



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

University Examinations 2019/2020 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

THIRD YEAR SECOND SEMESTER EXAMINATION FOR

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

BTM 376-3: - SOCIOLOGY OF TOURISM

DATE: 12/11/2020

TIME: 8:30 – 10:30 AM

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer Question One and Any Other Two Questions

SECTION A: COMPULSORY

QUESTION ONE (30 MARKS)

Carefully read the case study below and answer the questions.

Bodies for Sale: Sex Tourism in Malindi

By Rasna Warah

Over the Christmas holiday season, foreign tourists started to trickle back to the Kenyan coastal town of Malindi, thanks to the lifting of travel advisories and the calming of political tensions that peaked this time last year in the wake of the 2017 election. Tourism in Malindi has suffered enormously in the last few years after a spate of terrorist attacks in the country and many hotels, shops and restaurants have closed down as a result. Poor infrastructure and general neglect of the town have further eroded Malindi's fortunes. The return of tourism was a welcome relief, especially for small traders and people working in the hotel industry.

However, no matter how bad the local economy gets, one aspect of Malindi never dies: the thriving sex tourism industry. On any given day, in the many cafes in this town, you will find aging foreigners, both male and female, accompanied by locals, many of whom appear to be underage. Child prostitution is tolerated here, and no one blinks an eye when they see young black women or girls accompanying much older white men.

Young men are also being lured into the business. The other day, I saw a group of young men (usually referred to as beach boys) with bare chests standing in line as if in a slave market outside a famous hotel in Malindi. The idea, as someone pointed out, is to get the attention of aging white women staying at the hotel who would be willing to “sponsor” the men in exchange for sex. This display of young male bodies on a beach in Kenya left me wondering how far we have come as a nation when our youth are forced to peddle their own flesh to earn a living.

Stories of married local men taking on foreign “wives” during the peak holiday season, and then going back to their real Kenyan wives during the low season, are common here. I have often wondered what prompts an older woman to have sex with a much younger man who is clearly in the game for the money. While female prostitution has existed since time immemorial, this phenomenon of sugar mummies is one that I still cannot wrap my head around.

Those who visit Malindi frequently or who live here are familiar with this scenario. When I first moved here, the sight of old, wrinkly European men and women with young Kenyan women or men who were young enough to be their grandchildren used to nauseate me. I wrote about this exploitative practice in several of my columns in the *Daily Nation*, only to be reprimanded by the Italian consul based here (and once also by the Italian ambassador to Kenya) who informed me that Italians in Malindi were not in the seaside resort to have sex with local women or children, but that they had made significant investments in the town and were also contributing to charitable causes. (Apart from hotels and restaurants and the odd charity, I have yet to see these investments.) I have also on several occasions been scolded by some Italian residents here, many of whom view Malindi as their personal playground, an extension of Italy in an ungoverned terrain where anything goes. (Rumour has it that Malindi was once the hideout of Italian mafia dons who were wanted in Italy.)

Malindi is a unique town in that it not only hosts a sizeable Italian population but also attracts large numbers of Italian tourists. Hence, many signs in the town are in Italian, and Malindi often feels like a colony of Italy. Almost everybody, from the boda-boda rider to the fisherman, speaks Italian. Even those who have moved to the town recently quickly learn to speak the language. Italians living here have refused to learn either English or Kiswahili. When I asked a local resident how he felt about his hometown being taken over by foreigners, he shrugged his shoulders and said, “We need them.

Without the Italians, we will have no jobs.” One businesswoman told me, “Malindi can’t survive without the Italians.”

In many ways, tourism in Kenya's coastal belt, and in other poor tourism destinations, feels a lot like colonialism. Bani Amor, who describes herself as a "queer travel writer, photographer and artist from Brooklyn by way of Ecuador", says that like colonial settlers, rich white tourists coming to these destinations not only feel entitled to the land but to its women as well. Income inequality between the tourist and the local population exacerbates the situation.

My own encounters with Italians living here have left a sour taste in my mouth. Though I have befriended a few enlightened ones, I find the majority's attitude towards Kenyans, the local Giriama in particular, to be condescending and racist. There is a type of apartheid here that makes a mockery of Kenya's independence. For example, when I tried to sit at a table full of Italians at the Malindi Golf Club not too long ago, an Italian woman literally "shooed" me away. Apparently, tables at the club are racially segregated. I have not been back to the club since.

Unfortunately, some local leaders view these forms of apartheid and sexual exploitation as beneficial to the economy. Not too long ago, a female senator urged her female constituents to bare their breasts in order to boost tourism. Mombasa Senator Emma Mbura urged Mijikenda women to go topless and wear just a *leso* around their hips. She argued that foreigners used to come to Kenya's coastal region specifically to look at naked African breasts, and that the recent practice of covering them had kept them away. She apparently believes that if more coastal women walked around naked, foreign tourists will come in droves to Kenya's beach resorts.

Local people, grappling with poverty, have also grown up believing that their bodies are there to be used. Their stunted lives do not allow them to imagine a place where they, not the foreigners, are in charge. They have been marginalised and sexually exploited for so long that they see selling sex as normal. They do not aspire to be doctors or lawyers or fashion designers because there are few role models in their community who can show them that there are other more productive and less self-denigrating ways of earning a living. Those Malindians who manage to obtain a higher education don't bother coming back.

Nothing changes in Malindi, I am told, because everyone, including politicians and the police, are in the pockets of criminal elements. Sex tourism thrives here because women, men, girls and boys are sexually exploited or "bought" in private villas, not in hotels, which have become much more vigilant about sex tourism, especially child prostitution, in recent years.

People in Malindi tell me that in a places like Kilifi County, which is among the six poorest counties in the country, I should expect the sexual exploitation of children and adults. They do not see these practices as sexual exploitation but as a legitimate trade—a form of prostitution but with less stigma because the men and women who buy them are white and because they do not operate from seedy brothels. Some parents even encourage their daughters to actively seek out white tourists, who are referred to as *dhahabu* (gold). Prostitution, they say, helps poor women, girls, men and boys to raise families and support siblings. When people start believing that selling their bodies is the only option available to them, then you know that something has gone deeply wrong in this county.

Surveys show that the largest consumers of sex tourism (including sex with minors) in Kenya are Italian, Swiss and German tourists. Interestingly, locals also form a large part of those who sexually exploit children. A study by the Dutch NGO Terre des Hommes [found that](#) boda-boda riders, in particular, use the promise of a free ride to have sex with under-age girls. The study also singled out Malindi as a place where contacts with locals are used to supply children to foreign tourists.

While the presence of tourists in Malindi and other parts of the coast is desirable, as they help build the local economy through creating jobs and spending money on local products, it has also introduced a type of decadence that has had a negative impact on the local population. The sight of so many local women, girls and boys being openly bought in the town no doubt has an impact on the mindset and aspirations of the younger generation, which is likely to fall into the same trap as there are few other options available to them.

Many organizations have raised the alarm about the sexual exploitation of women and children at the coast, but their warnings have had little impact because there is little will on the part of the authorities to address the issue. It appears that the Kenyan government and officials view women, girls and boys at the coast as a tourist attraction – as mere flesh to be exploited at the altar of the almighty tourist dollar.

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- a) Identify and explain the type of Host- Guest relationship that exists in Malindi as depicted in case study. (10 marks)
- b) Explain Five Negative social cultural impacts of tourism Malindi. (10 marks)
- c) Analyze the relevance of **Tourism Gaze theory of John Urry** in the case study above. (10 marks)

SECTION B: ANSWER ANY OTHER TWO QUESTIONS

QUESTION TWO (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain Five social cultural benefits of tourism in Kenya. (10 marks)
- b) Describe four characteristics of culture (10 marks)

QUESTION THREE (20 MARKS)

- a) Describe Five Measures that Must be put in place to maintain the cultural authenticity and meet tourist expectations in Kenya. (10 marks)
- b) Explain Five factors that have facilitated growth of cultural tourism in Kenya. (10 marks)

QUESTION FOUR (20 MARKS)

- a) Explain five factors that motivate tourist mobility in a destination (10 marks)
- b) Giving relevant examples describe the Kenya Non material culture. (10 marks)

QUESTION FIVE (20 MARKS)

- a) Describe how tourism has contributed to gender inequality in the Hospitality and tourism industry. (10 marks)
- b) Explain five Physical controls measures that must be put in place to manage visitor mobility impacts on the environment. (10 marks)