



Analysis of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Tourism Industry in Tanzania

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<https://riiopenjournals.com/index.php/hospitality-tourism-review>

Doi: <https://doi.org/0.38157/hospitality-tourism-review.v1i2.214>

Citation: Batinoluho, L. (2020). Analysis of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Tourism Industry in Tanzania. *Hospitality & Tourism Review*, 1(2), 25-35. Doi: <https://doi.org/0.38157/hospitality-tourism-review.v1i2.214>

Research Article

Abstract

Purpose: The main purpose of this paper is to analyze the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the tourism industry in Tanzania and to propose mitigation measures.

Methods: This study was based on the desk review of published materials. Critical analysis of commercial sex exploitation of children in the Tourism (CSECT) industry in Tanzania was conducted.

Results: According to the findings, children in Tanzania are involved in commercial sex trade with tourists and residents. This perception was also supported by the studies which were conducted by End Child Prostitution and Trafficking International (ECPAT International) in Tanzania in 2013 and in Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa in 2015.

Implications: The problem of commercial sex exploitation of children in Tourism is aggravated by poverty and the trafficking of children for child labor engagement. The study serves as an early wake-up call for the policymakers in Tanzania. The study recommends prevention, protection, prosecution, policy, and mobilize coordinated national action to end the problem.

Keywords: Tourism, Sexual, Exploitation, Commercial, Hazardous, Children.

1. Introduction

The link between tourism and the sexual exploitation of children is not obvious. However as the tourism industry expands in Tanzania, the chances for child sex exploitation increase. Sexual exploitation of children is one of the forms of child labor. ECPAT International (2016) and United Nations (2017), referred to the Commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism (CSECT) as any “acts of sexual exploitation embedded in a context of travel or tourism, or both”. United Nations World Tourism Organization (2018) emphasizes that the exploitation of children conflicts with the fundamental aims of tourism and should be strongly combated with the cooperation of all the States concerned.

According to the ILO (1973), child labor is classified as children's work which is of such a nature or intensity that it is detrimental to their schooling or harmful to their health and development.

Child labor is a complex socio-economic issue affecting the lives of 218 million children worldwide. Among them, 152 million are victims of child labor; almost half of them, 73 million, work in hazardous child labor including sexual exploitation of children, especially in the tourism industry (Figure 1). In real terms, nearly half of child labor (72.1 million) is in Africa. Also in Africa, 1 in 5 children (19.6%) is in child labor, whereas in the Arab States (1 in 35 children); in Europe and Central Asia (1 in 25); in the Americas (1 in 19) and in Asia and the Pacific region (1 in 14). In addition, nearly 50% of all 152 million children victims of child labor are aged 5-11 years (ILO, 2018).

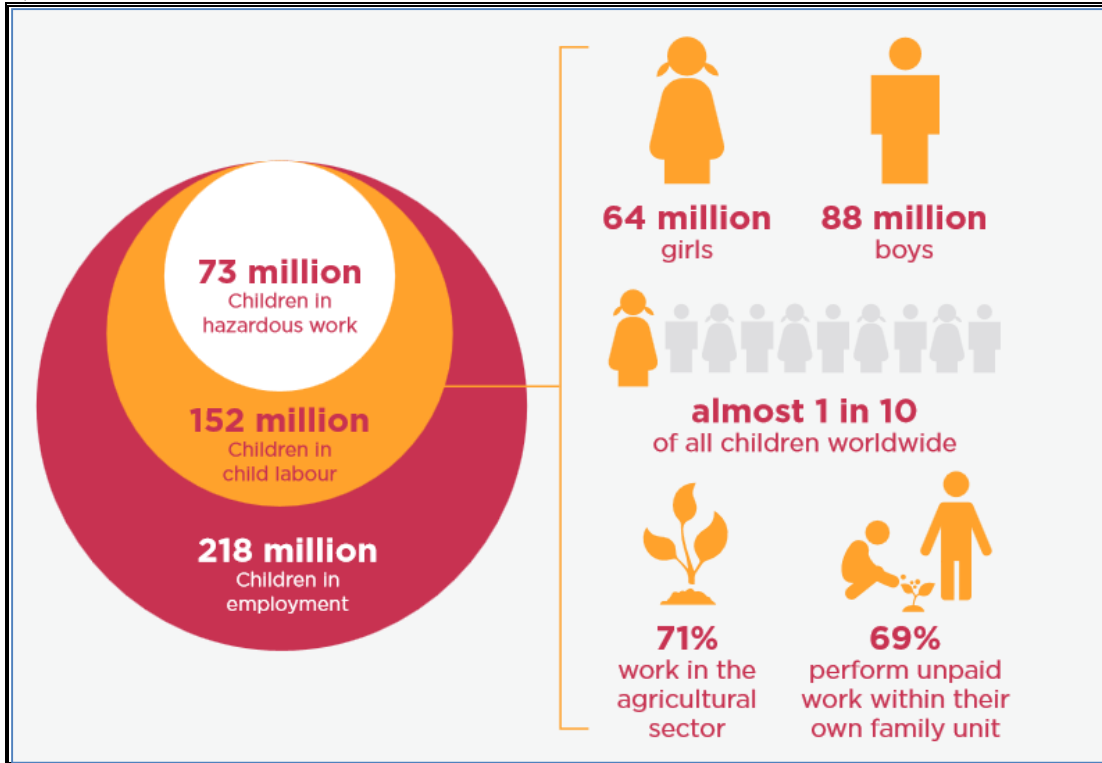


Figure 1: Global estimates of children in Child Labor in 2018

Source: ILO, 2018

Globally, 25% of all the children in child labor are employed in the service sector (ILO, 2019). Whereas, in Tanzania, 18.7% of the children in child labor are employed in the service sector. Girls consist of over 70% of child employment in the sector. The average age for employment of children is 7 and 16 years. Children workers in the service sector are molested and sexually assaulted by visitors and owners of households and enterprises. In the country, the rights of the child are compromised because of social, cultural, and economic factors. The violation of child rights is particularly pronounced in many forms of child labor, which is the participation of children in a wide variety of work situations, on a more or less regular basis, to earn a livelihood for themselves or others (USDOL, 2011 and National Bureau of Statistics, 2014). ECPAT International (2011), conducted studies in Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, and RSA and confirmed that there is CSECT in those countries. USDOL (2011) and NBS (2014) noted that there is a pronounced violation of child rights in many forms of child labor in Tanzania. ECPAT International (2013) found that Tanzania was the first country in Africa to carry out a National Study on Violence

against Children. The study found that preventing violence against children in Tanzania is complicated by the influence of poverty and a weak social protection framework to protect vulnerable children. Even though this study provided recommendations regarding the prevention of violence against children, it did not focus on the sexual exploitation of children in the tourism industry. It is against this background the study on the analysis of sex exploitation of children in the tourism industry in Tanzania was established.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Policy and Legal Framework on Child Labor

The International Labor Organization (ILO) in its Convention number 138 on the minimum age for admission into any employment and Convention number 182 on the worst forms of child labor, defines a *child as any person below age 18*. Countries that ratified Convention number 138 may come up with their own minimum age for admission into labor. For example, Tanzania's Employment and Labor Relations Act number 5 of 2004, sets the minimum age at 14 below which is a criminal offense to engage a child in any employment. Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development is known as "Child Labor" (ILO, 1974).

ILO (1974) defines child labor as children's work which is of such a nature or intensity that it is detrimental to their schooling or harmful to their health and development. The big concern is with children who are denied their childhood and a future, who work long hours for low wages, who work under conditions harmful to their health and to their physical and mental development, who are separated from their families, or who are deprived of education and bad enough who work at a too young age. Child labor creates irreversible damage to the child and is in violation of international law and usually, national legislation. According to Ballescás (1987) and Duran (1994), child labor refers to only those activities which are socially useful and remunerable, requiring manual and/or intellectual effort, which results in the production of goods or performance of services. Child labor does not include household chores for one's own family. Child labor includes mendicancy, which is not a socially useful means of livelihood and works in family enterprises (in agriculture, domestic work, services sectors such as tourism and hospitality), debt bondage, employment, and self-employment.

Children's or adolescents' participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business, or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

Globally, children's rights to protection from abuse, exploitation, and discrimination have been articulated in several declarations, codes, and laws such as the ILO Convention No. 5, adopted in 1919; ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Employment in 1973, and ILO Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor in 1999. Also, other conventions include the

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict; CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution; Child Pornography; Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons; Minimum Age for Work (14); Minimum Age for; Hazardous Work (18); Compulsory Education Age (15); Free Public Education and Domestic Workers Convention 189 of June 2011 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular to Target 8.7, which calls for effective measures to end forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking, as well as child labor in all its forms.

Whereas in Tanzania, children's rights to protection from abuse, exploitation, and discrimination have been articulated in several declarations, codes, and laws as well, including Employment and Labor Relations Act, 2004; National Action Plan 2009; Law of the Child Act, 2009; Children Development Policy, 2008; Youth Development Policy 1996; Social Protection Framework, 2008; and Vision 2025. All these conventions, policies, laws, strategies, and other proclamations recognize that children are one of the most vulnerable groups in Tanzanian society. Such susceptibility often makes the children objects of abuse, discrimination, and exploitation.

On many occasions, children are paid inadequate wages and they are often denied leave or day off for worship. Children are exposed to hazardous conditions including physical and sexual abuse; bed making; scrubbing floors; cleaning toilets; washing clothes; excessive hours of work including night work; heavy manual work (lifting visitors luggage) leading to backache and inadequate and unbalanced meal/food. Hazards inherent to the tourism sector include heavy manual handling; slippery floors; dangerous machinery and tools; electricity including fires, hot surfaces, boiling water, oils or food; poor work postures; hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, allergens, extremes of temperature (heat, cold); use of sharp instruments/tools, appliances, and knives; excessive long working hours; sexual abuse and violence; and drug and alcohol addiction (Tanzania's List of Hazardous work for children, 2009).

Whilst all these activities encompass child labor, the concern of the International Labor Organization focuses on types of child labor which are exploitative. Rodgers and Standing, (1981) observed that exploitation occurs under two general conditions; firstly the extent to which part of the products of workers is expropriated by others, often by members of another class or generation; and secondly the extent to which the children suffer discrimination relative to their abilities, rights and developmental needs.

2.1.2 Theoretical Framework

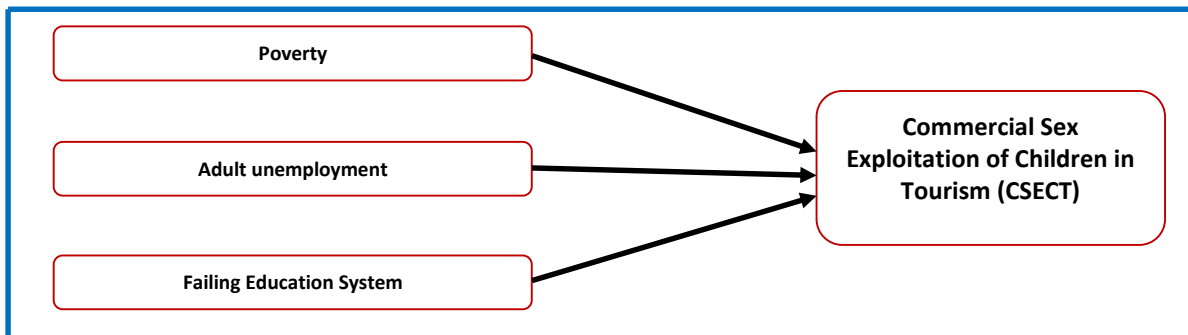


Figure 2: Theoretical Framework of the study

2.1.2.1 Link between CSECT and poverty

CSECT perpetuates inter-generational poverty and hinders the achievement of education for all. Mostly the parents of CSECT victims were CSECT themselves, who grew up to be semi-skilled, illiterate or semi-literate, and unemployed or underemployed adults. Their poverty obliged them to send their own children to work prematurely, thereby jeopardizing the future of their children. CSECT robs children of educational opportunities that impart the knowledge and skills they need to obtain better jobs as adults. It is difficult to escape from the inter-generational trap of CSECT and poverty (Varma, 2011).

2.1.2.2 Adult unemployment and reduced bargaining power

Even though many parents of CSECT victims are either underemployed or unemployed, employers prefer to "hire" children as a cheap source of labor. For instance, a survey of employers in industries with high levels of CSECT victims in India reported that 80 percent of all employers cited "*lower labor costs/wages*" and the possibility of being able to "*extract more work*" from children as the primary reasons for employing children. Employers look at children as easy to manage because they are more compliant and less aware of their rights than adults. Children will not try to organize themselves for their protection. The preference of employers to use the cheapest and most vulnerable workforce contributes to low wages and adult unemployment. Effectively, the vast number of working children reduces the ability of adults to bargain for fair wages, and/or takes jobs away from adults. When employers are able to hire children for less, adults are unable to negotiate for higher wages (Varma, 2011).

Children are denied their right to education because it is not free or affordable in many countries. Those who work prematurely and extensively may never receive the education or training needed to obtain a liveable wage. They grow up to be uneducated and illiterate adults, who are either unemployed or underemployed in unorganized sectors with no power to bargain for fair wages. Like their parents, they are unable to support their children's education. So they send their own children to work, repeating the cycle of CSECT and poverty. CSECT is both a *cause* and a *consequence* of poverty. CSECT creates generations of illiterate, unskilled adults by denying education to the future workforce. Thus, the downward cycle of children's sexual exploitation and poverty continues. Eliminating CSECT is key to achieving Education for All and alleviating poverty (Varma, 2011).

2.1.2.3 Damaged physical, mental or social development

According to Varma (2011), CSECT often harms the *physical, mental* or *social* development of children. Physically strenuous activities and lack of proper nutrition may lead to stunted growth. Some children have even lost vital organs in accidents at work and have been handicapped for the rest of their lives. Children who are engaged in CSECT work in depressing environments often endure physical and emotional abuse. They lack opportunities to properly socialize with their peers. CSECT victims also often miss *intellectual* stimulation. Overall, their self-esteem and activities are compromised. Thereby, they are often forced into leading lives of poverty.

2.2 CSECT at Global level

According to ILO (2018), nearly 4,300,000 children are in forced labor. Out of them, almost 1,000,000 children are in commercial sex exploitation including CSECT (Figure 2). UNWTO (2018) estimates that tourism in the African continent has more than tripled in the last two decades and the number of arrivals is forecasted to more than double again by 2030. This projection shows that the number of children in CSECT will continue to increase if the problem remains unattended.



Figure 3: Global estimates of children in Forced Labor in 2018

Source: ILO, 2018

2.2.1 CSECT in Uganda

Various major issues inform children's vulnerability to CSECT in Uganda. Ongoing conflicts in neighboring countries, which have caused displacement is not the only circumstance of making children in Uganda vulnerable to CSECT. Abject poverty and lack of adequate education experience are major causes of higher vulnerability to CSECT. There are approximately 10,000 children in Uganda who are in street due to extreme poverty and failure of the education system in the country (UNHCR and UNICEF, 2015).

Uganda, in particular, intends to become a ranking world tourism destination by drawing in visitors to its attractions. Since 2011, the tourism sector in Uganda experiences the highest growth rate in Africa (ECPAT International 2011). A significant proportion of travel and tourism in Uganda takes place through orphanage volunteer tourism programs. Through these programs, often outbound tourists from developed countries visit orphanages for short periods and are usually permitted unsupervised access to the vulnerable children that live there. Volunteers mostly have neither previous experience in childcare nor teaching and are typically not required to undergo background checks. Over the past 30 years, the number of children in orphanages in Uganda has increased exponentially from approximately 1,000 in the 1990s to 50,000 in 2017. Conversely, volunteer tourism has grown in popularity in the country, the orphanage industry has also boomed as foreigners often pay thousands of dollars to volunteer with orphaned children. This boom has been accompanied by the growing concern that many of these orphanages are principally income-generating establishments that operate with little regulation, and continue to put children at risk of commercial sexual exploitation and other evils.

2.2.2 CSECT in Kenya

ECPAT International (2015) conducted a study on the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism as part of the global study in 14 countries. The purpose of the survey was to strengthen the evidence-base and to raise awareness and build consensus on priority actions needed in law

and policy reform. The study revealed that commercial sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism is prevalent in Kenya. Children in Kenya are involved in the commercial sex trade with both tourists and Kenyan nationals who travel from other parts of the country. The study further discovered that 81.2% and 94.8% of children and adults respectively reported having heard of children being involved in sex with tourists and travelers. Also, the study discovered that 25% of children and 51% of adults interviewed believed that the perpetrators come from other countries as well.

The main child sex perpetrators were identified as tourists originating from Canada, China, Germany, Italy, Korea, UK, USA, among other tourist source countries. African countries identified included Eastern African countries namely Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, including Kenya. Other nations identified were South Africa, Sudan, and Nigeria. CSECT is reportedly widespread in major tourist destinations such as Mombasa, Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega, Nakuru, as well as other major towns across Kenya. CSECT in Kenya is perpetuated by a number of factors, especially household poverty. Other factors included the low level of education and poor housing, lack of self-control, guidance and counseling, peer pressure, early exposure to foreign lifestyles, drug abuse among other factors. These life challenges render children highly vulnerable and therefore subject them to be easy prey for tourists.

2.2.3 CSECT in Zambia

ECPAT (2015) in its study on commercial sex exploitation of children in travel and tourism revealed that sexual exploitation of children exists and it's a growing problem in Zambia. It was further discovered that children below the age of 18 do have sexual interactions with both inbound and outbound tourists from all over the world. These tourists often travel to Zambia for business, attending meetings and conferences, and to see tourist attractions such as the "Mighty" Victoria Falls, Mukuni Big Five, national parks, museums, white water rafting, and bungee jumping, but they end up having sex with children. Other foreigners are Chinese who come to Zambia as investors in the mining and construction industries. The study revealed that, despite the fact that both girls and boys are affected, it was established that more girls were victims than boys. Most children become involved in CSECT from age 10; this research discovered a few cases of boys and girls as young as 8 years old.

As it was the case for Kenya, household poverty was found to be the most common reason as to why boys and girls become easy prey to CSECT; some children lack basic needs such as shelter, food, and clothing and need to sell or engage in transactional sex in order to meet these basic requirements. Peer pressure and being out of school with little to do were also significant factors in augmenting children's vulnerability to sexual exploitation.

2.2.4 CSECT in South Africa

According to ECPAT International (2015), South Africa is one of the countries most affected by commercial sex exploitation of children in tourism in the African region. Also, ECPAT and FTT (2013) published a report on the prevalence of CSECT in South Africa. All respondents to the study considered CSECT to be a serious issue in South Africa. Even though it was noted that boys

are also sexually exploited by both men and women, victims were perceived to be primarily girls from poor and/or single-parent families or orphaned. The study further found that other risk factors included: prior history of abuse; low levels of education; poor parental relationships; limited parental supervision and abandonment. It was also found that children being forced into marriage or being sent away by their parents to live with relatives perpetuates CSECT. Children with limited parental supervision were also cited as vulnerable.

2.2.5 CSECT in Tanzania

There is limited data on the nature and extent of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the tourism sector in Tanzania. This is attributed to inadequate research on the topic as well as the hidden nature of CSECT related issues in society. However, there is evidence that CSECT is a growing problem, especially in popular tourist attractions, cities, and town centers. Poverty, failure of the education system, lack of awareness, and ignorance are some of the causes of CSECT. For instance, due to abject poverty, children are forced to drop out of school and some have no other means of survival than prostitution. Some parents give their daughters away for a dowry, and children are trafficked from rural areas to urban areas because it is believed that they are free from AIDS (ECPAT, 2013).

3. Methodology

This study is based on a literature review. The literature used included published articles, journals, books, newspapers, and magazines. Also, the study used Google scholar search engine with the keywords to access various information on the topic. Critical analysis of the sexual exploitation of children in tourism in Tanzania was carried out by borrowing experience from other peer countries, such as Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa. Content analysis was employed to assess the content and concept of child labor in relation to tourism. This technique is a common data analysis method in the social sciences (Berg, 2009). The scholar further identifies that this method involves a careful, detailed, systematic assessment, and interpretation of a particular body of material with the intention of identifying patterns, themes, biases, and meanings. Additionally, the technique identifies the meaning of the text and therefore maintains a qualitative textual approach (Silverman, 2006; Elo and Kyngäs, 2007). The reason for this method is that it is analytically flexible and offers a replicable methodology if done correctly (Duriau, Reger, and Pfarrer, 2007). Elo and Kyngäs (2007) noted that this method can be employed as an inductive or deductive research approach and that different levels of analysis can be performed using qualitative or quantitative approaches through longitudinal research designs. In tourism research, several studies have adopted this technique. The analysis was conducted to contextualize interpretations of the reviewed literature to produce valid, reliable, dependable, and trustworthy findings.

4. Key Findings

According to this study, children in Tanzania are involved in the commercial sex trade with tourists and Tanzanian residents and nationals. This perception is supported by the studies which were conducted by End Child Prostitution and Trafficking International (ECPAT International)

in Tanzania in 2013 and Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa in 2015. This study found that preventing CSECT in Tanzania is complicated due to the influence of poverty and a weak social protection framework to protect vulnerable children.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

ILO (2001) conducted a study on Children in Prostitution, which aimed at establishing the causes, incidences, and trends of children in prostitution in Tanzania. The study noted evidence of the existence of sexual exploitation of children in the service CSECT or including the tourism industry. As part of addressing the problem, the study proposed tentative measures towards eradicating child prostitution in the country. Among the proposed solutions include information and awareness-raising campaigns including local government and religious leaders and NGOs; outreach activities integrated into all local community structures and institutions such as schools, police forces, community groups, and churches; increase in vocational training programs; capacity building in local communities to promote social and economic gains; and targeting the demand side of child prostitution. However, there is little evidence to suggest that these preventive measures were implemented.

ECPAT (2013) conducted a survey on the Global monitoring status of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children found that the sexual exploitation of children in tourism is increasing in Tanzania, especially along with the Indian Ocean's beach hotels. In those hotels, tourists come specifically looking to have sexual intercourse with children, both male and female. The study cited Zanzibar as recognized as one of the countries most affected by the sexual exploitation of children in tourism in Africa. The study further noted that, even if child prostitution is strongly denied in Zanzibar, the sexual exploitation of children in tourism can be readily observed. The study added that Zanzibar is a desirable destination for men looking to have sexual intercourse with young boys and there are certain locations that are well-known for finding boy prostitutes. The study identified child sex offenders as inbound tourists and other foreigners involved in other businesses.

Also, Kiota Women's Health and Development (2013), conducted a study on the sexual exploitation of children in tourism covering four regions in Tanzania. The study's respondents included: victims of CSEC, tour guides, community leaders, hotel workers, Tanzania Tourist Board staff, beach boys, food vendors, taxi drivers, and community members living near tourist attractions. The study discovered that the sexual exploitation of children in tourism is a problem, especially in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Zanzibar; and many areas that are well known for tourism activities across Tanzania.

Despite the limited available data on CSECT in Tanzania, there is some evidence that child prostitution not only exists in the country. The existing evidence shows that CSECT is growing in the country due to increased tourism, poverty, and a growing number of street children in urban areas. Kiwohede (2013) found that children from 9-17 years of age were found to be involved in prostitution. Most of these children were trafficked to the bigger cities from rural areas with false promises of employment as house girls and barmaids and then sold to brothels, guesthouses, or left to live on the streets. Areas in Dar es Salaam as well as suburbs like Uwanja, Wa Fisi, Temeke

stereo, Buguruni Sewa, Buguruni Alabama, Magomeni Kwa Macheeni, Manzese, and Kinondoni are well known for child prostitution.

According to Kiwohede (2013), the Dar es Salaam City Authority carried out operations to clear child prostitutes out of certain areas, but these operations have only targeted the children involved in prostitution excluding offenders. The Author further noted that the police have also been known to exploit child prostitutes by arresting them and offering to release them in exchange for sexual favors.

The problem of CSECT in Tanzania is attributed to many factors including, inter alia, abject poverty, limited educational opportunities (especially for girls), urban migration, orphan-hood, child-headed families, marital separation, parents irresponsibility, peer influence, cultural practices that favor early/ forced marriages (causing young girls to run away to urban areas) and a preference by adult males for young girls as sexual partners in the belief that these girls are free from HIV/ AIDS.

Kiwohede (2013), described child sex offenders to vary depending on the price of the child. Tourists, businessmen, and civil society workers may be willing to pay more for sexual acts, while locals and teenagers may exploit those children who charge the lowest rates – sometimes only asking for food or a drink. Some child prostitutes operate out of hotels and bars and have clients that include wealthy tourists, businessmen, and politicians while others have sexual intercourse in the street, for lower prices. The prostitution business is mobile in Tanzania, with girls traveling to tourist towns and attractions, mining centers, gas towns, and the capital city in Dodoma especially during Parliament sessions.

6. Conclusion

This study found that commercial sexual exploitation of children in the tourism industry in Tanzania is significant and potentially a growing crisis. It is aggravated by poverty and the trafficking of children for child labor engagement, including commercial sexual exploitation. This was confirmed by the findings of several studies conducted on CSECT in Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa and it is now clear that Tanzania is not immune. As Tanzania continues to promote its tourist attractions so that may continue to be among the best desirable tourist destinations in the world, the problem will continue to grow. However, it is very difficult to obtain statistics or figures on the scale and scope of such violations due to the insufficient studies as well as the hidden nature of the catastrophe in Tanzania. The study findings conclude that unless prevention, protection, prosecution, policy, and mobilize coordinated national action to end the problem are effectively in place, sexual exploitation of children will continue to be a problem in the tourism industry in Tanzania.

7. Direction for Future Research

Further studies should be conducted to establish the prevalence rate of CSECT in Tanzania. New research should be conducted on more specific groups of children, such as street children and/or victims of CSECT and its root causes. The study recommends prevention, protection, prosecution, policy, and mobilize coordinated national action to end the problem.

Acknowledgment: An earlier version of this paper was presented in the International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality organized by the Tourism Educators and Researchers Association of Zimbabwe (TERAZ). The author wishes to thank the organizer of the conference as well as the anonymous reviewers for their comments and recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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