

Winning In the Tourism Marketing: The Case of Zanzibar Tourism Destination in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT: This investigation presents analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) in tourism sector of Zanzibar Tanzania, in order to find out the prospects for marketing policies and strategies for the sector with better strategic planning. Zanzibar possesses certain important and attractive historical, cultural and natural attributes that have made it a reasonable tourism destination. Using derivative information and identified SWOT variables, the paper critically reviews the relevant material for the sake of the analysis and discovered that Zanzibar tourism sector has been experiencing significant level of growth and expansion due to government policies and attention. The result shows that, the sector fuels the economy of the state and possesses certain important attributes that could help it in attaining the position of top most Indian Ocean tourism destination. However, the investigation found that, there is need of effective management of natural resources to assure their fair access and control to the tourists as well as local population. The paper also put forwards, possible strategies and approaches together with some recommendations to the government, policy makers and marketing managers to assist them in formulating adequate policies for the sector.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, Strategies, Marketing, SWOT-Analysis, Zanzibar.

1 BACKGROUND

Tourism has been more rapidly growing sector in the world of business with widespread economic benefits to the community, increased employment, infrastructure and superstructure improvement, economic diversification and environment preservation in countries and regions. Tourism destination management may be defined as a process of meeting objectives, using human, material, natural and information resources, and involving activities connected with planning, organization, motivation and control (Goranczewski & Puciato, 2010). Major cities, countries and regions have been struggling to resolve challenges and meet new expectations emerging in the world of tourism market aiming at rising visitation to and inside the tourism areas. Countries are trying to modernizing cooperative and more successful strategies that can foster growth of the industry and meet the requirements.

Zanzibar which is holding tourism potential and best tourist destination in eastern part of Africa is a semi-autonomous polity amongst the two east African sovereign states of Tanganyika and Zanzibar united (merged) in 1964 to form one country known as United Republic of Tanzania. It consists of two major islands including Pemba and Unguja. Zanzibar or Zanzibar Islands is blessed by nature with all world resources and attractions that the tourists usually look for like tropical beaches, palm trees, natural forest reserves, historical and cultural sites, fascinating and cheap markets for spices and handicrafts, historical stone town and adoring coastal sites (Makame and Boon, 2008). Zanzibar has become a favourite destination for the tourists coming from different countries and regions of the world due to which the tourism sector has evolved as top income generating sector for the economy of Zanzibar (Archabald and Naughton 2001)

The tourism sector of Zanzibar was not developed enough to meet the requirements of the tourists till 1980s however, the government of Zanzibar realized the importance of tourism sector as a source of generating foreign exchange due to which there is great emphasize being given to the development of this sector. The government has expressed its intentions

to promote the tourism industry of Zanzibar to make it top tourism destinations of the Indian Ocean (Luhanho, 2006). During the last few years there is considerable development observed in the tourism sector of Zanzibar. By 1990, there was no hotel present within the eastern coastal zone however, at present there are more than 237 accommodation facilities present at this coastal area that serve the tourists and provide them different leisure activities (Orjala, 2006).

With increasing significance of destination marketing, Zanzibar has to tactically analyze its interior and exterior environments in order to come up with logical approaches for a successful industry strategy formulation. This evaluation will help the region to recapitulate its current situation and therefore help to formulate a preparation for the competitive future tourism industry. The more globalised world of today necessitates organizations to depict to a greater and challenging extent of confusions in both its micro and macro environments. The process of environmental scanning allows an organization to arrange in a line its resources to take advantage of business opportunities at the same time defending against threats and intimidations. The process (the manager) will first analyze the internal environment by perhaps looking into inefficiencies inside the organization and will then look outside to the external environment and things happening independent of the organization. Environmental scans allow managers to use the knowledge gained during the scanning process to decide what strategic steps, or changes, the organization needs to take to create or maintain a competitive advantage. The micro-environmental factors are in the shortest or direct relationship with the organization as seen in fig.3 where the organization is competent of applying a certain extent of influence in adjusting the situation. Macro-environment on the other hand, impacts on the organization but related indirectly and therefore beyond the control of the organisation (Armstrong & Kotler 2000).

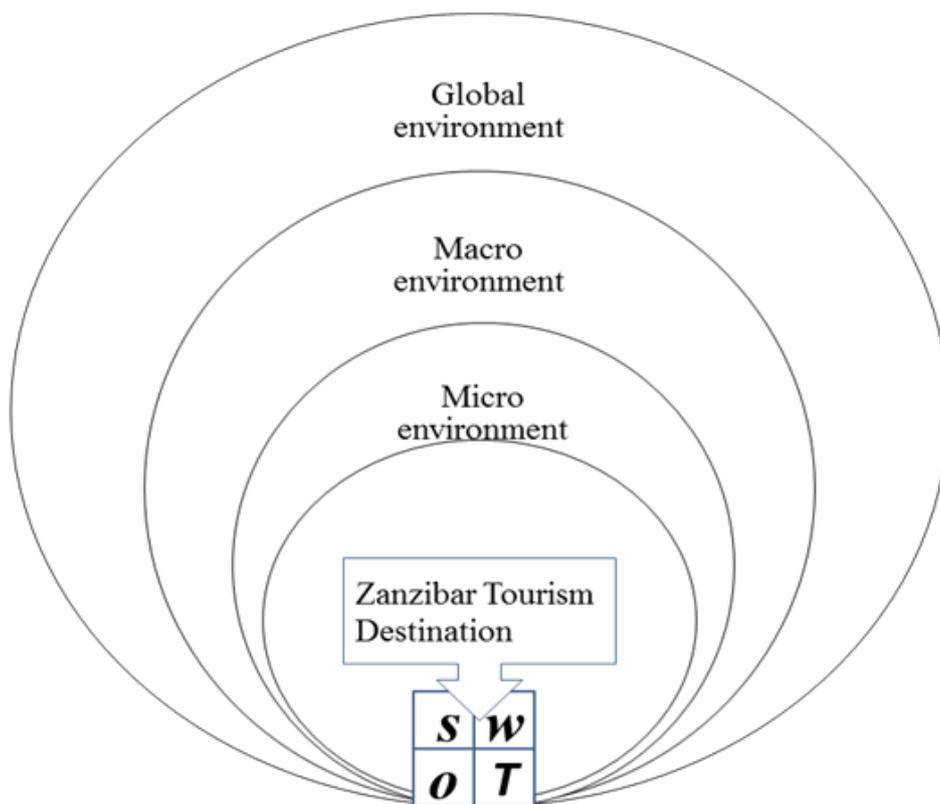


Fig. 1. The environmental scanning with SWOT analysis as related to Zanzibar

Source: Author, developed from N Wellman (2011)

According to Boz et al., (2007), to gain the most viable advantage in destination, fundamental characteristics of destinations should be determined and evaluated and it is necessary to create specific tourism policies and strategies for developing a long term plan for tourism industry and to avoid the long term problems associated with imperfect tourism development. As SWOT facilitates a common understanding of what is called “reality” among different working areas within an organizations or between organizations and their clients, suppliers, peers groups, shareholders or superiors. It includes examination of the organization’s existing condition and design of the strategy for the four types of strategic situation. The fig.4 shows algorithm of a procedure in SWOT analysis according to Weihrich.

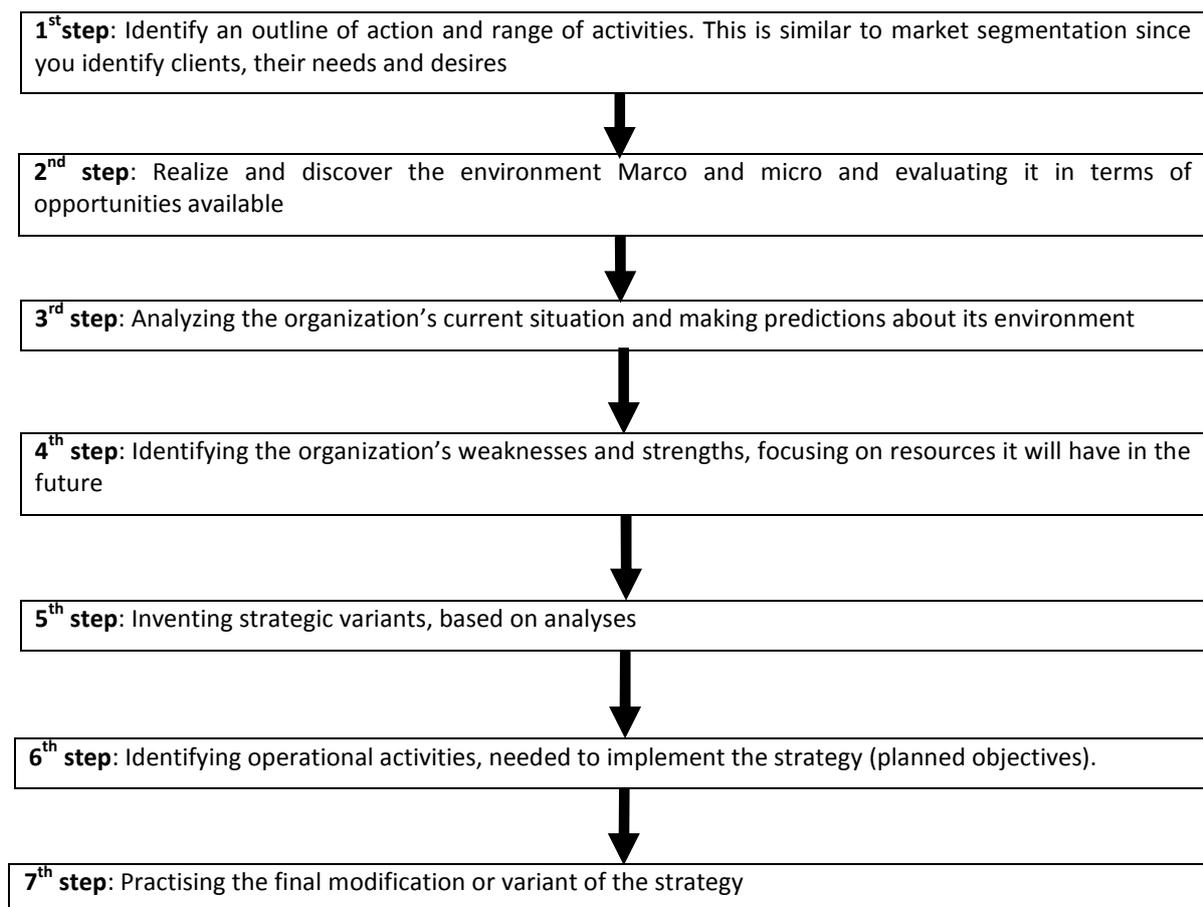


Fig. 2. *algorithm of a procedure in SWOT analysis, according to Weihrich*

This paper identifies the role of SWOT analysis in the formulation of best tourism improvement strategies for Zanzibar tourism destination. SWOT analysis as one of the most regularly used methods in strategic management can help providing basis for the manipulation of the current characteristics of Zanzibar tourism destination. Once SWOT results is identified and prioritized, it can be easier to develop temporary and continuing strategies for the business. The study material contains secondary data gathered from the literatures, bibliographic studies and relevant documents. The study uses a descriptive approach and sketch outs concepts in tourism development strategy using descriptions and manipulation of SWOT analysis.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The tourism sector of Zanzibar has been examined with respect to its strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. SWOT analysis is a common and widely used method of strategic management and planning that allow specifying the business objectives and identifying the internal and external factors that act favourably or unfavourably while achieving the decided goals. This sort of analysis helps evaluating a changing environment in current businesses and induces reactions proactively.

For conducting the SWOT analysis, a detail environmental scanning of the Zanzibar tourism sector has been done and both the external and internal factors associated with this sector are examined. The internal factors affecting the Zanzibar tourism sector are analyzed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the sector whereas the external environment analysis is carried out to point out the opportunities and threats related with the Zanzibar tourisms sector. Table 1 show the environmental scanning framework followed in the study for conducting the SWOT analysis of the Zanzibar tourism sector.

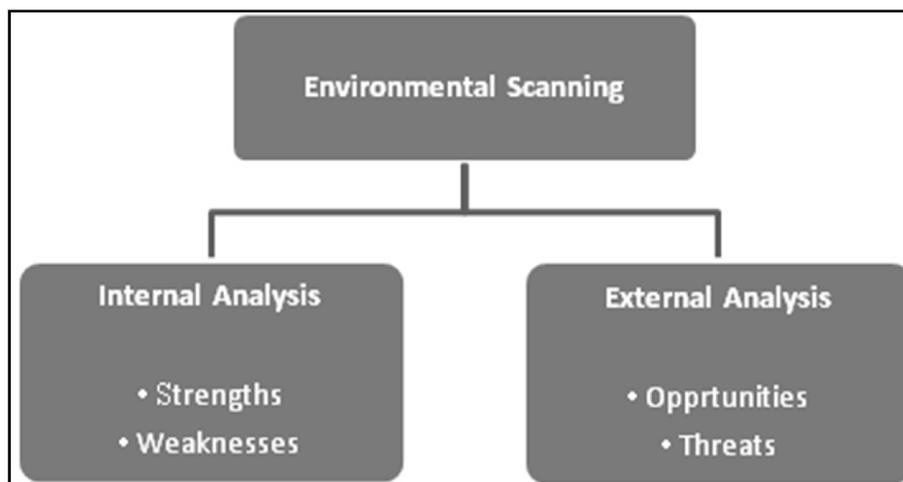


Fig. 3. SWOT Analysis framework followed in the study

This framework has been used for the SWOT analysis of the Zanzibar tourism sector. The environmental scanning has been conducted through the analysis of relevant information and literature relevant to the Zanzibar tourism sector that allows analyzing the potential of the sector to become a competitive and preferred tourism destination of the Indian Ocean. This examination reveals the prospects for marketing strategies for promoting Zanzibar tourism sector and allows having understanding the present situation as well as future direction of the Zanzibar tourism sector. The analysis basically aims to point out the areas where the marketing managers need to focus and it also spot the areas that possess great scope of marketing strategies and tactics. As in shown the fig.1, the more expanded SWOT analysis, it contains the logical combinations of factors relate to internal strengths or weaknesses with factors related to external opportunities or threats. The internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) are those that can be can be addressed or achieved on the tourism destination itself in accomplishing its objectives and targets. The external factors (opportunities and Threats) are those which are helpful (positive) or harmful (negative) in attaining the targets. Manipulating and identification of the factors and their interdependence helps clarify the steps needed to achieve the ending purpose. The logical combination of external and internal factors leads to four categories in the analysis. These are (1) External positive-opportunities (2) External negative-threats (3) Internal positive-strengths and (4) Internal negative-weaknesses (Gierszewska & Romanowska 2002, Goranczewski & Puciato 2010). Internal positive factors are actually the strengths which represent the most significant capital, skills and competences of the tourism destination which are applied to improve its economical situation. These possibly will include unique human impact on the environment with regard to tourism advantages, a powerfully built tourism network, transportation and communications as well as superstructures, highly skilled workforce and of course a high-quality destination brand name. The internal negative factors are the weaknesses that generally considered impeding development of the sector in the destination. The weaknesses may incorporate the reduced government support and funding, poorly improved infrastructures and weak perception of the workforce with regard to tourism sector and support in the destination. The threats or external negative factors are impediments or risks which block progress and the achievement of the targets such as adjustments in tourist favourites, cost-effective depression, problems in cross-border traffic, negative impulsive events (such as terrorism attack etc), and positive reception of the national currency etc.

External positive factors are opportunities and prospects such as improved transport connections to the area, which can be technically employed in accomplishing the targets. The constructive adjustments to tourism legislation, an increase in individual profits and disposable incomes and an improved situation on the tourism market are included as external positive factors.

The essence of SWOT analysis is the ability to take advantage of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and to ensure compatibility between the destination's resources and conditions in its environment. In this respect, SWOT analysis has become a tool which allows marketers and users to look at the direction an organization may wish to move towards in the future. Therefore it has become a strategic evaluation tool which marketers use for assessing organizational strategic position. After the evaluation, the stakeholders have to make use of the identified strengths, remove or eradicate the weaknesses, seize the opportunities and neutralize the threats.

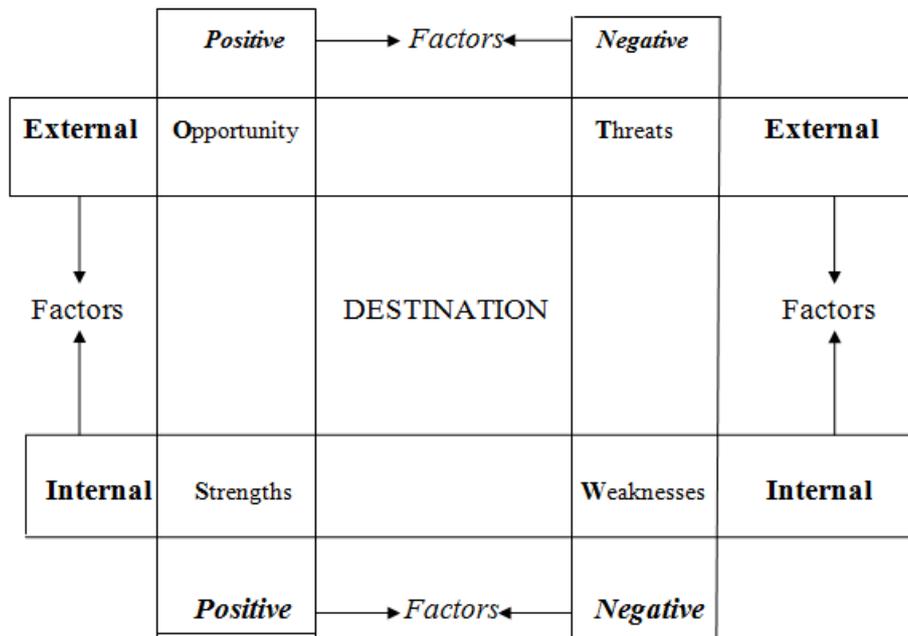


Fig. 4. The factors affecting the position of a tourism destination in SWOT analysis

Source: Author, developed from SWOT factors

A procedure which involves SWOT scoring and the likelihood of strategic success can also help choosing the right strategy. The process engages the evaluation on an established scale of key internal and external factors, and arranging whether there are more strengths than weaknesses in the organization and more opportunities than threats in its environment. In this process, the list of strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities in the form of a table, and their evaluation on an accepted scale, e.g. 1-5 points, summarizing strengths and weaknesses is prepared. Then identification of an organization's strategic position, with one of the four strategies (SO, WO, ST, WT), as described above, ascribed to it. Subsequent to these steps then an estimation of the probability of strategic success (PSS) follows. (Berliński 2002; Berliński & Penc-Pietrzak 2004, Goranczewski & Puciato 2010). PSS as the chance of the considered strategy is computed mathematically as

$$PSS = \frac{SP + AS}{2}$$

SP = the organization's internal strength

AS = the organization's attractiveness in the environment The PSS (here, coefficient of Probability of a Strategic Success) varies from zero to one and the demand for attaining the success is to have the value greater than 0.5 [$0 < PSS \leq 1$ and $PSS > 0.5$]

The internal strength (**SP**) and external strength (**AS**) are computed using the following course of action based on the list of strengths (**S**) and weaknesses (**W**) as in internal strength and opportunity (**O**) and threats (**T**) as in external strength.

$$SP = \frac{\sum S}{\sum S + W}$$

$$AS = \frac{\sum O}{\sum O + T}$$

These are all probabilities which can be calculated or computed in a correct or an approximation format.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The review of the related literature allows having clear picture of the Zanzibar tourism sector and there are certain important factors also identified that have the potential to influence the development of the sector in negative or positive manner. In the light of above review of the literature, the research paper presents the SWOT analysis of Zanzibar tourism sector to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could help in formulating marketing plans and strategies for this sector.

SWOT Analysis of Zanzibar Tourism sector

The study of external and internal environmental factors associated with the Zanzibar tourism sector allows having clear picture of the Zanzibar tourism sector and there are certain important factors also identified that have the potential to influence the development of the sector in negative or positive manner. Thus, the SWOT analysis of Zanzibar tourism sector is presented to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could help in formulating marketing plans and strategies for this sector.

Strengths

Zanzibar has been experiencing economic and political reformation for last few years that has resulted in the expansion and development of tourism entrepreneurs (Stephen and Joanne. 2006). The sector has shown significant signs of development and at present it offers competitive tourism services like secure leisure activities where the tourists can enjoy their vacations with privacy and safety. There are around 237 hotels operating in the state that provide tourists many options to stay for their tours and some of them are international standard hotels. There are wide ranges of activities that the tourists could get engaged in like diving, visiting historical and cultural sites, shopping for handicrafts, souvenirs etc. and visits to natural forest reserves with well trained guides. The strong point of the destination is the fact that Zanzibar is a native land of cultural heart and fun fields. Its town area is a UNESCO World Heritage site which has enabled some of the beautiful houses to get much needed renovation. The spice island of Zanzibar is a attractive and beautiful world of its own and its beautiful beaches and seashores are world-prominent.

Other strong points that may be considered standard for the entire forms of tourism (and tourism merchandise) for Zanzibar tourism destination include the Government commitment to the growth and development of tourism and recognition of the value of tourism, the appropriate geographical location within the famous deep Indian Ocean, the best position and entrance to the entire (core) African countries. Zanzibar Islands are closely positioned to other tourism regions such as Kilimanjaro Mountain, National Parks and Serengeti regions in Tanzania mainland as well as connection routes to Kenya, South Africa and Egypt with harmonizing tourism contribution and experiences. Also the natural scenery of the Zanzibar islands with its culturally diverse and peaceful community proves to be much more precise in comparison to other regions in eastern part of Africa. The recent investment in restoring historic sites in the Zanzibar municipality also considered to be another contributing strength point. Considering many strong points for the destination, it can easily be declared that the destination has a combination of natural potential and the cultural potential with forms of tourism that can still be practiced without massive hard works.

Weaknesses

The sector is in process of expansion and development and needs adequate plans to foster the pace of its growth (Stephen and Joanne, 2006). It has not been established as the top most tourism destination of Indian Ocean and needs effective management to attain this objective. The biggest weak point of this destination is that, at present the tourism industry of Zanzibar is immature and less groomed to serve tourists with expectations of high quality services. There are only few international standard hotels operating in the state and rest of the tourism facilities like accommodation, shopping, food and beverages are just of acceptable standard and do not offer relatively high quality products to the tourists. Due to this reason, Zanzibar seems to be attractive destination for low and medium spending tourists and the high spending tourists don't come here very often. Other weak points of the Zanzibar tourism destination include:- weak perception of tourism sector to the aged population of the region, inadequacy of skills in the business, weak awareness amongst visitors and residents of Zanzibar tourism experiences outside of major attractions such as unspoiled beaches. Weak understanding amongst residents of the tourism experiences available throughout the Zanzibar islands. Weak awareness of residents in neighboring suburbs as to the experiences available throughout the Zanzibar islands, transformation to tourism businesses are not fully and effectively communicated all the way through the industry.

Opportunities

There are several opportunities within the tourism sector of Zanzibar. The sector has been gaining the attention of the international community and the efforts of the government are resulting in increasing of foreign and local investment in the sector. There are so many different types of tourism attractions in the state that the marketing managers could focus upon them to attract the tourists. Zanzibar has been named as "land of exotic natural species, Romantic Island, paradise of Africa, Isle of harmony and the cradle of standard Kiswahili. These attributes possess great opportunities for the marketing managers because based upon these attributes, they could make effective and attractive marketing plans and strategies to influence the consumer decisions. The cultural and historical heritages of Zanzibar are very important aspects of the state that provide certain important marketing opportunities and the marketing plans could be based upon these attributes to attract the tourists. Another point is that, Zanzibar has still chance to reconsider the main role of the tourism association with the aim to enhance with relationships between the Zanzibar Tourism Association and the Tanzania mainland Tourism Association or sectors. This is consequently with supporting a strategic and targeted approach to destination marketing, promotion and industry development. The destination has an opportunity to capitalize and provide more training and development chances for tourism businesses

Threats

The partial government policies are the major threat confronted by the Zanzibar tourism sector because the policies mainly focused towards providing tourism facilities to the outsiders and overlook the demands and requirements of the local population. The negligence of local demands might also result in dissatisfaction among the people regarding the government policies that in turn become problematic issue and could threaten the peace and social stability of the state that is supposed to be major qualification of a tourism destination. Table 1 presents a brief synopsis of SWOT analysis of Zanzibar tourism sector.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis for Tourism Sector of Zanzibar Tanzania with the major SWOT factors

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Strengths</u> | <u>Weaknesses</u> |
| S1: Government Support S2: Easy Accessibility via airway and ships S3: Natural resources and attractive tourism sites S4: Wide range of tourism activities options | W1: Mismanagement of natural resources resulting in slow pace of expansion and development W2: Lack of adequate hospitality management training to local population W3: Lack of international level accommodation facilities |
| <u>Opportunities</u> | <u>Threats</u> |
| O1: International attention O2: Increased foreign and local investment O3: Cultural and historical heritage | T1: Negligence of local population's interest in government policies T2: Generation of dissatisfaction regarding government policies and plans T3: Risk of social instability |

Considering the dynamic tourism environment, awareness of and demand for a unified and coordinated tourism industry, awareness of and demand for tourism experiences from local residents as well as visitors to Zanzibar remains as the most excellent approaches to be integrated This should go sequentially with endorsing the Zanzibar city as a desirable and safely reachable destination. There should be strategies that help creating knowledge and up to date tourism industry described by reliable, most excellent values of business best practice, well-built client service, and easy communication between and within business facilitators. The more integrated strategies and action plans based on the analysis are predetermined in the tables 2 to 5 below

A strategy1: To smooth the progress and the opportunity for tourism businesses and then strengthen ties across the tourism industry in Zanzibar

Table 2.

| <i>Plan of action</i> | <i>Accountability</i> | <i>Resources</i> | <i>Implementation/measure</i> |
|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Develop a familiarization program for business operators within the Zanzibar city | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | A small group of tourism facilitators to host the first familiarization program |
| Discover the prospects to work with Tanzania mainland and neighbouring countries such as Kenya so as to encourage visitation to Zanzibar islands | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Systematize frequent congregation with Tourism officials from Tanzania mainland and neighbouring countries such as Kenya |
| Discover opportunities to work with environmental stakeholders to encourage most proficient use of the Natural attractions available in Zanzibar | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Tourism officials or commission meet with key representatives from the environmental officials to talk about opportunities. |

A strategy 2: To enhance the use of mass media for marketing in promoting Zanzibar as a potential and competitive tourism destination

Table 3.

| <i>Plan of action</i> | <i>Accountability</i> | <i>Resources</i> | <i>Implementation/measure</i> |
|--|--|---|---|
| Use of community and societal media to market the Zanzibar tourism destination | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Social media(both public and private) has to be utilised as frequent as possible per year campaigning in promoting the destination |
| Guarantee the supply of the tourism DVDs to local businesses, visitor and tourism information entrances in Zanzibar area | Tourism Commission | Among existing resources | Tourism DVDs, flyers and all adverts are displayed at all public places |
| Supply and utilise market research to sustain future marketing activity. Also discover opportunities for involvement in state or local research by the Zanzibar city and tourism operators | Tourism Commission | Some supplementary resources needed in addition to the existing resources | Future marketing activities are supported by industry research. The Zanzibar City here is also fully involved in the development of future destination RD initiatives |

Strategy 3: To implement procedures to accurately measure tourism progress and trends within Zanzibar City.

Table 4.

| <i>Plan of action</i> | <i>Accountability</i> | <i>Resources</i> | <i>Implementation/measure</i> |
|---|--|---------------------------|---|
| Performing a review of existing data collecting processes. | Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | examination of current data collecting processes has been undertaken and areas for improvement have been identified |
| Discover and work with business leaders to encourage data collection across tourism locations within Zanzibar | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Several locations across Zanzibar tourism locations for visitor data collection. |
| Perform yearly review of visitor trends and processes. | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Yearly report dispersed to stakeholders demarcating visitor figures, trends and adjustments |

Strategy 4: To intensify development and growth opportunities for businesses and individuals and groups providing services to visitors so as to increase industry ability and attitude.

Table 5.

| <i>Plan of action</i> | <i>Accountability</i> | <i>Resources</i> | <i>Implementation/measure</i> |
|---|--|---------------------------|---|
| Implement a complete survey of tourism and tourism-related businesses within Zanzibar tourism destination so as to ascertain needs and opportunities for growth and expansion | Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Various operators participate in survey and with participation from different business categories |
| Introduce a chain of networking events with stakeholders to join with the tourism commission and meet one another in a productive and informal atmosphere | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | Yearly networking events with representation from many businesses- (twice a year) |
| Enhance presence of tourism operators at existing Zanzibar tourism business events, workshops and tutorials | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Among presented resources | In any case two tourism representatives attending events each neighbourhood. |
| Founding from industry demand, enhance the business events, schedule to include events specifically targeting the tourism industry. | Tourism Ministry and or Tourism Commission | Within existing resources | At least 2 tourism-specific events run each year and almost fully packed. |

4 CONCLUSION

It is revealed from the above discussion that the tourism sector of Zanzibar possesses great scope for marketing because the sector is progressing significantly and is also gaining the attention of international community. The entire discussion could be sum up with the conclusion that the marketing strategies for Zanzibar tourism sector should be focused towards informing people about the ongoing expansion and development. Zanzibar could win the tourism market through adequately focusing upon certain important issues like training of hospitality management to the local population, improving the image of Zanzibar tourism sector, building of international level accommodation facilities and provision of high quality services to the high spending tourists along with low and medium sending consumers.

The tourism sector of Zanzibar possesses great scope for the marketing managers because the sector has been evolving as attractive tourism destination. At the same time, there are certain critical issues identified that needs the attention of all the stakeholders. The sector is under the development process and the marketers, tourism policy makers and government need to emphasize towards certain important issues. The local population must be provided with high level training of

hospitality management so that they could serve the tourism in better way. There is also need of establishing international level accommodation and food facilities to attract the high spending tourists. The hotel and tourism training centres must be established and strengthen to provide adequate hospitality management to the local population. There is also need to preserve the historical and cultural integrity of the place.

Zanzibar could win the tourism market by focusing towards tourism capacity building. The marketing policies must adequately address the expectations and demands of international tourism. The cultural and historical heritage of the state must be highlighted and promoted to position it as an important cultural and historical worth seeing place. There are many attractions in Zanzibar that must be promoted adequately to bring them in front of international tourism community. The marketing strategies much also emphasize upon improving overall image of Zanzibar tourism sector and establish its image as peaceful place that provide quality tourism services to induce upper scale market tourists. Internet, email and other advanced marketing tools must be used to capture the attention of the target consumers and the travel agencies must provide the information and offer the facilities of online booking of flights and accommodation to alleviate the tourists.

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