not, organizers pack the issues away in their bags and do not bother to share the discussed issues with the rightful authority in order to bring solutions. These organizations are established with the goal of providing hope to women in the HCT sector who aspire to become effective leaders capable of driving positive change and development. However, when this goal is not achieved, it unfairly hinders the progress of those who are participants in the industry, suppresses people's voices, and undermines authentic representation. As a result, many of the challenges faced by those working in the industry persist because of the organizations' failure to bring about resolutions.

Regarding the policies, the majority of women working in the formal economy expressed that tourism policies were “good on paper”, but they also highlighted that the implementation was lacking. Certain female workers in the informal economy disclosed that they were unaware of the existence of tourism policies. It is important to note that

²⁹J. Seager. *The Penguin Atlas of Women in the World* (4thed,). Penguin Books, New York, 2009.

although the former group was aware of the presence of tourism legislation and policies in their respective countries, most of them could not confidently state whether these policies adequately addressed the needs of women in the industry. As sighted in Chapter 3, it was evident that the majority, if not all, of the tourism policies were silent on women. One could perceive them as not effectively "targeting the advancement of women's prosperity." Tshabalala and Ezeuduji affirm that the southern African economic history and tourism policies guiding development do not clearly articulate the involvement of women in the tourism industry and as such women still feel ignored and discriminated against because of gender, class and racial differences.³⁰ Furthermore, when considering social progress towards achieving equality, it could be presumed that significant strides are being made. However, it is still disconcerting to observe that the obstacles impeding the progress of women in the HCT workplace within the southern African region are increasingly becoming more pronounced. Hence, R. A. Mowatt *et al.*, argue that because of women's underrepresentation in policy formulation, women exist in a state of systemic invisibility or problematic visibility, such as sexist oppression.³¹

On the other hand, in a global policy dialogue on "Gender Snapshot" presented by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), it is stated that "policies were constructed in a gender-blind perspective".³² It indicated that there were usually more male policy makers and where there were women, they usually represented the minority.³³ This implied that women's participation was limited and due to a lack of

³⁰S. P. Tshabalala & I. O. Ezeuduji. "Women Tourism entrepreneurs in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa: Any way forward?" *Acta Universitatis Danubius* 12(5), 2016, pp. 19 -32.

³¹R. A. Mowatt, B. H. French & D. A. Malebranche. "Black/Female/Body Hypervisibility and Invisibility: A Black Feminist Augmentation of feminist Leisure research". *Journal of Leisure Research* 45(5), 2013, pp. 644 – 660.

³²UN DESA: Global Policy Dialogue Series. How Close are We to gender Equality? A UN DESA Global Dialogue. Zoom Webinar. 21 November 2023.

³³UN DESA: Global Policy Dialogue Series. How Close are We to gender Equality? A UN DESA Global Dialogue. Zoom Webinar. 21 November 2023.

control over important decisions, it results in their rights and dignity not being accorded equal respect and protection.

While institutions vary in their approaches and level of commitment to gender equality, for the HCT industry, regrettably, workforce considerations seem to rarely become major drivers in shaping key decisions in tourism developments or investments. Henceforth, the industry constantly breaches service providers' dignity and the rights of those the industry is built on and this in turn impacts on the well-being of those servicing the industry. This thesis revealed, among others, the profound ignorance of women's dignity and well-being. As such, the UN DESA argued that unless women are the centre of development of legal frameworks, they will remain defeated.³⁴ Unfortunately, most of the southern African countries studied here barely indicated a genuine inclusion being firmly embedded in their tourism industry's system nor made a mandatory feature. The principle enshrined in the 2030 Agenda that "every person should reap the benefits of prosperity and enjoy minimum standards of well-being"³⁵ has hardly been translated into action across the southern African region. Undoubtedly, this presents a setback on the journey towards achieving gender quality by 2030.

Despite the extensive proven contribution of women to the HCT industry in southern Africa, their involvement goes relatively unnoticed. Tourism management agencies, together with government authorities, focus almost exclusively on "demand" without taking into account the essential nature of the "supply" by investing in and protecting the well-being and welfare of service providers in the HCT industry. Currently, there is a lack of existing data in nearly all the southern African countries studied in this research. This is because the globally accepted economic system looks universally at visitor numbers

³⁴UN DESA: Global Policy Dialogue Series. How Close are We to gender Equality? A UN DESA Global Dialogue. Zoom Webinar, 21 November 2023.

³⁵The United Nations: Identifying Social Inclusion and Exclusion. <<https://www.un.org/rwss/chapter1> Accessed: 08 Jan 2024.

and economic impacts, both direct and indirect, at a national and regional level. However, it does not include the cost of safeguarding the well-being of the most valuable asset - the female workforce. These women are the backbone of the industry. An illustration of this is the absence of a comprehensive database capturing the women workforce in tourism, both nationally and regionally.³⁶ This absence constrains the region's ability to monitor and evaluate women's advancement and challenges in the sector, thereby hindering a representative understanding of their role. One could conclude that this might be the reason why, among other issues, the problem of exploitation is hardly raised. The UN DESA Global Policy Dialogue argues that better data leads to informed decisions.³⁷ This implies that when data is not available at a country level or regionally, it becomes hard to raise issues that affect vulnerable groups or to address them.

There is no doubt that the southern Africa region is currently experiencing growth in its HCT sector considering the job opportunities that the sector has provided for women. However, it is regrettable that there is not enough focus on the well-being and welfare of the workforce in this sector, specifically in relation to the growth of HCT in southern African countries. HCT institutions recognize the importance of human resources in delivering excellent service quality and attracting and retaining satisfied and loyal customers in today's competitive environment.³⁸ However, this sector, which is predominantly female dominated, faces various challenges as revealed by this study. While these issues may differ from place to place, the common factor is that crisis responses fail to protect the most vulnerable - the human resources. There is often little or no recognition that the organisational culture, policies and practices often hold women

³⁶*Business Live*. 09 August 2023. SA Tourism Survey Reveals Women are Top Contributors to Sector's Growth. <<https://businesslive.co.za/lifestyle/travel-and-food/2023-08-09-native-sa-tourism-survey-reveals-women-are-top-contributors-to-sectors-growth>. >12 January 2024.

³⁷UN DESA: Global Policy Dialogue Series. How Close are We to gender Equality? A UN DESA Global Dialogue. Zoom Webinar. 21 November 2023.

³⁸M. Yasin. "Improving Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry". *Journal of Hospitality and Leisure Marketing*, 7, 2001, pp. 33-44.

from advancement.³⁹ Yet there are visible complexities of injustices with which organizations must grapple as seen in this study. This situation, in which female service providers are consistently found to be, seems to align with the observations made by Tshabalala and Ezedueji about southern Africa and possibly the entire continent of Africa. According to their findings, women have not been able to fulfil their potential as citizens due to “cultural and traditional” practices that enforce the idea that women should stay at home, cooking and taking care of children, while men are the ones who go out to work.⁴⁰

In light of the numerous challenges that women in the workforce still face to-date, it appears that HCT workplaces in the southern Africa region have made minimal efforts to implement the intersectional approach. As indicative in Chapter 1 in the methodology, intersectionality is a concept that explains how different characteristics, such as race; ethnicity; gender; class; religion; sexual orientation; age and disability, intersect and influence the experiences of marginalised people and groups.⁴¹ This approach is crucial for service agencies seeking to develop comprehensive service provisions and for organisations⁴² aiming to promote equity.⁴³ Based on the findings of this study, it is revealed that the female workforce in the HCT industries across the southern African region encounters additional dimensions of their identities or extra challenges, including racism; racialised sexism; ageism and classism, which hinder their ability to fully realise their potential in the industry. According to L. Steinfield *et al.*, organisations play a vital

³⁹The Star: Opinion. N.d. Women Need to Build Connections Rather than Fall into the Trap of Qualifications. <https://www.msn.com>. > Accessed: 10 June 2023.

⁴⁰S. P. Tshabalala & I. O. Ezedueji.. “Women Tourism entrepreneurs in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa: Any way forward?” *Acta Universitatis Danubius*. 12(5), 2016, pp. 19-32.

⁴¹M. Lawson. “What is Intersectionality in the Workplace? Why it Matters and Its Role in DEIB”. *Construction Management Association of America CMAA*. N.d., pp. 1- 4.

⁴²L. Steinfield, M. Sanghvi, L. T. Zayer, C. A. Coleman, N. Ourahmoune, R. L. Harrisson, W. Hein & J. Brace-Govan. “Transformative Intersectionality: Moving Business Towards a Critical Praxis”. *Journal of Business Research* (100), 2019, pp. 366 -375.

⁴³E. Severs, K. Celis & S. Erzeel. “Power, Privilege and Disadvantage: Intersectionality Theory and Political Representations.” *Politics* 36(4), 2016, pp. 346 -354.

role in leading the way towards an intersectional focus that brings about change, not only through individual behavioural modelling, but also by comprehending disadvantage and challenging prevailing thinking, behaviour; structures; policies; systems and power dynamics.⁴⁴ C. Azzopardi emphasizes that transitioning from intersectional theory to practice aids in cultivating a diverse and productive workforce that operates at its fullest human potential.⁴⁵ However, the basis of transformative learning and the establishment of an evidence-based set of practices that promote an intersectional perspective on inclusion, requiring participants to critically reflect on and evaluate their behaviours beyond the nominal diversity of identities, appears to be lacking in HCT organisations. HCT work places in southern Africa appear to under-utilise intersectionality as a framework for creating environments that value all individuals' talents and foster their growth. E. A. Viruell-Fuentes *et al.*, argue that organisations should not only respond to diversity and inequalities, but also embrace intersectionality to leverage diverse talent, human capital, and capabilities, as well as to cultivate a sense of belonging for individuals from diverse backgrounds.⁴⁶ They assert that this is crucial for facilitating change and achieving genuine inclusion in organisations and practice.⁴⁷ A. M. Nunez *et al.*'s, contend that applying intersectionality has the potential to disrupt and transform social inequalities and organisational thinking beyond the confines of traditional minority group perspectives.⁴⁸

⁴⁴L. Steinfield, M. Sanghvi, L. T. Zayer, C. A. Coleman, N. Ourahmoune, R. L. Harrisson, W. Hein & J. Brace-Govan. "Transformative Intersectionality: Moving Business Towards a Critical Praxis". *Journal of Business Research* (100), 2019, pp. 366 -375.

⁴⁵C. Azzopardi. "Cross-Cultural Social Work: A Critical Approach to Teaching and Learning to Work effectively across International Identities". *The British Journal of Social Work* 50(2), April 2020, pp. 464 -482.

⁴⁶E. A. Viruel – Fuentes, P. Y. Miranda & S. Abdulrahim. More than Culture: Structural Racism, Intersectionality Theory and Immigrant Health. *Social Science & Medicine* 75(12), 2012, pp. 2099 -2106.

⁴⁷E. A. Viruel – Fuentes, P. Y. Miranda & S. Abdulrahim. "More than Culture: Structural Racism, Intersectionality Theory and Immigrant Health". *Social Science & Medicine* 75(12), 2012, pp. 2099 -2106.

⁴⁸M. Nunez, J. Rivera & T. Hallmark. "Applying an Intersectionality Lens to Expand Equity in the Geoscience". *Journal of Geoscience education* (68), 2020, pp. 97 -114.

It is important to recognise the inherent and invisible complexities of injustice that HCT organisations must address and overcome for the sake of the well-being and welfare of the HCT female labourer in the southern African region. Even Mkhize and Cele assert that with the continuous growth of the tourism industry in South Africa, it is imperative to scrutinise the contribution of women, specifically black African rural women, as a catalyst for innovation in tourism.⁴⁹ They emphasise the necessity of redirecting attention towards the subjective development, core concerns, and competitive advantage of black African rural women who are striving for equal opportunities within the tourism economy.⁵⁰

Despite widespread recognition that women participate as service providers in the HCT industry in the countries of the southern African region, one of the main concerns for the female workforce in this sector is the lack of empirical evidence directly linking women to successful negotiation, recognition, and increased decision-making power in various aspects of life. This research focused on seven countries within the region, and unfortunately, there is limited evidence in these countries to support the positive impact of women's participation in the tourism industry particularly at top levels. The full flourishing of women in the HCT domain is still uncommon in the southern African region. Although women make significant contributions to the tourism sector, their presence often goes unnoticed. Despite the select efforts of the studied southern African countries to achieve the SDGs, the UN DESA Global Dialogue concluded that progress on SDG 5 - Gender Equality - is falling behind, with none of the SDG 5 indicators meeting or nearing the target level.⁵¹ This is a significant setback, especially considering that we are already halfway to 2030.

⁴⁹G. Mkhize & N. Cele. "The Role of women in tourism in Kwazulu-Natal: Case Studies from the South Coast of Kwazulu Natal". *Empowering Women for Gender Equality* 31(1), 2017, pp. 128 – 139.

⁵⁰G. Mkhize & N. Cele. "The Role of women in tourism in Kwazulu-Natal: Case Studies from the South Coast of Kwazulu Natal". *Empowering Women for Gender Equality* 31(1), 2017, pp. 128 – 139.

⁵¹UN DESA: Global Policy Dialogue Series. How Close are We to gender Equality? A UN DESA Global Dialogue. Zoom Webinar, 21 November 2023.

As this study's crucial role is to explore the overlooked issue of exploitation within the HCT sector in the southern Africa context as far as female workforce is concerned, the above discussed challenges encompass various forms of exploitation faced by women in the HCT domain in the region. One of the most evident forms of exploitation in the HCT sector is the violation of human rights of those who work in the industry. As observed, senior positions show no concern for employee rights. It is noticed that the majority of southern African countries have general legislation that is silent on issues related to women in the industry. Even at the organisational level, most institutions in the tourism industry adhere to unofficial workplace rules that prioritise profit-driven business practices. Consequently, this creates a work environment with no ethical standards. Additionally, at the global level, Baum notes that tourism industry continues to be a subject of controversy as it struggles to meet the United Nations' sustainable employment objectives.⁵² This draws attention to the existence of abuse within the industry, which leads to an unsupportable work environment and reduces female employees to mere tools for organisational interests.

Other apparent common forms of exploitation experienced by female labours in the HCT domain in the region include unfavourable working conditions; excessive work without proper benefits; inadequate wages and lack of recognition. This finding suggests that the HCT industry currently fails to provide a satisfactory workplace environment that promotes decent work. Job insecurity is also prevalent in this sector. Despite these unsustainable employment conditions, women continue to work in this sector because they have no other viable options, and the region heavily relies on tourism. However, they do not receive full/fair benefits for their work. E. Goffman argues that unemployment can cause "stigmatization" in the social environment as it is characterized as uselessness,

⁵²T. Baum. "Sustainable Human Resource Management as a Driver in Tourism Policy and Planning: A Serious Sin of Omission?" *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 26(6), 2018, pp. 873 -889.

inadequacy and laziness.⁵³ So many women would rather settle for “at least I have a job” being concerned about “How would people look at me if I was unemployed? Unemployment is bad.”⁵⁴ Despite accepting unfavourable working conditions, women lack mechanisms to challenge these conditions. Sadly, this acceptance has become the norm within the realm of work, worse, it comes at the expense of those the industry is built around on. As precarity increasingly becomes a structural feature of the industry, there is growing concern about the vulnerability of the female workforce in the HCT.

The interviewees in Yildirim’s study,⁵⁵ used metaphors to describe an adaptable employee in the tourism industry. These metaphors provide insights into working conditions and the nature of the job. For example, the average tourism employee is compared to a “slave, donkey, camel and a mule”, highlighting their ability to handle any workload.⁵⁶ These metaphors also align with the interviewees’ descriptions of their workplaces. They likened their workplaces to “an open prison”, where leaving is possible but mandatory to enter, “a stock market”, where everything is subject to change and fluctuation and a theatre scene where “everyone plays a fake role” and “an area where there are rules”.⁵⁷ Baum et al., argue that these metaphors indicate the lack of decent workplaces and their resemblance to oppressive conditions described in Orwellian working conditions⁵⁸ and Kafkaesque⁵⁹ literature.

⁵³E. Goffman. *Stigma: Notes on Management of Spoiled Identity*. Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963.

⁵⁴E. Goffman. *Stigma: Notes on Management of Spoiled Identity*. Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963.

⁵⁵M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘Unsustainable’ Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

⁵⁶M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘Unsustainable’ Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

⁵⁷M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘Unsustainable’ Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

⁵⁸T. Baum, A. Kralj, R. N. S. Robinson & D. J. Solnet. “Tourism Workforce Research: A Review, Taxonomy and Agenda”. *Annals of Tourism Research* 60, 2016, pp.1-22

⁵⁹R. Hodson, A. W. Martin, S. H. Lopez. & V. J. Roscigno. “Rules don’t Apply: Kafka Insight on Bureaucracy”. *Organisation* 20(2), 2013, pp. 256 -278.

Sexual harassment is another form of violation that female labourers in the HCT domain in the region commonly experience. Despite the increasing volume of academic research dedicated to addressing the multifaceted issues surrounding sexual harassment within the tourism industry, a significant number of female service providers opt not to disclose their personal experiences for a variety of reasons. For instance, findings from this study have unveiled a prevalent trend of underreporting incidents of sexual harassment within the HCT sector. Although males can also be victims of sexual harassment, it is generally agreed upon that females are the more common targets. In the case of this study, it was found to be especially, unmarried middle-aged female service providers that are the ones susceptible to sexual harassment in the workplace. R. Siegel points out that sexual harassment in the tourism industry has recently received unprecedented attention in both academia and media.⁶⁰

Despite increased visibility of sexual transgressions and speaking out, such as the #MeToo movement,⁶¹ it is important to note that Africa, though not as prominently, also had its own version, such as the #MenAreTrash campaigns.⁶² In southern Africa, and possibly the entire continent, women still appear to be vulnerable to these types of attacks. This is mainly attributed to the strong patriarchal culture that stigmatises women who speak out.⁶³ Additionally, women are well aware that the legal system offers little protection, particularly in some southern African countries where patriarchal courts often exacerbate the suffering of survivors. Shockingly, Gouw indicates that the conviction rates for rape in

⁶⁰R. Siegel. 2018. Hotel Chains to Tackle Worker Safety Against Sexual Harassment. *The Washington Post*. <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/09/06/major-hotel-chains-tackle-worker-safety-sexual-harassment-protection>>. Accessed: 16 January 2019.

⁶¹*Britannica*. 22 July 2024. Me Too movement. <<https://www.britannica.com>>. Accessed: 17 August 2024.

⁶²Rhodes University. N.d. #MenareTrash: What is this movement really about? <<https://www.ru.ac.za>>. Accessed: 17 August 2024.

⁶³N. Falkof, S. Phadke & S Roy. *Intimacy and Injury: In the Wake of #MeToo in India and South Africa*, Manchester University Press, 2022.

these nations hover at an average of less than 10%.⁶⁴ The consequences of women in the industry remaining silent about sexual harassment are twofold. Firstly, it allows the perpetrators to avoid being held accountable for their actions. Secondly, even when women do eventually come forward, there is still a chance that they will not face any consequences due to the lawlessness of the industry in which they work. So, service providers in the service industry appear to tolerate unwanted sexual attention and are able to effectively manage and overcome any potential negative impact on their professional and personal lives. However, this paints a concerning picture that sexual harassment is commonly accepted as normal in this industry. Worse still, L.F. Fitzgerald asserts that the experience of sexual harassment can be traumatic and have negative effects on the well-being of employees who become victims.⁶⁵ Overall, in the context of southern Africa, workplace provisions aimed at addressing sexual harassment, along with the endeavours of movements such as #MeToo movement and #ManareTrash advocating for women's rights, appear to exhibit limited efficacy for individuals employed in the tourism industry.

As far as the well-being of the female service providers is concerned, Yildirim point out that the instability of working conditions in the tourism industry creates collective anxiety, as anyone can experience job loss at any moment.⁶⁶ Moreover, pressure faced by the female workforce to constantly improve their skills and abilities also has a negative impact. For example, if they are already bilingual, there is an expectation for them to become proficient in a third language in order to increase their chances of survival in the industry. These are some of the sacrifices they are willingly to make to contribute to the

⁶⁴A. Gouws, 2019. '#MeToo Isn't Big in Africa: But Women Have Launched their Own Versions' *The Conversation*, 7 March. <[https:// theconversation.com](https://theconversation.com)> Accessed: 30 November 2019.

⁶⁵L. F. Fitzgerald. "Still the Last Great Open Secret: Sexual Harassment as Systematic Trauma". *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation* 18(40), . 2017, pp. 483 – 489.

⁶⁶M. Yildirim. "Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an 'Unsustainable' Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry". *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

industry they serve, particularly if they aspire to advance in their careers. Yildirim notes that tourism workplace environment is marked by fear, chaos, inconsistency, abuse, and nepotism, similar to a bureaucratic system reminiscent of Kafka's works.⁶⁷ This could not be mentally healthy for any human being. Unfortunately, there seems to be a lack of resistance practices in place. In addition, some female service providers in some workplaces feel pressured to assume personas that are akin to actors in order to navigate challenging situations and attain "survival" or "success."⁶⁸ A. S. Vucetic, holds that there is a noticeable presence of oppressive supervision in tourism workplaces.⁶⁹

Female service providers who participated in the survey and worked in the tour operation industry highlighted the presence of gender differences in this field. These women often faced challenges solely because of their gender. They pointed out that many clients preferred tours led by male guides rather than female guides. Consequently, female tour guides often felt undervalued due to the prevailing perception that tour guiding is a profession dominated by men, and the belief that women should prioritise family responsibilities. Consequently, many female respondents experienced difficulties and dissatisfaction with their role as they felt constantly undermined. As a result of this gender-based discrimination, women suffer more than men due to social stereotypes that label them as "less intelligent and less capable". They internalise these stereotypes, leading to difficulties in accepting praise and recognising their own intelligence and capabilities. Consequently, many women expressed that they struggle to fully appreciate their own achievements. Gender discrimination in the workplace creates an imbalance of power that leaves women feeling defeated. Researchers have identified mental health

⁶⁷M. Yildirim. "Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an 'Unsustainable' Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry". *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

⁶⁸Collinson, D. L. "Rethinking Followership: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of Follower Identities". *The Leadership Quarterly* 17(2), 2006, pp.157 -181

⁶⁹A. S. Vucetic. "Influence of Specialised Hotels on Employees' Perception of Abuse in the Selective Tourism Destination". *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 2(30), 2018, pp. 740 -756.

consequences stemming from this gender discrimination, including anxiety, depression, and burn-out.⁷⁰

This study has revealed a critical lacuna in the region's approach, particularly regarding the well-being of female workforce in the HCT domain. As much as HCT is used to challenge traditional roles and empower women in economic, social and cultural and political terms, tourism to a degree violates women's right. There is an increasing need for a proper understanding and implementation of the responsibility to protect the female workforce in the HCT domain in Africa. Unfortunately, the efforts of women in the workforce are not fully recognized by relevant stakeholders, governments, and local authorities. Currently, they are still overlooked, invisible, and unprotected, which makes them susceptible to exploitation.⁷¹ The findings presented here validate the findings from other scholars regarding women's well-being in the industry.⁷² Due to this, women miss out on opportunities to shape the agenda and establish the long-term strategic focus of the organization,⁷³ as well as to flourish personally. This suggests an abuse of power by those in authority.

Tourism has long been closely tied to the capitalist economy.⁷⁴ Consequently, it is not surprising that the results of this study indicate that the inherent nature of the industry has predominantly hindered the establishment of a socially equitable and sustainable

⁷⁰R. Dobson. 30 June 2024. Women in High Flying Job More Likely to Suffer Imposter Syndrome than their Male counterparts, Research Shows. <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13584191>. >Accessed: 07 July 2024.

⁷¹C. S. Jones. 2022. Now Transforming Travel: Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. <<https://www.itmustbenow.com/feature/our-big-questions/exploitation-travel-tourism>. >Accessed: 11 September 2023.

⁷²Manwa argues that organisational cultures are biased against women and that human resource policies are used to disadvantage them - H. Manwa. Gender Issues Impacting on the Delivery of Services in the Tourism and hospitality Industry. Paper Presented at the Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana Annual briefing. Gaborone, Botswana, 2005.

⁷³H. Manwa. Gender Issues Impacting on the Delivery of Services in the Tourism and hospitality Industry. Paper Presented at the Hospitality and Tourism Association of Botswana Annual briefing. Gaborone, Botswana, 2005.

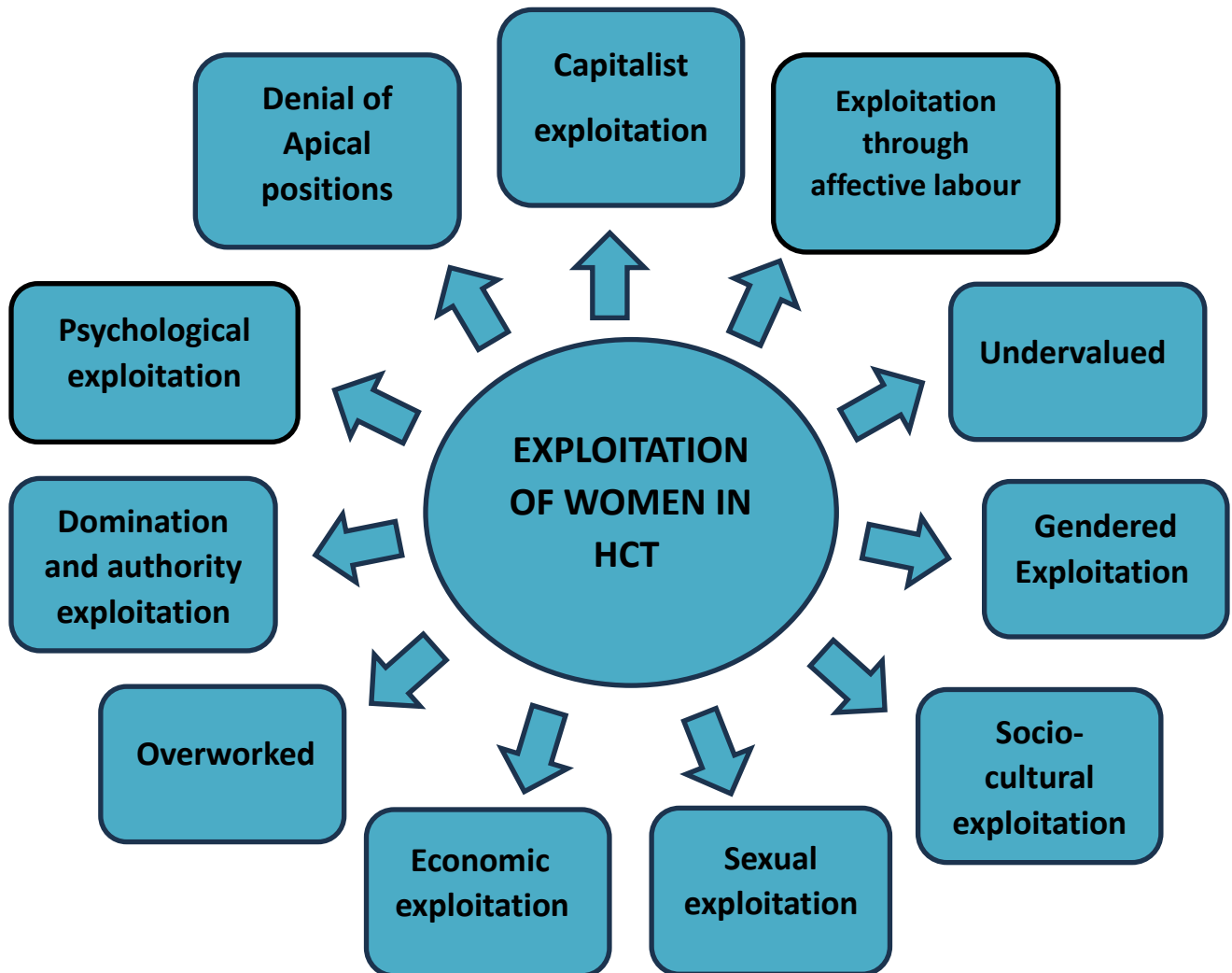
⁷⁴S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. Environment and Planning: Society and Space" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

model, as well as the protection of its valuable resource: the female workforce. Instead, capitalist exploitation remains a dominant force in this context. In relation to the capitalist nature of the sector mentioned earlier, including HCT, Karl Marx defines capitalist exploitation as the forced appropriation by capitalists of surplus value produced by workers.⁷⁵ In simple terms, Marx asserts that in a capitalist society, workers are exploited when they are obliged to sell their labour to capitalists for a price below the true value of the products they create.⁷⁶ Specifically, in this industry, the majority of female service providers are forced to sell their labour to capitalists for less than the fair value of the goods they produce or the services they offer because they do not own the means of production. Additionally, due to the prevalence of asymmetrical relationships in the industry, there is a power dynamic that leads to dominance and the exploitation of authority. Subsequently, this research has revealed that a significant proportion of female service providers experience various types of exploitation, resulting in limited employment opportunities and a compromised sense of dignity. The study has identified several other aspects of exploitation, which are discussed in detail in the previous Chapter: economic exploitation; denial of top positions; gendered exploitation; socio-cultural exploitation; psychological exploitation; exploitation through affective labour; sexual exploitation; and being overworked and undervalued (See Diagram 2).

⁷⁵*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. N.d., Exploitation. <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation>. > Accessed: 13 August 2024.

⁷⁶*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. N.d., Exploitation. <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/exploitation>. > Accessed: 13 August 2024.

Diagram 2: Exploitation Wheel: Female service providers in HCT industry in southern Africa.



This devised exploitation wheel highlights the different ways in which tourism development negatively affects and harms the people who are essential to the industry, with a particular focus on women. These negative effects are consequences of capitalist overproduction and unsustainable practices in the HCT domain.⁷⁷ Yildirim's claim that the government's support of these conditions in tourism workplaces has resulted in

⁷⁷S. Britton. "Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a critical Geography of Tourism. Environment and Planning: Society and Space" 9, 1991, pp. 451 -478. Doi: 10.1068/d090451.

numerous issues,⁷⁸ remains true even for HCT sector in the southern African region. One could argue that previous discussions have not sufficiently emphasised the role of the tourism industry in facilitating the expansion of capitalism, and this is an issue that needs to be addressed further in order to safeguard the well-being of those who work in this sector.

Lastly, it is imperative for HCT institutions to prioritise the well-being, work-life balance, and job satisfaction of their employees. Most importantly, there is a pressing need to enhance the visibility and representation of women in the tourism sector as a whole.⁷⁹ The majority of female service providers are hard workers and are committed to delivering high-performance services, guaranteeing a seamless experience for their clients and organisations. However, despite their significant contributions to the industry, they are not receiving fair compensation or recognition in any way, nor are they protected. Rather, they generally are exploited. M. Phorne-In emphasizes the consequence of being invisible in everyday life, stating that “If you are invisible in everyday life, your needs will not be thought of, let alone be addressed in a crisis situation.”⁸⁰ The revelations of this thesis and the UN DESA Global Dialogue align with Jones's disturbing depiction of the female workforce in the HCT industry. He argues that “tourism has a strong element of theatre, which is part of its charm, but also makes it easy to ignore what is going on behind the scenes as it is to buy garments made in sweatshops...”⁸¹

⁷⁸M. Yildirim. “Tracing the Consent, Adaptation and Resistance Practices of an ‘Unsustainable’ Workforce: The governmentality of Workplaces in Tourism Industry”. *Tourism Management* 84, 2021, pp. 104-260.

⁷⁹UNWTO, 12 March 2019. <<https://www.unwto.org/africa/news/2019-03-12/taskforcefor-women-in-tourism>.>Accessed: 8 June 2021.

⁸⁰Matcha Phorne-In. A Lesbian Feminist Human right defender from Thailand < UN Women: Intersectional feminism: What it means and Why it Matters Right Now. 1 July 2020.

<<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020>.>Accessed: 13 May 2024.

⁸¹C. S. Jones. 2022. Now Transforming Travel: Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

<<https://www.itmustbenow.com/feature/our-big-questions/exploitation-travel-tourism>>, accessed: 11 September 2023.

As evidenced by the preceding analysis, this research demonstrates that the role of women in the heritage and cultural tourism (HCT) sector is significantly undervalued, if not entirely overlooked, and may even approach total exploitation. The issues pertaining to women are prevalent on a global scale. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG) and UN Women report that "twenty-five years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, progress towards equal power and equal rights for women remains elusive⁸²." They assert that "the world is failing girls and women," highlighting that no country has yet achieved gender equality,⁸³ a phenomenon also observed in the southern African countries examined in this study. Consequently, these organisations are advocating for collective action and urging nations to expedite their efforts to empower women and girls, particularly through the enhancement of monitoring practices and the addressing of data gaps related to critical gender issues. This research sought to address this gap by analysing the concerning situation presented by the HCT in southern Africa with respect to its impact on women's workforce status and overall well-being.⁸⁴

It is therefore recommended that tourism stakeholders, government entities, and policymakers engage in collaborative efforts to develop more effective measures for this vulnerable demographic (women) by implementing gender-responsive policies within the heritage and cultural tourism sectors of the region. Furthermore, southern African countries should bolster their national and regional capacities to research and report on gender-disaggregated tourism data, utilising this information to promote gender equality

⁸²Sustainable Development Goals: Women's Job Market Participation Stagnating at Less than 50% for the Past 25 Years, Finds UN Report. <<https://www.un.org/sustainable-development/blog/2020/10/womens-job-market-participation-stagnation-at-less-than-50-for-the-past-25-years-finds-un-report>.> 04 February 2025.

⁸³Sustainable Development Goals: Press Release | The world is failing Girls and Women, According to the New UN Report < <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2023/09/press-release-the-world-is-failing-girls-and-women-according-to-new-un-report>.> Accessed: 04 February 2025.

⁸⁴External Examiner's Comment: 2025. "This thesis is a very significant examination of, and to some extent a "protest voice" of governments in the region thus keeping the continued marginalization of women workers in the tourism industry at large".

and women's empowerment. Moving forward, it would be prudent to formalise recommendations concerning the positions of women in the HCT, given the inadequate attention this issue receives in the regulations of various countries - and even less in practice.

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External Examiner's Comment.

Annexure A

Open-ended questions devised for the women who are the service providers (workforce) in the Heritage and Cultural Tourism (HCT) Sector:

- What is your place/role in this HCT institution?
- How long have you been part of the HCT sector?
- What has the situation been like for you as a service provider in the HCT sector?
Any opportunities or limitations?
- How can you describe the labour condition of your workplace?
- What are the “decent work” issues facing HCT service providers in your country?
- As a service provider in HCT, does the heritage and cultural tourism policy of your country serve you/assist you in any way? If yes, how? If no, where is it lacking?
- How important is this work to the survival of your family or is it an add on?
- Are you a member of any HCT organisations/programmes, if yes, how effective are they?

Annexure B



Faculty of Humanities

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotheo



Letter of Informed Consent

I, Matikoe Matsoso, student number: 17314136, am currently enrolled for a PhD degree in Heritage and Cultural Tourism in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies at the University of Pretoria. I am doing a thesis focusing on women working in Heritage and Cultural Tourism in southern African. In compliance with the requirements of a PhD's thesis, I need to do primary research. This will include archival research as well as certain fields of research which will take the form of open-ended interviews with individuals with first-hand or expert knowledge of information relevant to my topic. This will form part of my primary research as oral evidence and comply with the accepted standards within the discipline of Heritage and Cultural Tourism. I hereby wish to obtain permission to interview you.

Your input will be acknowledged according to the reference system prescribed by the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies. If specifically requested, participants may request to remain anonymous in the study and the data will be kept confidential. Your interview will be done telephonically and will be recorded in writing / recorder and will be stored in electronic format for a period of 15 years in compliance with the policy of the University Faculty of Humanities. This material may also be used for another research by the candidate. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the interview at any stage and your information will be deleted.

If you are willing to participate, please send me an email or message: matsosomatikoe+1@gmail.com or +27 73 432 2795

Yours sincerely
Matikoe Matsoso

I, _____ (the undersigned) agree to participate in the thesis's research project of Mrs. Matikoe Matsoso, student number: 17314136 at the University of Pretoria.

I have read his letter of introduction and agree that my information may be acknowledged according to the prescribed Departmental reference system.

<input type="checkbox"/>	I give permission for my name to be used in this research.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I wish to remain anonymous in this research.

Signed _____ Date _____

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