

**THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS OF INFORMAL ARTISAN  
ENTREPRENEURS IN TOURISM: A CASE OF KENYA**

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### ***Dedication***

*To my beloved parents, Boaz and Linah, for your unconditional love, sacrifice and unwavering support. You constantly provided an environment for me to flourish and grow into who I am today. No words are enough to say how grateful I am for you two and the family you have raised.*

## **DECLARATION**

This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The tourism industry is a source of livelihood for many people as it creates employment and business opportunities. Nonetheless, the industry experiences many fluctuations and instabilities that threaten the livelihoods of those who depend on it. These threats are more intense for informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, who also grapple with enormous challenges in the informal sector despite their persistent work in the context. Thus, this exploratory research aims to understand how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. The study uses the conceptual lens of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and framework alongside the concepts of resilience, vulnerability and culture. It incorporates 51 telephone interviews with 32 artisans and 5 institutions in Kenya, conducted over two phases, and includes document analysis, field notes and researcher diaries. In doing so, the study draws key methodological considerations for conducting remote qualitative data collection and engaging with marginalised participants in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The findings show that artisans experience constant challenges such as poverty, an indecent work environment, and inadequate institutional support. Nevertheless, their exposure to vulnerable conditions is paradoxically matched with resilience. The artisans' resilience stems from their agency and socio-cultural structures, which have allowed them to combine different resources to sustain their livelihoods, cope with challenges, and persist in making handicrafts. Theoretically, the study creates a modified framework for sustainable livelihood analysis. It also challenges how resilience is conceptualised in sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship and suggests how it should be conceptualised. Relatedly, it draws insights into the paradoxical relationship between resilience and vulnerability. Hence, it contributes to the understanding of resilience in sustainable livelihoods. Notably, the study extends the body of knowledge on informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, who have proven unique in their characteristics and how they sustain their livelihoods.

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To God – My Companion and Helper. This has only been possible through You. Not by my might, not by my power, but by Your Spirit. #GodDidIt

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

DFID	Department for International Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JKA	Jua-kali Association
KEPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
KFS	Kenya Forest Service
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
KTB	Kenya Tourism Board
KTDB	Kenya Tourism Development Board
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Services
MSEA	Micro and Small Enterprises Authority
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
PPT	Pro-poor Tourism
SACCO	Savings and Credit Co-operative Society
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
SLFT	Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction to the Informal Sector and the Tourism Industry

The informal sector first emerged in 1972, when the International Labour Organisation (ILO) introduced the term while presenting an employment report from Kenya (ILO, 1972). It was then introduced to the academic literature by Keith Hart when he studied informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana (Hart, 1973). In these pioneering studies, the informal sector was defined using its attributes. For instance, in the 1972 ILO report, the informal sector is described using the formal-informal dichotomy, where it is summarised as having “ease of entry, reliance of indigenous resources, family ownership of enterprises, small scale of operation, labour intensive and adapted technology, skills acquired outside the formal school system, and unregulated and competitive market” (ILO, 1972 p. 6). Alongside these, Hart (1973) elaborates that the informal sector is also made up of illegal activities and businesses that are not registered or regulated by the state.

Generally, the informal sector is associated with informality (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014; Kanbur, 2017), which denotes relationships, practices or things that emerge unofficially, happen outside of the formal domain or occur without protocol. However, the concept of informality can be ambivalent or inexplicit (Ledeneva, 2018), thus necessitating the need to explicitly describe the informal sector from different perspectives. From a political standpoint, the informal sector is described as lacking government regulations, having illegal activities, and not being registered by the state. From an economic point of view, the informal sector is deemed to lack national statistics for economic indicators, have incidences of tax evasion and an undefined labour market with no adherence to minimum wages. From a sociology viewpoint, the informal economy is characterised by ease of entry, high competition, flexibility in running the ventures and lack of employee protection and benefits (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004; Gërxhani, 2004; Gutierrez-Romero, 2010; Hope, 2014).

From a human resources perspective, Blunch, Canagarajah and Raju (2001) and Chen (2005) point out that the informal sector is divided into two broad groups. The first group is non-wage employment in the informal sector, which includes self-employed individuals comprising business owners or employers, own-account workers, and unpaid family members who contribute to the business. The second group is wage employment in the informal sector, encompassing employees, casual workers, sub-contracted workers, and home-based and

domestic workers. This study will focus on the former, the non-wage employment people, more specifically, the informal business owners, otherwise known as informal entrepreneurs, who drive businesses in the informal sector.

There is a general perception that informal entrepreneurs are motivated to join the informal sector out of necessity to survive. Hence, they are pushed into the informal sector due to the lack of employment opportunities, the need to gain additional sources of income to sustain their livelihoods and low wages that force them to engage in other economic activities. On the other hand, some people join the informal sector due to the social appreciation for business ownership and self-employment, which encourages them to establish personal businesses (King, 2001; Adom, 2014). However, regardless of these social reasons, the informal sector is still heavily referred to as survivalist and associated with poverty, exclusion and marginalisation (Gadzala, 2009; Hope, 2014), where people are assumed to work only to survive and fend for themselves and their households (Hold and David, 2014). For this reason, the livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs are often narrowly perceived as necessity-driven.

### **1.1.1 Relationship between the informal sector and the tourism industry**

Given the vast range of industries that interface with the informal sector, this study has narrowed the focus to the informal sector within the tourism industry. This is feasible because of the effortless link between the informal sector and the tourism industry. Rogerson (2012) highlights that the tourism sector is considered diverse to include the informal sector and that tourism depends on natural resources such as environmental scenery, wildlife, and culture, which are assets available to the informal sector. Ateljevic (2007) also links tourism to the informal sector and acknowledges that informality is a key feature in many tourism enterprises. Similarly, Power, Di Domenico and Miller (2017) recognise this relationship and note that tourism entrepreneurship is characterised by informality and smallness. Besides this, the tourism industry attracts the informal sector as it allows for participation regardless of the level of capital, which creates an opportunity for informal entrepreneurs with minimal capital to participate. Furthermore, the industry readily presents new markets and accessible opportunities for informal entrepreneurs to serve and engage with tourists (Slocum, Backman and Robinson, 2011). These show the relevance of the tourism industry to the informal sector. It also displays the association between the two, which is important to justify and acknowledge as it is pertinent to this study.

## 1.2 Artisans and Informal Entrepreneurs in Tourism

Informal businesses in the tourism industry are run by informal entrepreneurs, who are defined as “individuals and businesses that engage with tourists and the tourism industry but are not members of any formal association or trade organisation” (Slocum, Backman and Robinson, 2011 p. 48). They include artisans, also referred to as craftsmen, informal café owners, tour guides, pedicabs or taxi drivers and street vendors, to mention a few (Minishi-Majanja *et al.*, 2012b; Truong, 2018).

As tourism is consumed at the point of production (Goodwin, 1998), informal entrepreneurs play a significant role in the tourism industry. For instance, they provide tourists with tailor-made goods and services, enrich the tourists’ experience and promote the culture and heritage of a destination (Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012; Damayanti, Scott and Ruhanen, 2018). Besides this, informal entrepreneurs in tourism also promote the general economy by contributing to the creation of employment and tourism products and services (Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). For this reason, they form a crucial part of the sustainability, promotion, and development of tourism and the economy; hence, their relevance and persistence in the industry cannot be neglected.

Amongst the informal entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, a significant group are artisans who manually make cultural handicrafts sold to tourists (Wright, 2009). These handicrafts include but are not limited to hand-crafted sculptures, carvings, beaded ornaments, textiles, pottery, and foodstuff (Scott, 2014; Milman, 2015). Notably, handicrafts embody the culture and heritage of a destination and promote regional tourism competitiveness (Teixeira and Ferreira, 2018). Therefore, alongside the overall contribution that artisans make to the tourism industry and the economy, they also play a distinctive role in sustaining the culture of a community or country. Hence, they are also often referred to as cultural entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019).

Despite their significant role, the study of informal artisan entrepreneurs is underdeveloped. Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019) recognise this and specifically recommend the study of artisan entrepreneurs from the perspective of the informal sector and the tourism industry, which they observe is lacking in prominent academic journals. Alongside this, Bakas, Duxbury and Vinagre de Castro (2019) acknowledge that there is limited literature on artisans in the tourism industry and recommend that more studies focus on this area. Moreover, an examination of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) context shows a scarce focus on informal

artisans in tourism. Case in point, Igwe, Madichie and Newbery (2019) elaborate that artisans have not been extensively studied within the African context, which gives room for more studies to be undertaken within this context. This is similar to the case in Kenya, where there is scarce literature on informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism except for Wright (2008) and Wright (2009), which have focused on this context within the coastal region of Kenya.

To reiterate this, an extensive systematic review of key journals and databases by Pret and Cogan (2018) reveals how the body of literature on artisan entrepreneurship has focused on the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA) and Europe, with fewer studies in regions such as China, India, Mexico and Turkey. Thus, displaying the need to explore artisan entrepreneurship within the Global South. More specifically, all the above direct that the study on informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism within the context of SSA is underdeveloped and justifies the need for further study in this area.

Therefore, given this gap, the study will focus on artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector within the tourism industry. On several occasions, these informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism will be referred to as “artisans.” Furthermore, as will be elaborated in section 1.6 of this chapter, the study will focus on Kenya, a country in the Global South in the SSA region. The study will use the term “Global South” to ensure the colonial judgement of “developing vs developed countries” (Abrahams, 2019) is not imposed on the context and artisans.

### **1.3 Problem Statement: Livelihoods in the Informal Sector in the Tourism**

A livelihood is a means by which people make a living (Chambers and Conway, 1992). Given this understanding, the tourism industry is a source of livelihood for many people. It offers a means to generate individual and household income, spread risks, diversify revenue sources and offset pressure on fragile resources such as land (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008; Tao and Wall, 2009). Relatedly, due to its labour-intensive nature, the industry creates job opportunities for otherwise unemployed people and allows people to create business ventures, thus reducing poverty levels (Cooper, 2008; Slocum, Backman and Robinson, 2011).

Furthermore, the benefits of the industry go beyond the individual and household level, as tourism improves the attractiveness of the community, fosters unity, and promotes culture and heritage. Environmentally, tourism development stimulates the conservation of natural resources (Koh and Hatten, 2002; Musavengane, 2018), and nationally, the industry increases

state revenue through taxes and foreign exchange earnings and stimulates other sectors of the economy (Manyara and Jones, 2007a). The tourism industry, therefore, proves to be valuable in many ways.

Due to its numerous benefits, the tourism industry is considered a panacea to economic, social and environmental issues (Musavengane, 2018). Nonetheless, Tao and Wall (2009) argue that tourism cannot be considered a remedy to these problems, especially within indigenous and marginalised communities, as it is not a reliable source of income. This is because the industry faces many fluctuations and instability. More precisely, the tourism industry is fragile and is prone to shocks and stresses such as; changes in seasonality, competition, political instability, terrorism, natural disasters like tsunamis and earthquakes and economic recessions, to mention a few (Dieke, 1991;Butler, 1994;Jaakson, 2004;Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008;Harris, Doan and Wilson, 2012;Dahles and Susilowati, 2015). These challenges exist outside of the COVID-19 pandemic, which also destabilised tourism (Chang, McAleer and Ramos, 2020). Overall, the mentioned shocks adversely affect the industry and, consequently, the livelihoods of people who depend on it. During such circumstances, which result in a decline in tourism, the livelihoods of people within the industry are threatened. Moreover, these effects continue to be felt even after the shock or crisis as people in tourism still struggle to sustain their livelihoods (Baker and Coulter, 2007).

The exposure to livelihood threats is further intense for informal entrepreneurs in tourism, who, aside from facing the threatening circumstances in tourism, also face challenges within the informal sector. These include harassment by authorities in tourist cities, limited financial resources to navigate their daily lives and a lack of marketing opportunities due to their limited skills. It also includes scarcity of essential infrastructures like business premises and water, insecurity, and constant competition that threatens their business sustenance (Rogerson, 2005;Nieman, Visser and Van Wyk, 2008;Jena and Mahapatra, 2009;Truong, 2018). More specifically, artisans in the Global South also experience intensified competition from the surge in mass-produced handicrafts imported from countries like China, which compete with their hand-made local handicrafts (Grobar, 2019). All these challenges create a challenging environment for informal entrepreneurs in tourism to sustain a livelihood.

Moreover, informal entrepreneurs from the Global South experience institutional challenges caused by corruption, poor governance, and a lack of a supportive business environment. These institutional challenges are heightened by colonial history, which

influenced how entrepreneurship is developed and created. As a result of this history, the informal sector is often side-lined, lacks a voice and is perceived as inferior to its formal counterparts (Sambajee and Weston, 2015). Relatedly, this colonial history has also fuelled neo-colonialism, which encourages capitalism, unequal power relations and social and economic exclusion (Wijesinghe, Mura and Bouchon, 2019). In the tourism industry specifically, neo-colonialism is evidenced by the dominance of foreign investors, resulting in the local people not benefiting from the industry (Akama, 2004) and ultimately being neglected. Therefore, the local institutions and authorities do not support the informal sector during a decline in the tourism industry. Furthermore, despite strategies such as the Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) approach, which aims to increase the net benefit of the poor in tourism (Ashley, 2000a), factors like neo-colonialism have contributed towards a considerable gap between the rich and the poor within the Global South (Jaakson, 2004). This presents more challenges for informal players in the tourism industry, as the issues they face are beyond their direct control and capacity to handle.

International organisations such as the ILO also fuel institutional challenges for informal entrepreneurs. This is evidenced in reports like the ILO (2015) report, which outrightly encourages formalisation and relinquishment of the informal sector. It advocates for the legal and institutional compliance of the informal sector through strategies such as taxation and regulation. This strategy, albeit sound, does not consider the reality of many people in the informal sector who often run businesses for survival and do not have sufficient income to remit taxes, afford regulation compliance fees and compete with the formal sector. Thus, such a push for formalisation risks further secluding the often-marginalised people from setting up businesses and consequently threatens their livelihoods.

Therefore, the above discussions highlight that the informal sector in tourism presents a challenging environment for people to make a living. Thus, it necessitates understanding how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing these challenges. Furthermore, as livelihoods can only be sustainable once people cope and adapt to the stresses and the shocks they experience (Chambers and Conway, 1992), it further necessitates an understanding of how these artisans handle the challenges they experience to sustain their livelihoods in the informal sector in tourism. Moreover, the above discussions depict that the artisans' livelihoods do not happen in a vacuum but are also affected by institutions, which are likely to influence how they sustain their livelihoods.

### 1.3.1 Handling Challenges in the Informal Sector in Tourism

Existing studies suggest ways entrepreneurs in the tourism industry develop coping and adaptation strategies and persist in making a living during challenges, turmoil, and crises. For example, during periods of declining tourism, Kareithi (2003) explains that participants in tourism may temporarily relocate to a different town or city with a tourism boom, with some switching from being entrepreneurs to getting employed, where they are assured of a steady flow of income. In addition, Baker and Coulter (2007) explain that tourism entrepreneurs seek credit facilities to sustain their lives after a crisis. Furthermore, Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012) describe that due to the need for survival, tourism entrepreneurs shift from one core economic activity to another and close their struggling informal businesses. On the other hand, Dahles and Susilowati (2015) elaborate that during a crisis, hotel proprietors may market and promote their businesses by offering discounts and developing new skills to enable them to switch to a different market.

Though rational, the mentioned strategies by tourism players during periods of declining tourism may not be feasible for poor and marginalised people, especially not during crises in tourism such as recession, a pandemic and disasters like tsunamis and terrorism. These negatively affect the entire economy, resulting in low employment opportunities, minimum capital to engage in other economic activities and low disposable income for migration or relocation. Furthermore, the strategies may also not be viable for entrepreneurs in the informal sector who have challenges accessing credit facilities, partial education to facilitate employment mobility, limited marketing skills to promote their businesses, and are excluded from voicing their challenges and concerns (Mead and Morrisson, 1996; Blunch, Canagarajah and Raju, 2001; Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004).

Additionally, while the strategies discussed above may not be entirely feasible for informal entrepreneurs, who have limited resources and are neglected by relevant institutions, they may also not apply to artisans for several reasons. First, artisans have highly specialised skills that are likely to make them inflexible and disinterested in pursuing alternative ways of making a living (Simard *et al.*, 2019), including during a crisis or a challenging period in the tourism industry. These innate skills, which are passed across generations (Parts *et al.*, 2011), suggest that the norm and practices of making handicrafts are ingrained and likely to determine how they make livelihood decisions. Secondly, artisans are cultural entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Hence, their culture and desire to maintain culture and heritage are

likely to influence their livelihood activities. Third, artisans are also referred to as creative entrepreneurs (Ferreira, Sousa and Gonçalves, 2019). Thus, tourism may allow them to integrate creativity into their livelihoods, which may not be the case in other industries.

Consequently, while artisan entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector, their attributes make it reasonable to acknowledge that how they regard their livelihoods in the tourism industry differs from that of other informal entrepreneurs. Additionally, given the artisans' attributes, it is possible that how they handle challenges differs from that of their formal counterparts and other informal entrepreneurs. Therefore, this creates the need to explore how artisans handle the challenges they experience to sustain their livelihoods.

#### **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

The above discussion on livelihoods in the informal sector and the tourism industry raises the question of how these often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. As mentioned, the artisans' distinctive attributes, such as their skills, creativity, culture, and cultural influences, suggest that their experiences of sustaining a livelihood are different from those of their formal counterparts in the tourism industry. Hence, there is a need to explore this further.

As highlighted in section 1.2 above, the study of artisan entrepreneurs is still underdeveloped, which presents an opportunity to contribute to this field of study. To recap, the study of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism is lacking in prominent journals. Hence, it has been recommended for further research (Bakas, Duxbury and Vinagre de Castro, 2019; Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). More specifically, there is scarce focus on informal artisans in tourism within the SSA context (Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019), which gives room for more studies to be undertaken within this context. This is also witnessed by Pret and Cogan (2018), who observe that the body of literature on artisan entrepreneurship has concentrated on other regions and countries and neglected the Global South.

Moreover, the existing literature on artisan entrepreneurs, such as the studies by Ferreira, Sousa and Gonçalves (2019), Hoyte (2019) and Heying (2010), to mention a few, have focussed on other aspects of artisans but has not shed light into the vulnerable conditions that result from social, economic and institutional challenges which artisans experience to sustain their livelihood. Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019) agree with this and note that the studies on artisans have focused on the successes but have neglected the plight and challenges

they face. Hence, it presents the need to focus on and highlight the challenges that artisans experience to make a living and sustain a livelihood.

Specifically, within sustainable livelihoods, the study of artisans is still limited. This is with the exception of Parts *et al.*, (2011), whose study focused on developing heritage-based livelihoods for artisans in Estonia. It also excludes Jongeward (2001), who studied the livelihoods of artisans in Thailand by focusing on adult weavers and their quest for global marketplaces. Another example is Heemskerk (2005), who focused on the methodological obstacles for collecting data that inform programmes that enable sustainable livelihoods for artisanal and small-scale mining communities. However, while these examples reveal how artisan livelihoods have been studied, they have focused on other phenomena different from this study and its focus on the informal sector in tourism.

Furthermore, while there are studies that have focused on livelihoods in the tourism industry, these studies are centred on different subjects, including but not limited to the impact of tourism on rural livelihoods, rural development and community development (Ashley, 2000b; Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008; Simpson, 2009); tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy for rural communities and indigenous people (Tao and Wall, 2009; Leu, 2019); volunteer tourism and livelihoods of host communities (Eddins, 2013); the vulnerability of livelihoods in tourism (Baker and Coulter, 2007); and sustainable livelihoods of households in rural tourism destinations (Ma *et al.*, 2020). These examples illustrate that there has not been much focus on understanding how artisans sustain their livelihoods in the tourism industry, and more specifically, within the context of the informal sector in SSA.

Given the need to develop these areas further, this research, therefore, seeks to achieve the following aim:

To understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

To achieve this aim, the research has the following specific objectives:

1. To explore the challenges informal artisan entrepreneurs experience in the informal sector and the tourism industry
2. To examine how informal artisan entrepreneurs handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry

3. To analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to sustain their livelihoods
4. To investigate how institutional resources influence the livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and tourism industry

Chapter 2 of this study will further justify the focus on these objectives and how they are pertinent to addressing the research aim.

### **1.5 Methodological Approach**

The study followed an exploratory research design, which seeks to understand a phenomenon in a new light (Rahi, 2017) and is open to discovering new insights and issues that have not been extensively uncovered (Neuman, 2014). The study also embraced the philosophical underpinnings of social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann, 1966), rooted in qualitative approaches (Butowski *et al.*, 2021). Qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of people's lived experiences and viewpoints (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013) and enables an in-depth study of a specific topic (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Thus, it was appropriate for understanding the artisans' livelihoods.

The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted travel and access to participants. Hence, it adopted qualitative telephone interviews as the primary method. This was complemented by document analysis, fieldnotes and researcher diaries to generate more in-depth insight into the artisans' livelihoods. Consequently, the study sampled 32 artisans and 5 relevant institutions from Kenya. The study was carried out in two phases. The first phase was conducted between November 2020 and January 2021, whereas the second phase was conducted 6 to 9 months after the first phase, between June and August 2021. The two phases enabled follow-up interviews with some participants. This resulted in a cumulative of 51 semi-structured qualitative telephone interviews. Afterwards, the data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), which enabled the emergence of key themes.

Notably, the telephone interviews enabled access to participants and generated rich textual and descriptive accounts of participants' experiences. Therefore, the study demystifies the use of qualitative telephone interviews amongst marginalised participants. It challenges the biases of telephone interviews in qualitative research and presents methodological strategies

for obtaining rich qualitative data and interacting with marginalised participants in the informal sector.

## **1.6 The Scope: The Informal Sector and the Tourism Industry of Kenya**

Having laid out the methodological approach, the following section gives a contextual understanding of Kenya, the focus of this study. It provides a background of Kenya's informal sector and tourism industry and justifies why the country is ideal for studying the sustainable livelihoods of artisans. Notably, by focusing on Kenya, the study extends the body of literature on artisan entrepreneurship in SSA and the Global South, which is scarce and has been recommended for further studies (Pret and Cogan, 2018; Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019).

### **1.6.1 The Informal Sector in Kenya**

The informal sector is more predominant in the Global South. More so, it is prevalent in countries drawn from SSA, where the informal sector operates on a massive scale (ILO, 2018). Due to the lack of proper documentation, there are no official statistics on the size and operations of the informal sector. Nonetheless, the World Bank estimates that the informal sector accounts for a third of the GDP in emerging markets and economies (World Bank, 2019), indicating the sector's scale and size. Based on this magnitude, the sector provides employment and business opportunities. Thus, it plays a significant role in supporting and sustaining the livelihoods of people.

As alluded to, the informal economy emerged within the context of the Global South. It is, therefore, prudent to study the informal sector from the perspective of a country in the Global South. Consequently, Kenya was selected as an ideal case for this study. It is in Eastern Africa within the SSA region. It has a predominant informal sector known as *jua kali*, a Swahili word for "hot sun." This term emerged from the notion that informal workers work outside in the scorching sun (Hold and David, 2014; Hope, 2014), indicating the hardship and adverse conditions of the informal players.

The informal sector in Kenya operates on a massive scale and is widespread in different rural and urban cities and towns. A report by the World Bank estimates that 95% of the country's businesses and entrepreneurs are found in the informal sector (Safavian, Wimpey and Amin, 2016). Therefore, the sector plays a critical part, where it has incrementally grown and constitutes 83.4% of the total employment in the country (KNBS, 2018). It is also estimated

to account for 32% of Kenya's GDP (Murunga, Muriithi and Wawire, 2021). For these reasons, Kenya provides a valuable glimpse into the informal sector in SSA and is ideal for this study.

Kenya's informal sector continues to grow because of many auxiliary factors and the government's support. For instance, Juepner, McCormick and Ng'ethe (2018) point out that the Kenyan government encouraged the growth of the informal sector by establishing the Jua Kali Associations (JKAs) in the 1990s, which aimed to give a voice to people in the informal sector. Furthermore, due to the need for multiple income sources, the Kenyan government allows its civil servants to engage in additional sources of income other than public service, which King (2001) points out has resulted in and encouraged the emergence of informal enterprises.

Despite what may seem like government support, the informal sector has also grown due to failures by the same Kenyan government. For example, Hope (2014) discusses that the government's failure to ensure employment opportunities has resulted in the growth of the informal sector. Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall (2004) add that the sector has escalated due to the lack of fair development in the rural areas, which has created rapid migration to the urban areas in search of better opportunities. The sector has also been driven by a lack of government initiatives to ensure wages match inflation, resulting in people looking for livelihood in the informal sector (Juepner, McCormick and Ng'ethe, 2018). All of these suggest that the informal sector has emerged as a response to poor governance and societal and economic challenges.

### **1.6.2 The Tourism Industry in Kenya**

Tourism in Kenya began before the country's independence in 1963 as international tourists, mainly drawn from Europe, started arriving in the country (Irandu, 2004). This was mainly because Kenya was colonised by the British, who aided tourism development during the colonial era. For example, they opened up the interior parts of Kenya by constructing the Kenyan-Ugandan railway (Harris, Doan and Wilson, 2012). Due to the British colonisation, the development and promotion of tourism in the country are heavily influenced by Western ideologies, such as the focus on the economic interests of tourism and less on the local communities (Akama, 2004). To demonstrate this, Kenya's tourism performance is mainly measured by analysing the number of international arrivals and departures alongside their revenue. This is evident in government tourism reports, where there is a broad economic focus on revenue generated from international tourists. Consequently, domestic tourism remains

secondary to regional and international tourism (Odiara Kihima, 2015) despite Kenya's tourists comprising both domestic and international tourists.

Generally, since Kenya's colonial independence in 1963, the country's tourism sector has developed incrementally. It is now one of the most popular tourist destinations in Africa, where it is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the SSA (WEFORUM, 2019), with a GDP contribution of 10.3% (WTTC, 2020). To this day, tourism is one of the critical drivers of the economy. Moreover, it is a key economic pillar in Kenya's vision 2030 goals, aiming to transform Kenya into a middle-income country by 2030 (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

Kenya offers diverse tourist attractions founded on beaches, wildlife, geographical diversity, history, culture and heritage (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2022). The most popular tourist attractions are wildlife and the coastal beaches (Irandu, 2004; Okech, 2007). Consequently, Kenya's top destinations are in the coastal region and around game reserves and game parks. These include 23 national parks, 28 national reserves, 4 national sanctuaries, 4 national marine parks and 6 national marine reserves across the country (KWS, 2020). Alongside the famous wildlife and beach tourism, Kenya's tourism is also boosted by business tourism, driven by international conferences held by government and private institutions. These business conferences and meetings enhance the number of visitors in the country and constitute one of the critical tourism products (Dieke, 1991).

The key dissimilarity that differentiates Kenya from any other country is the nation's distinct culture and heritage, which is a tourist attraction. Okumu (2016) elaborates that Kenya's identity, embodied in cultural heritage such as monuments, statues, songs, mottoes, the national anthem, dances, poems, food, stories and literature, is an attractive tourism product. Alongside this, Irandu and Shah (2016) explain that Kenya has 42 tribes, all of which have their own culture, artefacts and traditional outfits that make the country unique. The culture and heritage are shared with tourists through souvenirs and cultural experiences, which offer unique tourist experiences (Irandu, 2004).

Due to the significance of the tourism industry, the Kenyan government has also put in diverse strategies to oversee and grow the tourism industry. For example, the government has formulated policies to attract international tourists, including improving the visa application process and enabling visa-on-entry applications for all African countries. This is coupled with the expansion of international air routes into the county and the extensive marketing of Kenya as a tourism destination, a move aimed at improving the inflow of international tourists

(Euromonitor International, 2019). Likewise, in light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the government prioritised the tourism industry by disbursing funds to help the sector recover. These included soft loans to hotels, funds to engage over 5,000 community scouts for wildlife conservation, and stimulus funds to support Utalii college, Kenya's tourism and hospitality college (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2020). Such efforts demonstrate that the Kenyan government holds tourism in high regard and is keen on developing and promoting the sector.

The Kenyan tourism industry has the potential to scale and compete with other popular tourist destinations in the region. However, the sustainability of the industry is at risk, which threatens the livelihoods of people who depend on it. This is because of the challenges, instability, and uncertainty that the industry presents.

As will be expounded in later chapters, tourism is a seasonal industry all around the globe (Butler, 1994), including in Kenya. It experiences both natural seasonality caused by changes in the climate conditions and institutional seasonality caused by human decisions influenced by religious, cultural, ethnic, and social factors (Butler, 1994). Consequently, seasonality is likely to affect the individuals and institutions in tourism, including artisans. Akama (1999) explains that tourism in Kenya is unstable as it is affected by many uncontrollable factors like socio-economic and political dynamics. This means incidences, such as political instability in Kenya, immediately disrupt the industry and negatively affect participants like artisans. Alongside this, the political climate of neighbouring countries like Uganda, Somalia, and South Sudan negatively affects tourism (Dieke, 1991). This implies that the country's tourism industry is influenced by its geographical neighbours, who, from time-to-time experience political conflicts beyond Kenya's direct administrative control.

Aside from political factors, external shocks like terrorism have also adversely affected Kenya's tourism levels (Euromonitor International, 2019). As will be expounded in later chapters, the country has experienced numerous terrorist attacks that have also negatively affected the perception of Kenya (De Sausmarez, 2013; Buigut and Amendah, 2016). These have dipped tourism and led to travel advisories from key tourism markets such as the USA, UK, Germany and Australia (Akama, 1999; Buigut and Amendah, 2016).

Kenya also operates in a competitive environment and competes with other destinations like South Africa and Namibia that offer similar products (Mayaka and Prasad, 2012; Irandu and Shah, 2016). Such competition is said to risk Kenya losing out on international tourists and

therefore threatens the sustainability of the tourism industry. Ultimately, this potentially threatens the livelihoods of people who depend on the country's tourism.

Undeniably, Kenya, like the rest of the world, was also impacted by COVID-19. The pandemic, which resulted in local and global travel restrictions, led to a steep decline in the number of domestic and international tourists, with a recorded decline of 72% in international visitor arrivals in 2020 compared to 2019. Consequently, there was an immense loss of income from the industry (Tourism Research Institute, 2020). To date, the pandemic remains a threat to livelihoods in the tourism industry.

Furthermore, tourism is also globally impacted by economic conditions like recessions (Dieke, 1991), and Kenya is not immune to this. To illustrate, Kenya's top international visitors come from developed countries like the UK, USA, Germany, and Italy (WTTC, 2020). This shows that the country is very dependent on European and American tourists. Thus, the global economic crisis or recession, as the one witnessed in 2008, which adversely affected America and Europe by reducing the spending of these markets, subsequently affected the Kenyan tourism industry (Mayaka and Prasad, 2012; De Sausmarez, 2013), where there was a dip in tourism during that period (CEIC, 2020).

Alongside the challenges discussed above, the Kenyan tourism industry faces the challenges of unequal distribution of benefits. Kenya is said to have a strong pro-poor tourism policy, where the poor benefit from the industry (S raphin, Butler and Vanessa, 2013). However, this is not entirely the case. For example, Akama and Kieti (2007) challenge that the present forms of tourism in Kenya have neither alleviated poverty nor improved the socio-economic status of the local people. Additionally, Kareithi (2003) examines that Kenya is concerned with tourism and its development through the different government initiatives; however, the benefits accruing to the local people and communities who are predominantly poor are still wanting. Relatedly, Irandu (2004) points out that the benefits of tourism are insignificant because they have not been tricked down to the local communities, as foreign investors own many tourist businesses in Kenya. Furthermore, Blake (2008) observes that tourism-related industries are likely to provide less income for poor households compared to other industries and that there is still a lack of significant empirical evidence to support that tourism indeed benefits the poor. This means that participation in the tourism industry is tough, especially for the poor informal entrepreneurs in tourism such as artisans.

Akama (2002) notes that due to the challenges outlined above, Kenya lacks a positive social and economic image, which results in a declined number of international tourists, reduced quality of tourism products, reduced per capita earnings from tourism and uneven distribution of tourism income. All of which limits the development and promotion of tourism. These external and internal factors suggest that Kenya's tourism industry still faces a risk of being undermined, which consequently presents a risk to the livelihoods of people who depend on it. Additionally, the above reiterates that the industry offers an uncertain and challenging environment for its players. More specifically, it presents a challenging environment for artisans, who, alongside the unique challenges in tourism, also undergo a separate set of challenges operating in the informal sector.

Therefore, given the dominance of the informal sector, the popular tourism industry and the numerous challenges witnessed in the context, Kenya presents an ideal case for this study.

### **1.7 Significance**

This study is significant on many fronts. It extends the body of knowledge on artisan entrepreneurship, specifically the typology of artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and the tourism industry, which is still underdeveloped. This is important as artisans play a significant role in promoting and developing tourism by enriching the tourists' experiences and maintaining the culture and heritage of a destination (Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012; Damayanti, Scott and Ruhanen, 2018). As informal entrepreneurs, they also promote the general economy by creating employment and tourism products (Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). This means that their livelihoods and persistence in the industry deserve attention.

Alongside this, the study explores how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. As will be expounded in chapter 8, focusing on this phenomenon advances knowledge and contributes to theory and practice. In particular, the contributions touch on a) understanding of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, alongside how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, b) resilience in sustainable livelihoods and c) the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and framework for informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism.

## **1.8 Overview of Study**

This thesis consists of 9 chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 introduced the study by elaborating on the research background, problem statement, aim and objectives, and methodological approach. It has also given an overview of the scope of the study by discussing Kenya's informal sector and the historical and present state of the tourism industry. Alongside this, it has highlighted the significance of the study.

Having laid out the foundation of the study, chapter 2 presents the literature review by detailing the theoretical and conceptual underpinning of the study. The chapter critically reviews the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and framework, which provide the conceptual lens that guides the analysis of the artisans' livelihoods. It explains their theoretical underpinnings and relevance to the study. Additionally, it critiques the framework and suggests ways to overcome these concerns by incorporating a cultural lens and the concepts of resilience and vulnerability to understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods. Overall, the chapter situates this study in the body of literature on sustainable livelihoods in the tourism industry and the informal sector within SSA and beyond.

This is followed by chapter 3, which discusses the research methodology and methods. It details the study's exploratory research design, philosophical underpinnings of social constructionism and qualitative research methods alongside their respective rationales. It also elaborates on the sampled participants, comprising 32 artisans and 5 relevant institutions drawn from Kenya. Likewise, the chapter elaborates on how data was collected over two phases through 51 semi-structured qualitative telephone interviews, document analysis, fieldnotes and researcher diaries. It also explains how the data was analysed using thematic analysis. Alongside this, the chapter also provides the researcher's reflexive account.

Having discussed the research methodology and methods, the subsequent chapters showcase the findings and discussions from the data. Chapter 4 extensively discusses the artisans' livelihoods in the informal sector in tourism and elaborates on how they make a living and use different livelihood resources. Chapter 5 highlights how institutions influence the livelihoods of artisans. Chapter 6 displays how artisans are vulnerable by elaborating on the challenges they experience. This is followed by chapter 7, which reveals the artisans' resilience by discussing how they handle challenges and persist in working in the context. Following

these findings and discussions, chapter 8 discusses their theoretical implications by expounding on how the study contributes to knowledge, theory, and practice.

Finally, chapter 9 concludes the thesis by revisiting the research aim and objectives and explaining how they have been achieved. The chapter also reiterates the study's contributions to knowledge, theory, and practice. Likewise, it outlines the study's limitations and makes recommendations for future research agendas and the government. Lastly, the chapter presents the researcher's reflections on the PhD journey.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following chapter positions the study in the existing literature by critically reviewing key concepts and theories. It starts by reviewing the concept of sustainable livelihoods. This is followed by a discussion of the conceptual lens grounded by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and Framework. The chapter critically reviews the SLA and its framework, specifically its attributes, application in literature and criticisms to showcase what is already known and position this study. This is followed by a discussion of concepts of culture, vulnerability and resilience alongside their respective theoretical underpinnings and ways they complement the SLA to address the research aim and objectives. In a few instances, the study engages with some aspects of neo-colonial discourse, Bourdieu's theory of capital and habitus. Collectively, the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings help to address the research aim, which seeks to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

### **2.1 Sustainable Livelihoods**

Livelihoods research can be traced back to Robert Chambers, who conceptualised sustainable livelihoods in the early 1980s while studying rural development (Chambers, 1983). The concept later received much attention in subsequent studies of rural development and livelihoods (Chambers, 1989; Bernstein, Crow and Johnson, 1992; Chambers and Conway, 1992), where it started to shape development discourse. Given its origin in rural development, the concept of sustainable livelihoods is popular in poverty studies, where it is mainly focused on the strategies people implement to make a living while facing adversity (Kaag *et al.*, 2002). Over time, the concept of sustainable livelihoods has advanced from preliminary development reports like the Brundtland Commission in the United Nations in the 1980s (Brundtland, 1987) to becoming a core concept widely used by various development agencies to formulate development policies. These agencies include but are not limited to CARE, Oxfam and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to mention a few (Carney, 1999).

In the pioneering livelihood studies, Chambers and Conway (1992) define sustainable livelihoods as follows:

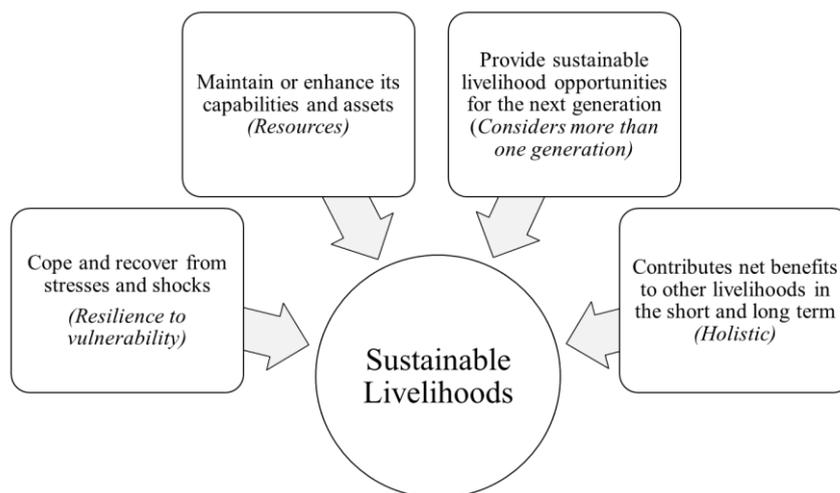
*“a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.”*

*(Chambers and Conway, 1992 p. 6)*

As pointed out, a livelihood is a means by which people make a living; nonetheless, the above definition suggests that it is complex and does not just consider income but entails much more for it to be sustainable. More specifically, livelihoods can only be sustainable if it is holistic to consider how people use resources to make a living, how they cope and adapt to the stresses and the shocks they experience and how they create net benefits for themselves, others and the next generation (Chambers and Conway, 1992).

Additionally, this definition also necessitates acknowledging various aspects that make livelihoods sustainable. For example, it acknowledges the aspects of resilience and vulnerability. As noted above, a livelihood is only termed sustainable once it can cope and recover from stresses and shocks that make people vulnerable. The same sentiments are acknowledged by DFID (1999), which notes that livelihoods are sustainable if they are resilient to external shocks and stresses. Besides this, the definition by Chambers and Conway (1992) also encompasses the aspects of assets and capabilities required to make a living. Johnson (1997) highlights that these are essentially the resources people accumulate to benefit their livelihoods and those of others. Thus, affirming that livelihoods are not individualistic. They not only consider how individuals make a living but also how they support others now and in the future.

Taking this into consideration, figure 2.1 below summarises the components of sustainable livelihoods.



*Figure 2.1 Components of Sustainable Livelihoods*

*Source: Author's Figure Adapted from Chambers and Conway (1992)*

As it encompasses various components shown in figure 2.1 above, the concept of sustainable livelihoods is used for explaining and analysing how marginalised people use their available resources to make a living while facing adverse conditions and how they develop coping and adaptation strategies to showcase their resilience to vulnerability (Scoones, 1998;Sakdapolrak, 2014). Therefore, the concept of sustainable livelihoods is ideal for explaining and understanding how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihood while operating in the challenging informal sector and the uncertain tourism industry.

Having discussed the definition of sustainable livelihoods, the following section gives an overview of how the concept has been studied based on examples from the literature.

### **2.1.1 Ways Sustainable Livelihoods are Studied: Phenomena and Theories**

As alluded to, the concept of sustainable livelihoods originated in rural development studies. Thus, the concept is popularly used to study rural households and communities. This is similarly the case within the context of tourism, as shown by examples such as but not limited to; Ma *et al.*, (2020), who studied the sustainable livelihoods of households in rural tourism destinations in China and Ashley (2000b), who examined the impact of tourism on rural livelihoods in Namibia. Relatedly, this is also evident in the study by Kheiri and Nasihatkon (2016), which examined the effects of rural tourism on sustainable livelihoods in Iran. All these

examples engage with sustainable livelihoods and suggest the need to develop rural tourism to support the livelihoods of rural communities and households.

While the focus on rural livelihoods and development continues, it is evident that the study of sustainable livelihoods has gone beyond this scope to being studied in various disciplines and fields. Thus, the study of sustainable livelihoods has attracted the investigation of various phenomena and the engagement with various theoretical and conceptual lenses. To illustrate, Johnson (1997) studied how institutional arrangement influenced sustainable livelihoods and engaged with common pool resource theory to explore the relationship between resources and capital. This is also witnessed in the study by Amadi and Anokwuru (2017), which engaged with post-colonial discourse and the Marxian political economy framework to discuss the sustainable rural livelihoods in post-colonial Nigeria. Likewise, this is displayed by Parts *et al.*, (2011), who used an anthropological approach and developed a contemporary institutional framework to study sustainable heritage-based livelihoods for artisans in Estonia. While the above examples do not directly relate to this study's aim and objectives, they display how the concept of sustainable livelihoods is used to investigate different phenomena using a variety of theoretical and conceptual lenses.

Notwithstanding, while the above examples show that the concept of sustainable livelihoods is used beyond rural livelihoods and development, it is evident that the concept remains primarily focused on people facing adverse conditions like poverty or living on the margins of society (Wall, 2007). Thus, justifying it as an ideal concept to study artisans who experience challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

Furthermore, with reference to the above and other examples reviewed in the literature, it is evident that the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and Framework is the most predominant lens for studying sustainable livelihoods, as various studies have embraced this. Before embarking on examples to justify this claim, the following section will discuss the SLA framework. It will start with an introduction and a discussion of its attributes to display its theoretical underpinnings. This will be followed by an overview of how it has been used within tourism and beyond, where examples will be discussed to justify its predominance in the study of livelihoods. Afterwards, the chapter will critique the approach and suggest concepts that can be integrated to develop an ideal conceptual lens to understand how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihood while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

## 2.2 Sustainable Livelihood Approach and Framework

The initial conceptualisation of sustainable livelihoods in the 1980s and early 1990s (Chambers, 1983; Chambers, 1989; Bernstein, Crow and Johnson, 1992; Chambers and Conway, 1992) set the ground for developing suitable models for rural poverty reduction in the Global South. Based on these studies, Scoones (1998) introduced the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework to analyse sustainable rural livelihoods. In this initial framework, he analysed the livelihoods of people living in rural areas by examining various factors. These include people's livelihood resources, the institutional processes and organisational structures that influence access to resources, their livelihood strategies, the sustainable livelihood outcomes, and contexts, conditions and trends that affect people. As the framework encompassed the fundamental facets of people's livelihoods, it formed the core basis for analysing sustainable livelihoods and received worldwide recognition.

The ground-breaking framework by Scoones (1998) was developed further, and its scope increased beyond rural livelihoods, which resulted in the creation of the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) by the Department for International Development (DFID), shown in figure 2.2 below.

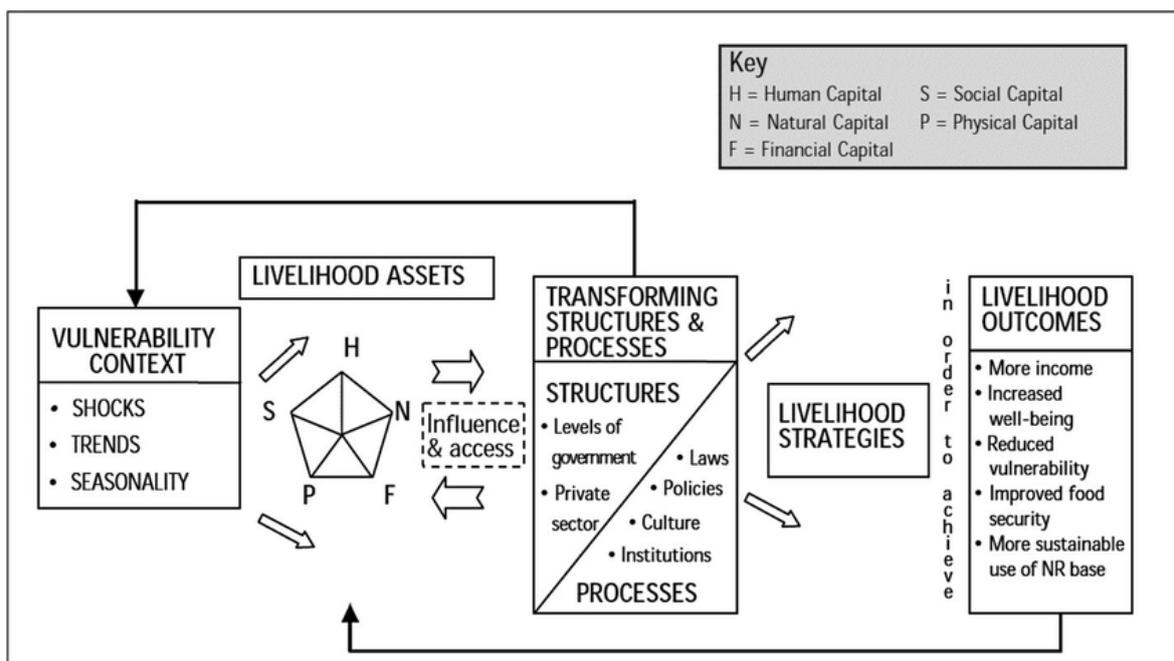


Figure 2.2: Sustainable Livelihood Framework (DFID, 1999)

The above framework is based on the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA), which offers a way to help alleviate poverty and social exclusion in the Global South by empowering the most vulnerable people and thinking about how the poor can achieve livelihoods (DFID,

1999). Alongside DFID, other development agencies such as CARE, Oxfam and UNDP have also developed their frameworks and models for sustainable livelihoods (Carney, 1999). Notably, they do not have strong fundamental differences from DFID's SLF as they are all inspired by the ground-breaking framework by Scoones (1998). Nonetheless, and as will be discussed throughout the chapter, DFID's sustainable livelihood framework shown in figure 2.2 above is the most predominant, as it offers a more comprehensive analytical tool and way of thinking about the sustainable livelihoods of poor and marginalised people (Cahn, 2006).

### **2.2.1 Demystifying SLA, SLF, SLA Framework, and Theory**

The SLA generally denotes a way of thinking about the livelihoods of people who are disadvantaged or experiencing poverty, whereas the SLF is a tool for livelihood analysis that is required to implement the SLA (Ashley and Carney, 1999). In literature, the two terms are often used interchangeably (McLean, 2015). In fact, in several cases, the two are joined together; hence, it is common to come across the term "SLA Framework" (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Consequently, as they are often used interchangeably in literature, the terms SLA, SLF and SLA framework broadly refer to a method for analysing and understanding the livelihoods of people. They have also been referred to as a way of viewing the world (De Satgé and Holloway, 2002).

Given this understanding, there is a debate on whether the SLA Framework is a theory. Case in point, Mazibuko (2013) claims that the SLA cannot be termed as a theory because it does not explain a phenomenon. He adds that it can neither be a model because it does not describe anything. Nonetheless, he admits that it is a framework that recognises patterns of a phenomenon, which may lead to a theory or a model.

On the contrary, the SLA Framework is considered to have theoretical underpinnings that make it a theory. For example, Wang and Yue (2018) view the SLA Framework as a theory in their study of family livelihood vulnerability in China. Weldegiorgis and Jayamohan (2013) consider DFID's SLA Framework a theoretical framework and adopt its theoretical underpinnings to study the livelihoods of female-headed households in Ethiopia. This is consistent with the thoughts of Bhuyan (2016), who says that the DFID's SLA framework provides theoretical and practical tools. Hence, suggesting that it can also be embraced as a theoretical framework. Solesbury (2003) also alludes that DFID's SLA is both a theoretical and a practical tool and expresses that there is a theory behind the approach. Additionally,

Morse and McNamara (2013) elaborately explain the theory behind the SLA. Thus, creating the notion of sustainable livelihood theories.

Based on this, the SLA Framework has been used as a conceptual, theoretical and interpretive lens within academic discourse and doctoral research. This is evident in doctoral studies such as Eddins (2013), which used the SLA Framework to study volunteer tourism and the livelihoods of host communities and Sheriff (2004), which integrated the DFID SLA Framework to assess the sustainable livelihoods options for coastal fishers in Thailand. Thus, showcasing the SLA Framework's credibility in offering theoretical or conceptual guidance in the study of sustainable livelihoods.

Furthermore, a theory shows the interactions and linkages between concepts to explain why or how a phenomenon occurs (Corley and Gioia, 2011). Given this understanding, the SLA framework can be viewed as a theory in several aspects. To illustrate, the SLA enfolds income and non-income aspects and depicts the ability of a unit, i.e. individuals, households, villages, regions or nations, to enhance its assets and capabilities during shocks and stresses (Morse and McNamara, 2013). It also provides a way of thinking about the challenges and opportunities that the often-marginalised and poor people face (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003). Likewise, it provides a way to understand the factors influencing livelihood strategies and decisions.

The following section will explain various attributes and components of the SLA that interact or relate to explain how people sustain their livelihoods while experiencing challenges. This is crucial because it provides a conceptual lens pertinent to this study. Nonetheless, as will be elaborated later in the chapter, the SLA bears some limitations that limit its ability to extensively explain how the poor and marginalised people sustain their livelihoods.

### **2.3 Attributes and Components of the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA): Towards Conceptual Underpinning**

Alongside its prevalence as a credible and widely accepted way of thinking about livelihoods, the SLA prides itself on six core principles that should not be compromised (DFID, 1999). These principles justify and strengthen the approach in various ways. First, it is people-centred and pro-poor. Thus, it champions the participation of the poor to give them a voice. Second, it is holistic and non-sectoral; hence, it can be applied in different sectors and contexts,

and in this case, it can be applied in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Third, the framework is guided by the principle of being dynamic; hence, it is not rigid to changes happening in society. It is, therefore, a practical and logical framework for a world that undergoes rapid changes (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Fourth, it focuses on building on strengths, as the framework starts by analysing strengths rather than needs. Thus, strengths, such as resilience, can be analysed at the outset. Fifth, the framework encourages the macro-micro link and considers policy and institutional involvement, including government and non-government institutions, the private sector, and community organisations that influence people's livelihoods. Lastly, it stresses the principle of sustainability as a core factor in the livelihoods of vulnerable and marginalised people (DFID, 1999). Generally, these six core principles highlight some of SLA's key strengths and attributes. However, as will be discussed in section 2.5, some of these principles have been criticised and are not new to controversies.

Aside from the six principles, the SLA elaborates that people with sustainable livelihoods attain livelihood outcomes. These outcomes include increased working days, reduced poverty, and enhanced well-being manifested by self-esteem, happiness, power, and security. It also includes sustained natural resources, livelihood adaptations and reduced vulnerability (Chambers, 1989; Scoones, 1998). Alongside these, DFID (1999) explains that sustainable livelihoods achieve more income, inclusion and access to essential services and infrastructure.

Before achieving these livelihood outcomes, the SLA acknowledges that marginalised and poor people operate in a vulnerability context, which is the external environment in which they exist. This context incorporates trends, shocks, and seasonality. The trends include changes in population, governance, and politics, to mention a few. The shocks are generally unpredictable, such as a crisis, unforeseen health issues, and economic shocks, whereas seasonality is the fluctuations in prices, products, and employment opportunities. The vulnerability context also includes stresses, which are usually predictable, typically cumulative, worrying and continuous (Conway and Barbier, 2013). Section 2.7.1 of this thesis discusses the vulnerability context in more detail.

The following section will dissect the other critical facets of the SLA, which make it suitable for studying sustainable livelihood. These include the livelihood assets and the transforming structures and processes. Elaborating on this is essential, as it provides a building block for understanding the resources that artisans use to sustain their livelihoods while facing

challenges. It also enables the conceptual understanding of how institutions influence artisans' livelihoods in the informal sector in tourism. Thus, they are critical towards addressing the research aim and objectives outlined in section 1.4.

### 2.3.1 Livelihood Assets

Within the SLA, people have access to various capitals, herein regarded as livelihood assets, which gain meaning and value under the prevailing social, institutional, and organisational environment. These livelihood assets, i.e. natural capital, economic or financial capital, human capital, social capital and physical capital, are represented by a pentagon, as shown in figure 2.2. DFID (1999) regards them as the heart of the livelihood analysis framework and describes them as follows:

- **Natural capital** - includes natural resources like soil, water, air, genetic resources, and environmental services, where resources flow and people derive their livelihood.
- **Economic or financial capital** - consists of capital bases like cash or credit, savings, and other economic assets for pursuing livelihood strategies.
- **Human capital** - incorporates the skills, knowledge, ability, labour, health, and physical capability to pursue livelihood strategies successfully.
- **Social capital** - encompasses social resources like networks, relationships, and affiliations.
- **Physical capital** - includes basic infrastructure and producer goods, which are the tools and equipment that promote productivity. It also includes secure shelter, the supply of water, affordable energy, and transportation.

These livelihood assets are also called livelihood resources (Scoones, 1998). They include tangible and intangible assets people possess, which also determine how they pursue different livelihood strategies (Scoones, 1998; DFID, 1999). The assets can be destroyed or created due to vulnerability and change from time to time depending on people's experiences and exposure to vulnerable situations (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Thus, the framework is not rigid but dynamic to changes. Generally, the SLA directs that livelihoods are sustained once livelihood assets become less vulnerable through enhancing their contributions and improving the institutional context (Carney, 2003). Additionally, livelihood assets determine

the poverty level because they are a means of making a living and alleviating poverty, which insinuates that their lack can be termed poverty (Dijk, 2011). Relatedly, livelihood assets are a means of survival (Whitehead, 2002). Moreover, they are also a means by which people give meaning to the world and showcase people's capabilities to act and sustain their livelihoods (Bebbington, 1999).

The SLA is criticised for being rigid in considering only five livelihood assets within the framework. This is echoed by McLean (2015), who refers to the five livelihood assets, i.e. natural, social, economic, human, and physical capital, as rigid and like a pentagon prison. Nonetheless, despite recognising only five assets, the framework prides itself on being dynamic and flexible. This is displayed by numerous studies that were flexible and incorporated other livelihood assets that they perceived as underplayed or ignored. For instance, Moser (1998), in the study of asset vulnerability in urban poverty, identified other critical livelihood assets such as housing, labour, and infrastructure alongside Scoones (1998)'s livelihood assets of social capital and human capital. On the other hand, Baumann and Sinha (2001) incorporated political capital, which they termed the sixth capital, to allow for a rigorous analysis of power, which the SLA framework lightly considers as policies and institutions. Likewise, Albu and Scott (2002), in the study of livelihoods and micro-enterprises, also adapted the livelihood assets and included technological capacity as a livelihood asset. This is the same case for Daskon and McGregor (2012), who incorporated cultural capital as a sixth asset to the SLA pentagon of livelihood assets. Within tourism specifically, Shen, Hughey and Simmons (2008) incorporated institutional capital to strengthen people's participation in political governance to achieve better livelihoods in tourism.

These varied examples demonstrate that the SLA framework is widely applicable in various fields of study. They also highlight how the framework is highly adaptable and flexible to incorporate aspects perceived as missing in livelihood research. This further justifies that the SLA framework should not be considered a pentagon prison, as McLean (2015) claimed, but considered adaptable to incorporate other necessary concepts and livelihood assets within the study.

#### ❖ **The Association between Livelihood Assets and Bourdieu's Theory of Capital**

Capitals described within the SLA can be associated with Bourdieu's theory of capitals. The SLA recognises five capitals, i.e., financial/economic, social, human, natural and physical capitals. On the other hand, Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, identifies four forms of

capitals, i.e., social, economic, cultural and symbolic capitals (Bourdieu, 1986). Notably, social and economic capitals are identical to the capitals identified within SLA.

Despite these similarities, the livelihoods capitals in SLA and Bourdieu's theory of capitals are fundamentally different. Bourdieu's forms of capital recognise power and link all the capitals to power (Bourdieu, 1986). This power may be associated with class, status, or other forms of power relations. Additionally, capital and power amount to the same thing, and something, such as natural capital, is not automatically capital (Thieme, 2008). Bourdieu (1986) also explains that all forms of capital are dynamic and can be transformed into another through transformation work, though not automatically. Similarly, Bourdieu's perspective of capitals demonstrates contextual issues and challenges how assets in livelihood studies are non-embedded and static (Dijk, 2011). Nevertheless, livelihood capitals described in SLA still provide an avenue for analysing the resources that people use for their sustainable livelihoods. Henceforth, they remain crucial and relevant to the analysis of sustainable livelihoods.

### **2.3.2 Transforming Structures and Processes**

Alongside recognising the livelihood assets and the vulnerability context, the SLA framework also encompasses transforming structures and processes. Structures are referred to as the "hardware" and include the private and public institutions that create and implement policies. This comprises the government, the public sector through executive, legislative and judicial arms, and the private sector, all of which are responsible for creating structures that largely control people's livelihood strategies and outcomes. On the other hand, processes are the "software" that determines how structures operate and interact. It comprises policies, legislature, institutions, culture, and power relations that influence livelihood decisions (DFID, 1999).

Hence, the transforming structures and processes direct that livelihood analysis cannot neglect the institutions in which vulnerable people operate. Consideration of institutions is vital as it allows for comprehending institutional processes, barriers and limitations that affect sustainable livelihoods (Scoones, 1998). To expound, Morse and McNamara (2013) explain that institutions, which constitute authorities, government and non-government bodies, can step in to help, constrain risks and provide compensation during shocks and stresses that heighten vulnerability. Likewise, institutions can enhance people's livelihoods by providing an enabling environment for them to sustain a livelihood in vulnerable conditions. They also shape

livelihoods because they can enhance people's livelihood resources or heighten their vulnerability (Ashley, 2000b; Cannon, Twigg and Rowell, 2003).

Additionally, institutions can limit people's choice of livelihood strategies (DFID, 1999). For instance, Jianchu and Mikesell (2003) note that institutional problems such as poor governance, unfavourable development policies and central planning by the states can affect how people use their livelihood resources and make them more vulnerable. This is also acknowledged by Carney (2003), who highlights the challenging reality of how poor people sustain their livelihood and denotes that institutions contribute to the continued poverty and vulnerability of people.

Therefore, given the relevance of institutions in sustainable livelihoods, it is prudent to consider and examine the institutional context that people operate in to sustain their livelihoods. In this case, the SLA's transforming structures and processes make it possible to analyse how the relevant institutions in Kenya affect the sustainable livelihoods of artisans in the informal sector in tourism.

The above section has discussed the key attributes of the SLA to give an understanding of the approach and what it entails. Having done so, the following section will discuss its use and application, its criticisms, and the concepts that can complement the SLA framework to understand sustainable livelihoods.

## **2.4 The Use of SLA: Tourism and Beyond**

As alluded to in section 2.1, the SLA framework is predominant in studying sustainable livelihoods. It is flexible and used across different fields and industries (DFID, 1999). Thus, it is extensively used, albeit more prevalent within poverty and development research (Kaag *et al.*, 2002). For example, outside of the tourism industry, it has been used in numerous studies, such as but not limited to Albu and Scott (2002), who applied SLA to understand the livelihoods of microenterprises in Kenya and Ghana with a focus on technology and markets as livelihood assets: Jianchu and Mikesell (2003) who applied SLA within the context of Montane Mainland of Southeast Asia to analyse the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the access and regulation of natural resources: Caihuan (2022) who used the SLA alongside the concept of diverse economies to understand rural peasant livelihoods in China: and Tahira (2021) whom while focussing on agriculture, studied the sustainable livelihoods of cotton growers in rural Pakistan. These are just a few studies that have used the SLA to study livelihoods, thus showing the range of applications in different industries. More specifically,

they show the flexibility and reliability of SLA in understanding and explaining livelihoods in diverse industries.

Within tourism, the SLA and its framework are mainly used as an analytical tool to analyse the effectiveness of tourism in poverty reduction and the impact of tourism on people's livelihoods (Wu and Pearce, 2014). This is evident in how SLA has been applied within tourism research by Eddins (2013), who, in a doctoral thesis, used the SLA to study volunteer tourism and livelihoods of host communities in Panama; Ashley (2000b), who used the SLA to examine the impact of tourism on rural livelihoods in Namibia; Simpson (2009) who assessed the impact of tourism on community development and sustainable livelihoods in South Africa; Baker and Coulter (2007) who applied SLA to examine the vulnerability of livelihoods of beach vendors in Bali; Tao and Wall (2009) who examined tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Taiwan; Leu (2019) who used the SLA to study tourism as a livelihood strategy for indigenous people in Sweden; Ma *et al.*, (2020) who analysed households while studying their sustainable livelihoods in rural tourism destinations in Wuhan China; and Westoby *et al.*,(2021) who studied tourism livelihoods in various destinations in Bali. Aside from these examples, Shen, Hughey and Simmons (2008) strived to bridge the gap between the SLA and tourism sustainability by introducing the Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism (SLFT) to explain tourism as a livelihood strategy in rural development. In this regard, focusing on tourism on a macro level, away from the prevalent use of SLA on household and individual levels.

These studies display the predominance of the SLA framework and suggest that it is an ideal analytical tool and approach for understanding livelihoods, especially among the poor and vulnerable in the tourism industry. They also show that it is an appropriate approach and framework for understanding tourism as a context for livelihood strategies. Likewise, the above studies reveal that the SLA framework is not new in tourism studies.

The connection between the SLA and tourism goes beyond applying the SLA framework to the tourism industry. This is apparent in the relationship between SLA and the pro-poor tourism (PPT) approach. For instance, both approaches focus on poor people and are underpinned by the conceptual understanding of poverty. Similarly, the SLA is geared toward understanding poverty, amplifying the voice of the poor, and analysing the complexities of their lives, the challenges they face, and the trends in their livelihoods (DFID, 1999;Carney, 2003), which the PPT approach draws upon. Furthermore, both the SLA and PPT approaches

prioritise the voices of the poor, which Shen, Hughey and Simmons (2008) explain are usually not heard during the decisions on tourism development.

Moreover, while the SLA focuses on reducing poverty (Scoones, 1998), the PPT approach focuses on increasing the net benefit of the poor in tourism by linking tourism businesses and initiatives to the poor (Ashley, 2000a; Ashley, 2002). This is because poor people are often side-lined. Thus, they are likely to benefit less from tourism than rich and socially powerful people (Gibson, 2009). For this reason, the two approaches complement each other in tourism studies focusing on benefiting the poor and marginalised people. Therefore, affirming the relationship between the SLA and PPT approach. More broadly, it affirms that the SLA can be seamlessly applied in the tourism industry.

Nevertheless, while there is a clear connection between the SLA and the tourism industry, it is evident that the use of the SLA within the informal sector in tourism is still underdeveloped, despite the poverty and marginalisation of the informal sector and the close link between tourism and the informal sector. To demonstrate, the examples above on the use of the SLA in tourism show that the application of the SLA, specifically within the informal sector or among informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, is lacking. As previously elaborated in sections 1.2 and 1.4, this might be because this group of artisans has not received much attention in sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurship, or tourism discourse. Hence, given the analytical benefits of the SLA and its association with tourism, the application of the SLA and its framework can be extended to study informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism to understand how they sustain livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

## **2.5 SLA Criticism and Controversies: Overcoming Concerns and the Way Forward**

Given the varied attributes and underpinnings, the SLA framework is praised as a reliable and functional approach or framework for understanding sustainable livelihoods (Tahira, 2021; Caihuan, 2022). Despite this, it is not new to criticism. The following section highlights some main criticisms and proposes ways to overcome these concerns.

### **2.5.1 Concerns about the analysis of institutions**

As illustrated, the SLA framework gives a provision for the analysis of the institutions by considering the transforming structures and processes. However, the framework does not

illustrate or explain other relevant aspects, such as the social structures and history that shape how the institutions are formed. This is relevant because some of the challenges that affect livelihoods can be traced to social systems and structures such as politics, power relations and laws (Toner, 2002;Sakdapolrak, 2014), which influence how institutions function.

Specifically, for many African countries, these challenges can be traced to colonial history, which shaped how institutions were formed and governed and how laws and policies were conceived. Case in point, colonisation has influenced how entrepreneurship is developed and promoted in SSA. Hence, the informal sector is often perceived as inferior and, as a result, lacks a supportive business environment (Sambajee and Weston, 2015). The lingering colonial history is also evident in the presence of neo-colonialism, which promotes capitalism and corruption that hinder the local people from accessing means of livelihood, land, water, food and other resources (Devine and Ojeda, 2017).

Within the context of tourism in the Global South, neo-colonialism drives tourism resources to be controlled by foreigners and not by the local communities (Manyara and Jones, 2007b). Due to neo-colonialism rooted in institutions, tourism benefits are unequally distributed both regionally and socially, which Jaakson (2004) explains drives the gap between the rich and the poor. Amadi and Anokwuru (2017) share the same sentiments and reiterate that livelihoods are historically embedded. Thus, there is a need to understand the institutional context, the history, as well as the post-colonial reality of a context and how it impacts livelihoods.

Livelihood research can, therefore, benefit by digging deeper into the institutional factors and considering the lingering colonial history that influences the livelihoods of vulnerable people. This includes examining the political and colonial history that shapes the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of relevant institutions.

### **2.5.2 Concerns about livelihood decisions**

SLA is also criticised for the mechanical structure of how people make livelihood decisions. In particular, there is a sense that the SLA lacks a theoretical foundation to explain people's behaviours (Sakdapolrak, 2014) but relies on people's ability to make systematic livelihood decisions. For example, Toner (2002) criticises the framework for presuming that people are wired to make strategic and rational choices. She argues that some livelihood decisions are unconscious and unintentional. Thus, stressing that this assumption is wrong for implying that people can make strategic decisions. This is particularly the case, especially

amongst people that face structural constraints, such as marginalisation and vulnerability, who may lack the freedom and power to make strategic or logical livelihood decisions. To support this argument, she uses the concept of habitus to understand people's livelihood decisions and outcomes. Habitus constitutes the internalised behaviours, perceptions and beliefs that people have (Costa and Murphy, 2015). They are also a system of long-lasting dispositions that operate subconsciously, meaning people may make decisions without necessarily thinking about them (Thieme, 2008). Hence, implying that people can unconsciously develop livelihood strategies (de Haan and Zoomers, 2005) and do not necessarily make strategic decisions.

Nonetheless, entrepreneurship literature provides a counter to this argument. Entrepreneurs are generally known to be strategic, creative, and innovative in solving problems, exploiting business opportunities and making livelihood decisions (Choi and Shepherd, 2004). They have a sense of agency, which is the ability to understand and control individual actions (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2001). Therefore, in this case, as artisans are also entrepreneurs, their entrepreneurial spirit and agency may drive them to make rational and strategic decisions according to the resources at their disposal. This means that as entrepreneurs, they can make logical and tactical decisions about how they handle challenges, persist in their livelihood strategies, and ultimately sustain a livelihood. Hence, the criticism by Toner (2002) and Sakdapolrak (2014) may not entirely apply to rational and strategic agents such as artisans.

Nevertheless, this SLA criticism calls for the need to consider both people's strategic and unconscious livelihood decisions. This may be achieved by integrating the concept of habitus, which reconciles structure and agency (Carr, 2008) in understanding how people make livelihood decisions. The concept of habitus is expounded further in the following section 2.6.

### **2.5.3 Concerns about the lack of people-centredness**

The SLA is also criticised for not aligning with its principles. Case in point, according to DFID (1999), the SLA framework maintains a key principle of being people-centred, thus its emphasis on being pro-poor, giving a voice to the vulnerable, and encouraging their political participation. However, Morse and McNamara (2013) fault SLA for making people invisible in the framework despite the framework being people-centred. Due to this, Kaag (2004) pleads for a people-centred approach that considers people as a whole, including their cultural and social structures, and not just as economic actors.

Additionally, in the framework, the aspect of culture is considered as part of transforming processes, but there is no explanation of how culture influences livelihood decisions and outcomes. Thus, implying that the SLA framework has a simplistic view and does not consider people's hopes, norms and values. Carney (2003) also stresses that the framework underplays some factors, such as gender, that impact livelihood portfolios, hence justifying Kaag (2004)'s argument that the framework needs to pay attention to differences in individuals and the different categories of people to make it more people-centred. This can be achieved by explicitly considering people's social structures, culture, and history to make them more visible in the framework.

Owing to the framework's flexibility, it is possible to include the downplayed social structures and culture, where people's views, norms and values are considered throughout the framework. This includes the influence of socio-cultural structures on people's view of challenges and how they overcome them, their persistent work in the context, their access to livelihood resources and their desired livelihood outcomes. Doing so would also resolve Sakdapolrak (2014)'s concern that people in the SLA are treated as individual units and not embedded in society. Likewise, it would make it possible to incorporate the socially constructed meanings, beliefs and norms that exemplify people in society and may assist in understanding their livelihood strategies. Section 2.6 below expounds on this further and discusses ways culture may be considered to understand how people sustain their livelihoods.

Having acknowledged the predominance of the SLA framework in the study of sustainable livelihoods, the above section has highlighted critical concerns and proposed ways of overcoming them. Thus, the following section delves deeper into addressing these concerns. It discusses the key concept of culture to address the SLA's lack of people-centredness and concerns about livelihood decisions. After the discussion on culture and sustainable livelihoods, the subsequent sections will also discuss how the relevant concepts of resilience and vulnerability are relevant for addressing the research aim and objectives.

## **2.6 Culture and Sustainable Livelihoods: Putting People at the Centre**

Culture encompasses the long-standing and distinctive ways of life of people within a society (UNESCO, 2001). It denotes the shared meaning and how people with specific backgrounds and affiliations behave individually and within society (Huggins and Thompson, 2015). Likewise, culture is a social structure (Hays, 1994) and comprises the ways of life that

society interprets and adapts (Gunnestad, 2006). While these show the various definitions and understandings of culture at a macro and micro level, this study maintains a consensus that culture is the sum total of people's systems of beliefs, behaviours, norms, values, attitudes, skills, customs and tangible and intangible knowledge that are preserved and passed from one generation to the other (Daskon, 2010;Andreatta and Ferraro, 2012;Irandu and Shah, 2016).

As highlighted in the previous section, culture has received little attention in studies on sustainable livelihoods, yet it is possibly a fundamental part of people's daily livelihoods. Principally, there is a relationship between culture and sustainable livelihoods because they are interwoven with complex relationships and linkages (Cahn, 2006). Hence, culture is embedded in different components of sustainable livelihoods.

To illustrate, the study by Jianchu and Mikesell (2003) on indigenous knowledge and sustainable livelihoods suggests that culture influences how people use different resources for their livelihoods. These are similar to the views of Carr, Ruhanen and Whitford (2016), who explain that indigenous communities use their cultural resources alongside other natural and historical cultural resources to sustain their livelihoods within the tourism industry. Kalafatic (2007) similarly directs that the survival of indigenous people is pegged on inter-generational aspects of cultural, economic, political, and social dimensions but warns that all these strategies are restricted by poverty, which limits their access to resources.

Moreover, Daskon and McGregor (2012) explain that people use culture to determine their livelihood patterns. Likewise, Wu and Pearce (2014) indicate that culture and subcultures play a role in people's choice of livelihoods, thus alluding to the cultural influences on an individual's livelihood choices. These mirror the views of Scoones (1998), who discusses that cultural constructs such as gender, age, power, and religion influence and impact the composition of livelihood portfolios.

Within entrepreneurship, culture also influences how entrepreneurs make a living and make strategic decisions. This is witnessed in the studies by Madichie, Nkamnebe and Idemobi (2008), who affirmed that culture is embedded in entrepreneurship practices and discussed that indigenous culture influences entrepreneurship. This is also the case with Jenssen and Kristiansen (2004), who examined that sub-cultural qualities such as social capital influenced entrepreneurship resources. Similarly, aside from stressing that culture is neglected in entrepreneurship research, Takyi-Asiedu (1993) also elaborates that cultural dimensions affect

entrepreneurial behaviour. Therefore, these studies show that culture is embedded in livelihood and entrepreneurial decisions.

Moreover, culture may influence how people cope and adapt to challenges that make them vulnerable (Cahn, 2006). Sections 2.7.1 and 2.7.2 discuss this in more detail and elaborate on how culture affects how people experience vulnerability and demonstrate resilience to sustain their livelihoods.

Therefore, the above discussion highlights that culture and sustainable livelihoods are interwoven. Hence, the concept of culture may help to understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods.

### **2.6.1 Considering Culture in Sustainable Livelihoods and the SLA**

As alluded to, livelihood research has primarily relied on the SLA, an approach praised for being people-centred, representing the voices of the poor, alleviating poverty and empowering the poor and vulnerable people in society (DFID, 1999). Notwithstanding, the approach does not explicitly consider culture, which places people at the centre when analysing sustainable livelihoods.

This has resulted in very few studies that have explicitly considered the influence of culture on sustainable livelihoods. These include; Cahn (2008), who applied principles from sustainable livelihood approaches to study how culture influenced indigenous entrepreneurship in the Pacific island of Samoa. Hence, demonstrating how the SLA framework could be used to analyse cultural influence in entrepreneurship. In a previous study, Cahn (2006) emphasised the need to incorporate culture in the sustainable livelihood framework and, more so, recognise cultural differences driven by gender, age, ethnicity and class differences. He added that culture needs to be considered as it can encourage more positive livelihood outcomes.

The aspect of culture has also been incorporated by Daskon and McGregor (2012), who drew from Bourdieu's 1986 concept of cultural capital and incorporated it into the SLA to conceptualise the relationship between culture and development. They proposed that cultural capital should be included within the livelihood assets. In particular, they found that intangible embodied culture, which is the long-lasting dispositions in people's bodies and minds (Bourdieu, 1986), sustains livelihoods. Daskon and Binns (2010) also championed the consideration of culture. They explored how culture influenced rural livelihood choices and advocated that culture should be explicitly incorporated into the SLA framework. This aligns

with Daskon (2010), who analysed how cultural values are connected to rural people's livelihood and resilience. In this paper, she explained how people naturally use their customs, norms, and beliefs to sustain their livelihoods. Additionally, while using the SLA framework, she investigated how cultural values are connected to people's lives and the role culture plays in livelihood resilience. The paper's key findings are that livelihoods are primarily influenced by cultural traditions and not just by institutional factors such as the political and economic conditions of a place.

The above papers by Daskon (2010), Daskon and Binns (2010) and Daskon and McGregor (2012) were all done in the context of communities in rural villages in Sri Lanka. Nonetheless, despite being done in a different context and industry, i.e., not within the informal sector in tourism in SSA, these papers provide precedence for considering culture in livelihood research.

Within the tourism context, while there have been studies focused on livelihoods in the tourism industry, such as those highlighted in section 2.4, there has not been an explicit discussion on culture and how it can enable more people-centredness in sustainable livelihoods. This is except studies by Ma *et al.*, (2020), who studied the influence of culture on sustainable livelihoods of households in rural tourism destinations of Wuhan. It also includes Tao (2006) and Tao and Wall (2009), who studied livelihood strategies amongst indigenous communities in Taiwan and recognised that livelihoods are sensitive to culture. Nonetheless, while these examples spotlight culture in sustainable livelihoods, they have focussed on rural households and communities as their units of analysis. Likewise, the studied rural households and communities have diverse non-tourism-related livelihood strategies such as cash-crop farming, fishing, hunting and wage employment. This is unlike this study, which focuses on informal artisan entrepreneurs who primarily rely on handicrafts while living and working in a context where they experience continuous challenges.

Besides these studies, which are primarily focused on rural households and indigenous communities, no prominent studies have explicitly focused on cultural influence on the livelihoods of artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector in tourism. Likewise, there has not been much focus on the SSA informal entrepreneurial context, which shows that this area is still underdeveloped.

Therefore, given the relevance of culture in sustainable livelihoods and the need for further development in this area, there is an opportunity to consider it in the analysis of artisans'

livelihoods. More specifically, as artisans are cultural entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019), it is possible that culture influences their sustainable livelihoods.

### **2.6.2 Considering Habitus**

Relatedly, the concept of habitus from Bourdieu's theory of practice can be considered to further understand the artisan's livelihoods. Habitus is a system of acquired and long-lasting dispositions obtained through socialisation. It is an accumulated and internalised behaviour and a deeply rooted scheme in which people perceive, understand and evaluate their world (Sakdapolrak, 2007). Habitus can be connected to culture because it encompasses how people within a society perceive and interpret events and occurrences in their lives. Additionally, habitus illustrates the cultural underpinning and structures embodied in people's minds and bodies, which may be long-lasting and can be transferred over time (Kolawole, 2014). Hence, it has some similarities with cultural practices that are long-lasting and can be transferred across generations.

Furthermore, Bourdieu used Habitus to explore the internalised behaviours, perceptions, and beliefs that people have, which determine their day-to-day practices (Costa and Murphy, 2015). These day-to-day practices, beliefs, behaviours, and perceptions exemplify an individual's embodied culture, thus, highlighting the association between culture and habitus. This relationship is further demonstrated by Kolawole (2014), who studied cultural values and perceptions towards disasters in Botswana. Some of their findings suggest that a person's perception of a problem or a challenge is a function of their culture, and that habitus is rooted in how people perceive and read meaning to the social, physical, natural, and socio-cultural phenomena around them. Therefore, this close association suggests that habitus may be used alongside culture to understand how people sustain their livelihoods.

### **2.6.3 Concluding remarks on culture and sustainable livelihoods**

Owing to the embeddedness of culture in sustainable livelihoods, the consideration of culture may enable an understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihood. More specifically, it may enable further consideration of their livelihood strategies and entrepreneurial decisions and how they access and use their livelihood resources. It may also enable an understanding of how artisans perceive and deal with challenges and persist in working in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Furthermore, considering culture may enable the contextual

understanding of artisans. This is because cultural considerations are set on the precedence that people are not homogeneous. Thus, their livelihoods vary in social and cultural contexts, age groups, gender, and history (Chambers, 1989).

## **2.7 Concepts of Vulnerability and Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods**

As pointed out in section 2.1 and shown in figure 2.1, the definition of sustainable livelihood necessitates the concepts of vulnerability and resilience. To recap, a livelihood is sustainable if it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks that create vulnerability (Chambers and Conway, 1992). This ability to cope and adapt to vulnerability is interpreted as resilience (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Therefore, imposing the concepts of resilience and vulnerability in sustainable livelihoods.

Furthermore, as discussed in section 1.4, the study seeks to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to explore the challenges artisans experience in the context. Relatedly, the study also seeks to examine how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry. For this reason, the study's aim and objectives also impose the concepts of resilience and vulnerability in sustainable livelihoods.

Resilience and vulnerability go hand in hand and have been used concurrently in diverse literature. As mentioned above, within sustainable livelihood theories, the relationship between the two is explicit because livelihoods are sustainable if they are resilient to shocks and stresses that create vulnerability (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Additionally, resilience theory, which is one of the main theories in resilience discourse within fields like social work, psychology and mental health, depicts a relationship between resilience and vulnerability by highlighting how resilience can be a positive outcome of vulnerability (Van Breda, 2001; Greene, Galambos and Lee, 2004; Ungar, 2008a; Southwick *et al.*, 2014; Van Breda, 2018).

Therefore, given the relationship between the two concepts and their relevance in understanding sustainable livelihoods, this study will consider both the vulnerability and resilience of artisans to understand the challenges they face and how they handle the challenges and persist in working in the tourism industry. Hence, the chapter will explain these concepts and expound on how they can address the research aim and objectives.

### **2.7.1. Vulnerability**

As alluded to, the study of sustainable livelihoods considers the vulnerability of people. Thus, the following section will discuss the concept of vulnerability, its relationship to sustainable livelihoods and how it can help to understand the challenges that artisans face.

Within the study of sustainable livelihoods, vulnerability comprises shocks, trends and seasonality (DFID, 1999). Conway (1987) and Conway and Barbier (2013) explain that stresses are predictable, worrying, and usually continuous, which may include seasonal changes and a decline in resources. On the other hand, shocks are traumatic, unpredictable, and sudden impacts such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, drought, and fires that affect the natural environment. They also include health issues such as epidemics, sickness, terminal illness or death and unexpected disabilities that affect the day-to-day lives of people. Likewise, shocks may include political occurrences such as instability, wars, and terrorism (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018). All these shocks differ in magnitude and occurrence. Some only affect individuals and households, while others affect the entire nation or region. Given this explanation of shocks and as elaborated in section 1.6 on the discussion of the Kenyan tourism industry, it is evident that informal artisans in tourism are vulnerable. This is because they have experienced some of these shocks and stresses that have affected their livelihoods and the wider informal sector and tourism industry.

Alongside the shocks and stresses, livelihood vulnerability is caused by a lack of livelihood assets, such as insufficient income (Wei et al., 2016). In this case, it is possible to recognise that artisans are vulnerable because they operate in a competitive business environment with very slim margins and unguaranteed sales. Furthermore, in tourism specifically, owing to the industry's seasonal and unstable nature, the income is inconsistent, hence, heightening vulnerability. Likewise, as alluded to, artisans operate with minimal physical capital due to the lack of basic infrastructure like water and health facilities in the informal sector (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018); thus, they are made more vulnerable.

Vulnerability is also increased by institutional processes, which may force people to seek a livelihood in areas that are more prone to risks and shocks (Christophe-Gaillard, Texier and Cannon, 2008). These institutional issues are also echoed by Daskon (2010), who discusses that vulnerability is caused by a lack of favourable policies from relevant institutions. Additionally, Miller *et al.*, (2010) point out that vulnerability happens due to institutional factors caused by the political state, power relations and historical processes. As mentioned

earlier, in Africa, the colonial history of many countries has influenced how entrepreneurship is developed and viewed, resulting in entrepreneurs within the informal sector being side-lined and deemed inferior. For this reason, entrepreneurs within the informal sector lack a voice and do not have favourable policies (Sambajee and Weston, 2015), consequently making them more vulnerable and challenging their livelihoods. Furthermore, the lack of institutional support has resulted in the informal sector being perceived as an avenue for illegality and tax evasion, a hindrance to entrepreneurship efforts and growth in Africa and a mere necessity-driven sector that fails to make economic contributions in Africa (Khavul, Bruton and Wood, 2009;Kshetri, 2011;Dana, Ratten and Honyenuga, 2018). Hence, highlighting some of the institutional constraints that the informal sector faces. This, therefore, directs that the analysis of vulnerability ought to consider institutions and the various ways they influence the exposure to stresses and shocks that create vulnerability.

Vulnerability is often associated with poverty and marginalisation because people who are stereotyped as vulnerable are the poor, women and children, and those with limited essential and financial resources who are socially isolated and defenceless (Christophe-Gaillard, Texier and Cannon, 2008). For this reason, there is a relationship between poverty and vulnerability, especially in the Global South, where the term vulnerability is vaguely used as a substitute for poverty (Prowse, 2003). This makes it prudent to recognise that artisans who experience poverty and are often marginalised may also be vulnerable. Hence, PPT approaches and poverty alleviation strategies in tourism also ought to embrace the concept of vulnerability. Nevertheless, Cannon (2006) warns that vulnerability is not the same as poverty, marginalisation or other concepts that identify sections of a population deemed disadvantaged, at risk or needy. He adds that poverty is a current state, whereas vulnerability has a predictive quality. This, therefore, presents the need to view the artisan's vulnerability holistically and not just as a facet of poverty.

Aside from enabling the understanding of artisan's sustainable livelihoods, focusing on their challenges and vulnerability would also fill a gap in the literature. Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019) recognise the need to discuss the plight of informal artisans as current studies have focused more on their successes, achievements and contributions to the tourism industry but have not shed light on the challenges that make them vulnerable. Thus, justifying the focus on challenges that artisans face.

While the study will extensively discuss the challenges that artisans experience, it is prudent to note that the intention is not to glamorise the challenges or ways that artisans handle them but to showcase how these challenges affect livelihoods. Importantly, discussing these challenges is essential towards achieving the research aim that seeks to understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Additionally, shedding light on the challenges will reiterate the need for supportive policies and PPT approaches that prioritise livelihoods (Ashley, 2000a; Ashley, 2002).

#### **i. Using the SLA and a Cultural Lens to Understand Vulnerability**

Besides being widely used in sustainable livelihood studies, the concept of vulnerability has also shaped studies in numerous disciplines, including human and political ecology, geography, and agriculture, to mention a few (Miller et al., 2010). It has also been used as a core concept in studies about; disasters (Oliver-Smith, 1996; Buckle, Mars and Smale, 2000; Wisner, 2014), climate change (Kelly and Adger, 2000; Gwimbi, 2009), psychology (Garmezy, 1993), health research (Delor and Hubert, 2000), and poverty research (Prowse, 2003).

Therefore, since it has been studied in these various disciplines, there is no uniform theory or framework used to understand, explain, or analyse vulnerability, but rather a diverse variety. For example, in ecology and environmental studies, Turner *et al.*, (2003) developed and used a vulnerability framework to analyse the exposure, sensitivity to risks and vulnerability caused by uncertainties in the biosphere. Whereas in climate studies, Maru *et al.*, (2014) developed a linked resilience-vulnerability framework to identify ways to minimise vulnerability and increase resilience to climate change.

Specifically, within sustainable livelihood studies, vulnerability analysis has witnessed different theories and lenses. For example, Didero (2012), in the research on sustainable livelihoods of waste collectors in Cairo, used SLA alongside Bourdieu's theory of social field to explain the outcomes that led to people's increased livelihood vulnerability and elaborated that vulnerability is informed by habitus. This is also witnessed in the study by Sakdapolrak (2007), who used Bourdieu's theory of practice to discuss the social vulnerability of people in Chennai, India. On the other hand, Webb (2018) and Andrews (2016) analysed livelihood vulnerability using the social constructionism lens and argued that vulnerability is socially constructed. All these, therefore, indicate that no uniform framework, theory or lens is applied in the study of vulnerability.

Given the lack of a universally accepted theory, framework, and lens to understand and explain vulnerability, and given the boundaries of sustainable livelihoods, this study will use the SLA framework (figure 2.2) as a guiding framework to understand vulnerability. Thus, the study conceptualises vulnerability as shocks, stresses, and seasonality that artisans face in the informal sector and the tourism industry. All of which create challenges in sustaining livelihoods. The SLA dictates that livelihood resources such as human, financial, physical, social, and natural capital affect vulnerability. Thus, the study will also consider artisans' access to these resources. Additionally, as artisans operate within an institutional context, the study will consider how these institutions affect their vulnerability and sustainable livelihoods (Chambers and Conway, 1992; DFID, 1999; Carney, 2003).

Alongside the SLA, the study will use a cultural lens to understand the artisans' vulnerability. This is because while people experience vulnerability, culture has played a role in how they view and react to vulnerable situations. Principally, from a philosophical stance, vulnerability is a socially constructed phenomenon, which means that people perceive, interpret and make decisions to overcome these risks in different ways (Webb, 2018). Andrews (2016) agrees that culture contributes to the social construction of vulnerability due to the beliefs and values communities hold about vulnerability and the behaviours that drive how they handle it. This is similarly noticed in the study by Cahn (2006), whose findings suggest that culture influences how people perceive vulnerability and risks in their livelihoods and that these perceptions are socially embedded in people's values and beliefs. Furthermore, Kolawole (2014) also acknowledges that people's perception of challenges in their lives is a function of the culture around them. These suggest that culture influences how people perceive risks, challenges and circumstances that cause vulnerability.

Culture can also be a source of vulnerability during shocks and uncertainties, where some cultural practices can make people more vulnerable (Gunnestad, 2006). For instance, Webb (2018) explains that social structures on aspects such as age, gender, and race may increase exposure to vulnerability, as they depend on the belief system and values that the community holds about them. They also drive how people think and behave. Christophe-Gaillard, Texier and Cannon (2008) also suggest that culture plays a role in people's willingness to tolerate peril and hazardous conditions, thus supporting the argument that cultural practices can heighten vulnerability. Therefore, this encourages the consideration of culture in vulnerability analysis. In this regard, it encourages the consideration of culture to understand the challenges artisans experience while sustaining their livelihoods.

Having discussed vulnerability and how it is associated with challenges that people experience, the following section will discuss the related concept of resilience.

### **2.7.2. Resilience**

The concept of resilience originated in ecology, and its conceptualisation is popular in disciplines such as physics, control system design, engineering, biology, psychology, disaster research and economics, to mention a few (Hudson, 2010; Carlson *et al.*, 2012; Nyamwanza, 2012). Given the diverse disciplines, the meaning of resilience varies across disciplines. For example, in ecology, there is a broad overview that resilience is focused on the return and recovery time from a disturbance and on how a system persists and does not change functions (Miller *et al.*, 2010). In environment and hazard studies, resilience is focused on bouncing back to the reference state after disturbances and is a conceptual tool for dealing with future uncertainties and changes (Berkes, 2007). In psychology, resilience is described as a successful response to adversity and the positive ways that people respond to adverse and stressful situations (Sonn and Fisher, 1998). This is closely related to other social sciences, where resilience is considered an asset based on factors like personality traits, emotional and cognitive ability and individual behaviours (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016), which enable people to bounce back after adversity or failure.

These diverse definitions of resilience are echoed by Longstaff, Kowalski and Geoghegan (2014), who acknowledge the challenges of attaining a universal definition of resilience and attempt to define resilience from a multi-disciplinary perspective. They assess the definitions of resilience in various disciplines and create a framework that explains resilience in different categories. These include a category of engineering disciplines that view resilience as a descriptive measure of elasticity and recovery to the pre-defined state; the category of business, psychology, and other social sciences, which explain that resilience is a positive outcome, the ability to bounce back to a pre-determined state and a capacity to maintain a desirable state. They also conceptualise resilience as the capacity to adapt and thrive successfully. Hence, a valuable skill for people that leads to good and positive outcomes after facing adversity. Lastly, they view resilience as the capacity of systems to withstand stress and have persistence thresholds. Nonetheless, despite these efforts to conceptualise resilience from a multi-disciplinary standpoint, it remains a problematic area as there is no one universally accepted definition but rather, an overly broad understanding of resilience from the perspective of different disciplines and fields of study.

To this point, the chapter has shown the different definitions and perceptions of resilience in different disciplines. Given the focus on sustainable livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs, the following section will discuss resilience as defined and conceptualised in sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship. This will be followed by a discussion of resilience in the context of the informal sector and the tourism industry in Africa.

### **i. Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods**

There is a strong relationship between resilience and sustainability, as well as resilience and sustainable livelihoods. The relationship between resilience and sustainability is evident in various aspects. For instance, Carpenter *et al.*, (2001), in the study of ecosystems, note that resilience is a metaphor for sustainability. Relatedly, Gabella and Strijker (2019) and Derissen, Quaas and Baumgärtner (2011) argue that resilience is synonymous with sustainability and a necessary precondition for sustainability. This is also echoed by Cimellaro (2016), who opines that resilience and sustainability are inseparable and that resilience is an indicator of sustainability. Therefore, this suggests that sustainability and resilience cannot be separated.

There is also a close relationship between resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Principally, resilience in sustainable livelihoods is informed by an ecology approach (Obriest, Pfeiffer and Henley, 2010), which stresses the relationship between resilience and sustainability. Thus, resilience thinking is embedded into the SLA framework (Liu *et al.*, 2020). Relatedly, some studies depict the close association between resilience and sustainable livelihoods. For example, Daskon and Binns (2010), in the study of rural livelihoods, point out that rural livelihoods are only sustainable if they show resilience during stressful circumstances, thus alluding to the importance of resilience in attaining sustainable livelihoods.

Furthermore, this association is also enforced in sustainable livelihood theories and practices, which elaborate that sustainable livelihoods should include the ability to handle stresses and shocks. This entails the ability to withstand and recover from stresses and shocks, thus necessitating the concept of resilience in livelihood research (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Morse and McNamara, 2013). Similarly, DFID (1999) notes that livelihoods are sustainable if they are resilient to external shocks and stresses, emphasising that resilience should be considered in the analysis of sustainable livelihoods.

Generally, resilience in sustainable livelihoods is perceived as the ability of people to bounce back after facing livelihood challenges. It encompasses how people reduce and recover

from vulnerability, thus sustaining their livelihoods and doing well despite adversity (Gwimbi, 2009). Besides this, livelihoods are also considered resilient to stresses and shocks if they have sufficient livelihood resources, including human, social, financial, physical and natural capital (Istanabi, 2020). Thus, resilience is compromised when these resources are depleted (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003; Daskon, 2010). Therefore, given this understanding, resilience becomes relevant in addressing the research objective of examining how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry.

To this point, the chapter has discussed the relevance of resilience in sustainable livelihoods. The following section will elaborate further on this by discussing resilience in entrepreneurship. This is relevant as artisans carry out entrepreneurial activities to sustain their livelihoods.

## **ii. Resilience in Entrepreneurship**

Resilience is a critical factor in entrepreneurship (Hedner, Abouzeedan and Klofsten, 2011) and is used to explain different facets of entrepreneur and business success. For example, the concept of resilience explains why some entrepreneurial ventures perform better than others, with those that perform well being termed resilient, whereas those with poor performance are termed less resilient (Korber and McNaughton, 2018). Resilient businesses are flexible and can adjust their operations and strategies and be innovative during times of crisis (Dahles and Susilowati, 2015). They can also retain or regenerate their businesses while facing shocks or uncertainty (Huggins and Thompson, 2015). Therefore, through resilience, entrepreneurs can respond to challenging situations and survive despite adverse conditions such as terrorism or war (Branzei and Abdelnour, 2010). This is similarly the case in tourism businesses, where resilience is demonstrated by their recovery from the shocks within the industry (Baker and Coulter, 2007). Generally, resilience is an outcome of the entrepreneurs' behaviours, which dictates how they engage in entrepreneurship. It is also a resource that entrepreneurs use to manage shocks (Korber and McNaughton, 2018).

Notably, resilience in entrepreneurship is also associated with persistence. To expound, resilience requires persistence during adverse circumstances (Adomako et al., 2016). Persistence is the ability to actively engage in and decide to continue business engagements irrespective of the circumstances (Caliendo, Goethner and Weißenberger, 2020). It is also the positive maintenance of a motivation to continue acting under difficult and challenging

conditions (Holland, 2011). Owing to this, resilience makes it possible to understand how artisans persist in working in the informal sector tourism industry, where they face challenges.

Resilience in entrepreneurship is influenced by psychology, which focuses on individual traits and behaviours. More so, it is heavily influenced by positive psychology (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016), where resilience is associated with success and better-than-expected outcomes. Hence, there is a perception that resilience is a positive adaptation to stresses and adversity, which leads to positive outcomes (Masten, 2001; Norris *et al.*, 2008; De Bruijne, Boin and van Eeten, 2010). For this reason, resilient entrepreneurs are perceived as those who end up as successful and more robust after facing challenges and adversity (Bullough and Renko, 2013; Duchek, 2018).

Furthermore, the influence of psychology is apparent in the dimensions of entrepreneurial resilience. Case in point, De Vries and Shields (2006) discuss the entrepreneurial theory of resilience and elaborates that resilience in entrepreneurship has four main dimensions. These are; flexibility, which is the ability to tolerate ambiguity and adapt; motivation, shown by self-efficacy, autonomy and the desire for achievement; perseverance, which is a sense of hardiness and the ability to endure torturous conditions consistently; and optimism, which is a general positive outlook of viewing failure. Ayala and Manzano (2014) also elaborate that entrepreneurial resilience has three main dimensions, namely, resourcefulness, optimism, and hardiness. These dimensions are further recognised by Korber and McNaughton (2018), who say that resilience in entrepreneurship is synonymous with optimism, self-efficacy and persistence. Bullough and Renko (2013) agree with this view and reiterate that self-efficacy promotes entrepreneurial resilience.

These dimensions of optimism, hope, perseverance, hardiness, persistence, self-efficacy and self-starting represent individuals' behaviours and attitudes. Nonetheless, while they give a good ground for understanding and showing resilience in entrepreneurs, they risk being individualistic. Thus, they may not give a holistic perspective of people's resilience. This is essential for this study on sustainable livelihoods, which demands an elaborate consideration of industrial, institutional, and socio-cultural contexts where artisans make a living and sustain their livelihoods. Therefore, there is a need to move beyond the individualistic lens portrayed in entrepreneurial theories of resilience.

### **iii. Resilience in the Informal Sector and Tourism Industry in Africa**

As pointed out, resilience is studied in various disciplines; thus, there is no universally accepted definition but rather a general understanding of resilience from the standpoint of different disciplines. This fluidity makes it possible to conceptualise and understand resilience from the context of informal artisan entrepreneurs in Africa.

Within the SSA context, there have been studies on entrepreneurial resilience, such as Dimitriadis (2021), who studied social capital and entrepreneurial resilience in Togo; Fatoki (2018), who examined the impact of entrepreneurial resilience on the success of enterprises in South Africa; and Tengeh (2016) who studied entrepreneurial resilience of grocery shop owners in South Africa. While these examples exist, the specific focus on the resilience of entrepreneurs in the informal sector is minimal. For this reason and owing to the lack of a universally accepted definition, resilience has been conceptualised differently. For example, Moyo (2018) studies the resilience of informal traders in the informal sector and conceptualises their resilience as the ability to overcome unemployment and make a living during an economic crisis. He also terms resilience as the ability to withstand economic collapse and recover from economic turmoil. Lubell and Zarour (1990), in the study of the resilience of the informal sector in Senegal, similarly relate resilience to economic recovery after a crisis. While these give an understanding of resilience in relation to the economy, they may risk giving a narrow perspective that focuses heavily on the economic and financial well-being of the informal sector and assumes that informal traders and entrepreneurs are survivalists.

Besides the above, given the unique phenomena of the tourism industry, such as seasonality and volatility that generate continuous challenges, it is also prudent to understand resilience within this industry. However, the resilience of livelihoods in the informal sector and the tourism industry has not received much attention, except for a few studies like Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012), which compared the resilience of the informal and formal enterprises in tourism during disasters in Thailand. This suggests that the conceptualisation of resilience in the informal sector within the tourism industry is still underdeveloped. More specifically, there has not been an elaborate explanation of how the resilience of the informal sector affects sustainable livelihoods, which makes it necessary.

#### **iv. Understanding Resilience: Resilience Theory**

As mentioned, resilience is studied across different disciplines, which makes it challenging to achieve a consensus on its theoretical underpinnings. Consequently, various theoretical lenses are associated with the study of resilience. A popular one is the resilience of complex adaptive systems (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003; Berkes, 2007; Edson, 2012; Coetzee, Van Niekerk and Raju, 2016), which is ideal for analysing how systems such as households, communities, ecosystems and nations, recover, withstand and adapt to adversity (Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011). Nonetheless, as it is focused on systems, this theoretical lens risks being too extensive. Hence, it may not be reliable or practical to explain how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry to sustain their livelihoods.

The study of resilience is also associated with resilience theory, which makes it possible to analyse the factor that causes vulnerability within a system and the factors that enable them to absorb any disturbances (Cochrane, 2010). The resilience theory has its roots in adversity studies and how adverse conditions impact people. Hence, it is widely applied in the fields of social work, psychology and mental health to explain how vulnerable people such as children, adolescents, mentally ill and disadvantaged individuals deal with adversity, trauma and risks (Masten, 2001; Ungar, 2008a; Carlson *et al.*, 2012; Zimmerman, 2013; Southwick *et al.*, 2014). Additionally, resilience theory helps to understand the human experience of vulnerability and informs on suitable policies and practices (Van Breda, 2018).

Van Breda (2001) gives an elaborate account of resilience theory and its evolution over time, specifically on its application in understanding how people deal with adversity and recover from shocks and stresses. While focusing on social work, he explains resilience amongst individuals, children, families and communities. In this account, resilience theory presumes that human resilience is based on behaviours and traits such as hardiness, ability to thrive, self-efficacy, stamina and locus of control, to mention a few. Greene, Galambos and Lee (2004) also give an account of resilience theory based on human behaviour and the social environment. They outline the key assumptions and considerations of resilience theory. These include linking resilience to life stresses and how people navigate traumatic events, cope, and bounce back to overcome adversity. Furthermore, they outline the internal and external factors of resilience, like personal attitudes, religion, and the level of education. Thus, describing how these behaviours determine how people deal with adversity or vulnerability. Based on these

theoretical underpinnings, resilience theory may help to explain how artisans deal with and recover from challenges caused by shocks and stresses in the informal sector and the tourism industry to sustain their livelihoods.

The resilience theory, however, only describes the successful and positive outcomes in adversity but does not explain them. Consequently, it constricts the understanding of resilience to successful or positive outcomes after adversity. The resilience theory is also criticised for minimising political and societal contexts. It assumes that individuals are responsible for improving their adverse conditions but does not consider the responsibility of the state, implying that the state is free to disregard adverse conditions, including poverty, lack of access to resources and poor services (Van Breda, 2018). Thus, this stance may limit the understanding of social and contextual issues that drive vulnerability or adversity.

Resilience theory informed the entrepreneurial theory of resilience, which is similarly focused on individual attributes, attitudes and behavioural patterns that make entrepreneurs overcome adversity. As mentioned in the discussion on resilience in entrepreneurship above, this theory focuses on dimensions such as flexibility, motivation, optimism and perseverance, which are the factors that make up entrepreneurial resilience (De Vries and Shields, 2006). Nonetheless, just like resilience theory, the entrepreneurial theory of resilience risks being individualistic as it ignores the industrial, institutional, and socio-cultural context where entrepreneurs operate. As mentioned, the entrepreneurial theory of resilience is informed by positive psychology, which also creates a constricting assumption by associating resilience with positivity and success. Thus, it assumes that people successfully bounce-back from adversity.

Therefore, there is a need to consider ways of overcoming these limitations to understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. The following section, therefore, suggests the way forward.

## **v. The Way Forward**

### **a. Incorporating resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience into the study of sustainable livelihoods**

To this point, the chapter has discussed how resilience is closely related to sustainability and sustainable livelihoods. Hence, displaying the relevance of the concept in understanding how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. The chapter has also discussed

the resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience and how they may address the research aim and objectives. However, given that artisans operate within a broader context, where various factors may influence their livelihoods, there is a need to go beyond these individualistic resilience theories and be more holistic.

Consequently, the conceptualisation of resilience in sustainable livelihoods is likely to be strengthened if resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience are used alongside the more holistic SLA. As discussed, the SLA framework (figure 2.2) incorporates other relevant aspects, such as the vulnerability context, livelihood assets, and transforming structures and processes, that affect how people cope and adapt to stresses and shocks (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Scoones, 1998; DFID, 1999). Thus, using these theories alongside the SLA will likely enable a more in-depth understanding of how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry to sustain their livelihoods.

Moreover, incorporating these theories would enhance the SLA, which is theoretically lean when discussing the resilience of people. Case in point, the SLA gives a narrow explanation of resilience as the ability of people to cope and adapt to vulnerable conditions, which may be enriched by incorporating the resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience.

#### **b. Integrating culture to understand resilience**

As pointed out above, the conceptualisation of resilience in resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience risk being individualistic as it has a narrow focus on individual attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, there is a need to go beyond the individualistic resilience perspective. While the SLA helps to resolve some of the concerns about individualism, there is still a need to delve deeper and incorporate culture, which the SLA does not explicitly consider. Doing so would enable a further understanding of the resilience of artisans as it pertains to their sustainable livelihoods.

As mentioned, artisans are also described as cultural entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019), and culture is embedded in several aspects of their livelihoods. They also live and work in a social context, which influences how they sustain their livelihoods (Parts *et al.*, 2011). Thus, given this essence, the study will consider the artisan's culture, which may help to address how they handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry.

The synthesis of culture and resilience is promoted in literature. Case in point, Webb (2018) discusses that culture is a source of resilience during and after disasters and recognises that culture should be considered when analysing how people cope and deal with uncertainties. This is aligned with Gunnestad (2006), and UNESCO (2017) view that culture is a source and form of resilience as cultural practices can lead to resilience. Furthermore, Hopkins and Becken (2014) argue that cultural factors within social structures, such as norms, values, trust and reciprocity among members of society, influence resilience; hence must be considered to understand resilience. Likewise, Southwick *et al.*, (2014) insist that resilience can only be understood by considering the embedded communities, societies and cultures, hence suggesting the relevance of these factors.

This is similarly the case within sustainable livelihoods, where there is a link between resilience and culture. For example, Daskon (2010) explains that cultural practices can be helpful when handling difficulties in life and, ultimately, when building livelihood resilience. She adds that a cultural system gives people layers of resilience, which enables them to cope with adversity. Furthermore, Cahn (2006) specifically points out that maintaining cultural capital enhances resilience because culture influences the coping and adaptation strategies that people have when faced with vulnerability. On the other hand, Huggins and Thompson (2015) warn that cultural traditions and practices may not always provide livelihood resilience, and adherence to social norms may not necessarily influence positive resilience in entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, the above display a clear relationship between culture and livelihood resilience.

Despite the evident relationship, the influence of culture on resilience remains an underdeveloped area (Fleming and Ledogar, 2008). Ungar *et al.*, (2007) point out that this is necessary and reinforces that culture should be embedded in the understanding of resilience. Ungar (2008b) further debates that there is no elaborate understanding of resilience in marginalised non-western cultures and contexts. He adds that there are several culturally determined resilience outcomes in non-western contexts and cultures. This suggests the need to understand resilience from a cultural and context perspective. Furthermore, it justifies the need to consider culture when understanding resilience within the non-western context of countries in the Global South, such as those in SSA.

Therefore, in addition to examining the behavioural traits such as optimism, motivation, perseverance, and hope outlined in resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience, the study will also incorporate a cultural lens. This would enable an understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. More specifically, it would

enable an understanding of how they handle challenges and persist in working in the tourism industry, where they sustain their livelihoods.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

To this point, the chapter has positioned the study in the existing literature. It has discussed ways that sustainable livelihoods have been studied and justified the focus on artisans, whose literature remains underdeveloped. Alongside this, the chapter positions the study in the existing literature by critically reviewing key concepts and theories needed to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. In doing so, it discusses how these concepts and theories have been used and displays the existing gaps in the literature.

As elaborated, the study uses the SLA as a conceptual lens and analytical framework. Thus far, the SLA has shown to be a legitimate framework for understanding livelihoods. Based on its theoretical underpinnings and practicality, it has been extensively used by development agencies, policymakers and academic researchers in diverse disciplines and fields and is praised as a reliable and functional analytical framework. This is mainly because the SLA encompasses income and non-income components that make it possible to analyse the sustainable livelihoods of people. These include the vulnerable contexts in which people operate; the different livelihood resources such as the social capital, human capital, financial capital, physical capital and natural capital that people combine to sustain a livelihood; the transforming structures and processes such as institutions and governments that influence livelihood decisions; livelihood strategies that people pursue; and livelihood outcomes (DFID, 1999).

Nevertheless, the SLA has shortcomings that should be overcome to make it ideal for addressing the research aim and objectives. The study intends to overcome these limitations by incorporating a cultural lens and the concepts of vulnerability and resilience. A cultural lens makes it possible for the SLA framework to have a more holistic view of the artisans' livelihoods. This includes how they view and overcome challenges, combine their livelihood resources, formulate their livelihood strategy and make livelihood decisions. Similarly, a cultural lens makes it possible to understand relevant people-centred aspects ignored by the SLA. Moreover, as culture has received little attention in studies on sustainable livelihoods, this study gets an opportunity to explore this further.

Additionally, the study explicitly incorporates the concepts of vulnerability and resilience, which are necessary to understand the challenges artisans experience in the informal sector and the tourism industry and how they handle them and persist in working in the context. Doing so necessitates incorporating relevant theories such as resilience theory and entrepreneurial theory of resilience. These theories are complemented by the SLA and the use of a cultural lens to enable a more holistic analysis of sustainable livelihoods. In doing so, the study overcomes the risks of resilience theories being individualistic.

Collectively, the SLA framework and the above concepts make it possible to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. More precisely, it makes it possible to achieve the specific research objectives. These are first, to understand the challenges artisans experience by analysing their vulnerability context. Second, to examine how informal artisan entrepreneurs handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry by examining their resilience. Third, to analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to support their livelihoods by investigating their livelihood assets. Lastly, to investigate how institutional resources influence the livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the tourism industry by examining the transforming structures and processes. Therefore, this chapter justifies using these conceptual lenses by showing how the SLA's theoretical underpinning and framework, alongside the cultural lens and the concepts of vulnerability and resilience, address the research aim and objectives.

It is prudent to disclose that before the data collection, the study primarily used the SLA's theoretical underpinning and the SLF (figure 2.2.) as a guiding framework to study the sustainable livelihoods of artisans. As will be expounded in later chapters, data collection and analysis resulted in themes that further stressed the relevance of the concepts of resilience and culture. This created the need to elaborate richly and extensively discuss these concepts in the literature review. Consequently, this chapter was revised after data collection and analysis.

Notably, as the study used the SLF (figure 2.2.) as a guiding framework, the study offers a more comprehensive framework (figure 8.2) discussed in chapter 8, which encapsulates the research findings and analysis of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Grant and Osanloo (2014) recommend this as an ideal practice for qualitative research. They explain that qualitative research can have a less structured theoretical or conceptual framework before the data collection, as a more comprehensive framework can emerge after the data collection and analysis.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

This chapter discusses the research approach. It elaborates on the overall strategy and procedure of how the study was conducted to achieve its aim and objectives. The research approach is informed by three broad components. First, the philosophical assumptions that the researcher brings. Second, the research design, which encompasses the procedure of inquiry and third, the research methods for data collection, analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2018). More specifically, the chapter elaborates on the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism, the qualitative research design, and qualitative methods of semi-structured telephone interviews, document analysis and the use of field notes and researcher's diaries. Likewise, it expounds on the sample and elaborates on how the study used thematic analysis to analyse and interpret data.

Alongside this, the chapter recounts the methodological implications based on the conceptual lens of the SLA framework and the concepts of resilience, vulnerability, and culture within the SSA context. In doing so, the study justifies the research approach and methods. Additionally, it explains how the study maintained methodological rigour, quality, and ethics guidelines. Finally, the chapter offers a reflexive account of the data collection and analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy is the “systems of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge” (Saunders, 2019 p. 130). These beliefs guide the branches of philosophy, i.e., the researcher's ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Ontology is the assumption of reality. It encompasses what people believe exists and consider fundamental (Berryman, 2019). Thus, it considers the nature of existence and shapes the questions a researcher would ask about the actions of people or the world (Hiller, 2016). The other key branch is Epistemology, which is the philosophical theory of knowledge (Blackburn, 2008). It includes assumptions about knowledge and describes ways of knowing what and how we know. Thus, it guides how research is interpreted and theorised (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Philosophy also encompasses methodology, which is the theory of how the inquiry should advance (Freebody, 2003). It comprises a comprehensive design and framework that guide the research method, sampling and analysis (Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012).

Lastly, philosophy incorporates axiology, which shows how individual values and ethics influence the research process (Saunders, 2019).

Philosophical assumptions direct the research paradigm, which is a worldview or a set of beliefs that influence how people perceive the world (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It is also the central analogy to the worldview, which exists before a theory is formed. Thus, a paradigm provides a framework for building theories and is critical to how the researcher views the world (Kuhn, 1970; Aliyu *et al.*, 2015).

Social sciences accommodate a diverse range of paradigms, including positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, interpretivism, critical realism, postmodernism, and pragmatism. All these paradigms have different ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Saunders, 2019). Given the diversity and extent of these paradigms, the following section will only discuss the dominant paradigms within this study's scope. This will be followed by a discussion of the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism, which underpin this study.

### **3.1.1 Dominant Paradigms**

As alluded to, this study seeks to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Thus, the study primarily draws knowledge from tourism, entrepreneurship, and the informal sector. However, these are not recognised as disciplines as they draw from other disciplines. For instance, tourism is studied in numerous disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, marketing, human geography, anthropology, political science and management, to mention a few (Zahra and Ryan, 2005; Tribe, 2009). Similarly, entrepreneurship draws from diverse disciplines such as economics, sociology, and psychology (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009).

Therefore, due to the multi-disciplinary nature of tourism and entrepreneurship, it is hard to achieve philosophical homogeneity, meaning there are multiple paradigms and no distinct dominant paradigm (Zahra and Ryan, 2005). Due to this, paradigms within tourism and entrepreneurship are driven by the researchers' respective disciplines, which influence their philosophical assumptions. Ultimately, philosophy is a personal point of view (Bell, 2002), meaning that individual worldviews drive philosophical assumptions.

Despite the lack of a dominant paradigm, it is apparent that certain paradigms are more prominent than others. Case in point, Riley and Love (2000) examine positivism as a dominant paradigm within major tourism journals, with other paradigms, such as interpretivism, being sparingly used. Mura and Pahlevan Sharif (2015) similarly identify that qualitative and quantitative tourism research is driven by positivist and post-positivist paradigms. Furthermore, Wijesinghe (2020) and Wijesinghe and Mura (2018) share the same sentiments and identify that the tourism phenomenon and epistemology are broadly articulated through Eurocentric and positivist ideologies, which dominate academia and knowledge production in tourism. Within the study of the informal sector in Kenya, there is also a tendency towards positivism. This is witnessed in studies by Mang'unyi, Mwanzia and Govender (2018), who used positivism as a philosophical stance to study employment creation by *jua kali* enterprises in Kenya. This is also the case for Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall (2004), who, though not explicitly stated, adopt a positivist stance to study the informal sector and development policies in Kenya.

Positivism has a distinct set of assumptions. For instance, it adopts an objective ontology, where the truth and the human consciousness are separate (Crotty, 1998). Positivism also denotes that the social world comprises a single reality coupled with solid, granular and relatively unchanging things (Burrell, 1979). This is consistent with its objective epistemology and axiology, which keeps the research free of values that may generate biased findings (Saunders, 2019). Additionally, positivism believes that measuring a phenomenon and the relationships between variables is possible. Consequently, positivism is linked to quantitative research methods. However, not all positivists will use quantitative methods (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Owing to these assumptions, positivism is not suitable for this study. For instance, positivist ideologies are likely to neglect and ignore the voices of poor and vulnerable participants and may limit contextual knowledge and understanding (Wijesinghe and Mura, 2018; Wijesinghe, Mura and Bouchon, 2019). Thus, it would not be ideal for this study that seeks to obtain contextual understanding and is focused on the often marginalised and vulnerable participants who are likely to experience poverty. Additionally, positivism assumes a realism ontology, where a single reality exists, and prescribes objective epistemology. These assumptions are unsuitable for studying social phenomena (Tribe, 2009), which feature in this study. Furthermore, within entrepreneurship specifically, a positivist stance dehumanises the research context and is inadequate for understanding the entrepreneurship phenomena

(Sambajee and Weston, 2015). This means that using positivism in this study would limit understanding of the context and phenomena.

Therefore, despite the predominance of positivism within the aforementioned fields, the underlying assumptions are not ideal for this study. Consequently, the study does not adopt positivism. Furthermore, since philosophical assumptions are driven by individual worldviews (Bell, 2002) and the researcher's assumptions (Creswell, 2018), the study is anchored within the researcher's worldview of social constructionism. The following section discusses this in detail.

### **3.1.2 Social Constructionism**

Social constructionism was first introduced to academics by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, who discussed the role of sociology in knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). It has since developed further and has extended beyond sociology to other disciplines, such as psychology and linguistics (Burr 2003). Social constructionism is often viewed as synonymous with the constructivism paradigm (Creswell, 2018). It can also be traced to interpretivism, which criticises and offers a counter to positivism in traditional science (Andrews, 2012). This is because interpretivism holds that the truth is revealed through social constructions and other social interactions (Berryman, 2019). It also holds an ontological view of relative and multiple realities and a subjective epistemology (Saunders, 2019), which are aligned with the assumptions of social constructionism.

Ontologically, social constructionism holds that reality is constructed through social interactions among social actors (Saunders, 2019). Thus, “the meaning of the social world cannot be discovered but is rather constructed by humans along with their histories, societies, ideas and languages” (Butowski *et al.*, 2021 p. 53). Social constructionism is also based on subjective and unbiased observation of the world, which implies that multiple realities exist, making objectivity impossible (Burr, 1995). Additionally, man and reality are subjective and inseparable; hence, ideas, thoughts and actions are due to ongoing interaction and interpretation among human beings (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009).

Regarding its epistemology, social constructionism believes knowledge is constructed rather than created (Andrews, 2012). People construct it through daily interactions during their social life, hence why it warrants that knowledge and social actions are interrelated and that knowledge is sustained through social practices and human relationships. Social

constructionism accepts relativism of knowledge. For example, it believes that all knowledge is historically and culturally relative and dependent on social and economic occurrences (Burr, 1995). Still, within its epistemology, language is considered in social constructionism, as it constitutes reality (Young and Collin, 2004). This is because it allows the expression of socially constructed meaning, facilitates the production and reproduction of knowledge and provides the basis of thoughts (Burr, 1995;Allen, 2005).

Ontological and epistemological assumptions of social constructionism have methodological implications. Social constructionism holds that the researcher and participants construct theory and practice. Thus, empirical research stems from the interactions between the researcher and the research participant (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009). For this reason, social constructionism is rooted in qualitative approaches (Butowski *et al.*, 2021), where the participants and the researcher interact and are co-creators of knowledge. Additionally, social constructionism situates people in their social, cultural, and historical contexts, suggesting that a phenomenon can only be understood by extensively considering the contexts (Burr, 1995;Young and Collin, 2004). Thus, it compels the researcher to study the phenomena in rich detail and consider the historical, geographical and socio-cultural contexts and how they affect the realities of the respondents (Saunders, 2019). Consequently, it advocates for qualitative methods such as; participant observations, in-depth interviews, discourse analysis, ethnography, stories and narrative analysis (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009).

Social constructionism is ideal for this study for various reasons. Principally, it is suitable for the context of the study. As alluded to, artisans are bound by social ties. They also have a sense of community as they work and live within a social context (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Thus, implying that society shapes their reality. Relatedly, since social constructionism focuses on the socio-cultural context of the research participants and extensively considers history and culture (Burr, 1995;Young and Collin, 2004), the paradigm allows the study to delve deep into understanding the participants' context, which shapes their livelihood sustenance. Additionally, empirical work in social constructionism is regarded as the interactions between the researcher and the participants (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009). Thus, such interactions enable an in-depth understanding of the context and phenomena being studied.

Alongside this, owing to its assumptions, social constructionism is often praised in the study of tourism and entrepreneurship phenomena (Young, 1999;Chell, 2000;Iwashita,

2003;Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009;Junaid, Durrani and Shaheen, 2015;Butowski *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, affirming that it is a practicable paradigm for this study.

To this point, the study has discussed the underpinning philosophical assumptions. Therefore, before embarking on the study's methodology and methods, the following section will discuss the methodological implications based on the conceptual lens guiding the study.

### **3.2 Methodological Implications for Research Approaches**

Chapter 2 discussed the conceptual lens and key concepts needed to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. They include the SLA and its framework, and the concepts of culture, resilience, and vulnerability. Given the use of these concepts and the focus on the informal sector in tourism within the SSA context, it is practical to discuss the methodologies and methods used in these areas, as they have methodological implications for this study.

Generally, the SLA framework offers flexibility in the choice of methodology (Morse and McNamara, 2013), meaning a range of philosophical underpinnings and research methods can be employed. Thus, the SLA allows the use of a range of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Nonetheless, while it offers methodological flexibility in livelihood research, it has been criticised for leaning towards quantitative approaches. For instance, McLean (2015) interprets the five livelihood assets as quantitatively focused and rigid, thus warning that the framework can be mistaken for being mechanical and quantitative despite the flexibility in research methods. Morse and McNamara (2013) also caution that there is a danger of the SLA framework being quantitative and mechanical but also reinforce that the framework offers methodological flexibility to accommodate different approaches.

Nevertheless, despite these concerns, there is an urge for sustainable livelihood research to use qualitative methods to collect data. For instance, Chambers and Conway (1992) explain that sustainable livelihoods emerge better using open-ended fieldwork than surveys. Simpson (2009) rationalises this by arguing that livelihood insights are better conceived and comprehended using qualitative methods, as not all livelihood aspects can be quantitatively measured. This is also encouraged by Scoones (1998), who expounds that the indicators of sustainable livelihood require qualitative techniques or a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess. Likewise, McLean (2015) encourages using qualitative

approaches in the study of livelihoods and recommends that researchers consider the social, cultural, political, demographic and contextual differences. These include but are not limited to differences such as power relations, age, gender, education levels, religious affiliations, life histories and sexuality.

Notwithstanding, there is a general tendency towards quantitative approaches in other key areas relevant to this study. For instance, within the concept of resilience, Liu *et al.*, (2020) and Fang *et al.*, (2018) show how quantitative models and methods dominate the study of livelihood resilience. Similarly, Korber and McNaughton (2018) explain that most of the studies on resilience in entrepreneurship journals have used more quantitative techniques than qualitative methods. Relatedly, Miller *et al.*, (2010) agree that research on resilience is skewed towards positivist epistemology that encourages quantitative techniques.

Furthermore, the same is witnessed in entrepreneurship studies, where the field is dominated by research that uses objective stance (Junaid, Durrani and Shaheen, 2015). Notably, entrepreneurship journals have a prevalence of quantitative studies that have used methods such as surveys (McDonald *et al.*, 2015). As mentioned, this is also witnessed within tourism studies where positivist ideologies dominate knowledge production despite the complexity, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary perspectives of tourism. Hence, tourism research predominantly uses quantitative methods (Wijesinghe and Mura, 2018). Nevertheless, despite the predominance of quantitative methods, several recommendations towards qualitative methods exist. For example, Holden, Sonne and Novelli (2011) emphasise that the study of poor and marginalised people in tourism should use qualitative techniques such as unstructured interviews. Likewise, Cochrane (2010) recommends that tourism studies use qualitative methods such as ethnography that consider and understand the culture.

Notably, it is evident that the application of qualitative methods outside the West is still relatively scarce (Mura and Pahlevan Sharif, 2015; Wijesinghe and Mura, 2018). For this reason, qualitative techniques that consider the context are encouraged for studies in SSA, specifically within the informal sector. Akin (2000) stresses this and explains that qualitative methods provide an in-depth understanding and insight into the complex informal business processes. He further recommends an exploratory research approach that is grounded on holistic insights, avoids ethnocentricity, is flexible and prioritises establishing trust, rapport, and confidence with the participants. Alongside this, research in the SSA context requires an understanding of the context and the context-specific aspects like cultural norms, social

constructs of gender, age, religion and social dynamics (Obeng-Quaidoo, 1985;Takyi-Asiedu, 1993), which can be achieved through qualitative methods. Similarly, Keikelame and Swartz (2019) expound that research within marginalised groups in the African context should be culturally appropriate and include the participation and recognition of individuals. Thus, they should lean towards the good practices of trust, respect and participation in qualitative methods. Synchronously, within the African context, Adu-Gyamfi, Kuada and Asongu (2018) explain that African entrepreneurs should be given voices and their stories told. Hence, entrepreneurship research within the continent can benefit from qualitative techniques to avoid the loss of meaning, which may happen with the use of quantitative approaches.

To this point, it is evident that a qualitative research design is favourable for this study. To expound on this further, the following section discusses the qualitative research design in detail. It also justifies why it is ideal for the context and appropriate for the research aim and objectives.

### **3.3 Qualitative Research Design**

Research designs can be exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, evaluative, or a combination of these, depending on the research purpose and questions (Saunders, 2019). This study follows an exploratory research design. Exploratory research seeks an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, issue, or problem that is not well understood (Ghauri, 2020). It is also open to discovering new insights and issues that have not been uncovered before (Neuman, 2014). Likewise, exploratory research seeks to understand or assess a phenomenon in a new light (Rahi, 2017).

To recap, the study aims to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

To achieve this aim, the research has the following specific objectives:

1. To explore the challenges informal artisan entrepreneurs experience in the informal sector and the tourism industry
2. To examine how informal artisan entrepreneurs handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry

3. To analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to sustain their livelihoods
4. To investigate how institutional resources influence the livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and tourism industry

Therefore, given the nature of the research aim and objectives and as expounded in chapter 1, an exploratory research design is suitable for understanding and gaining new insights into the phenomena.

Exploratory research commonly uses qualitative approaches, which allow inductive research and in-depth study of a specific topic (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of people's lived experiences and viewpoints. It goes beyond description to encompass sense-making and interpretation of meaning that people attach to a phenomenon (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013). Thus, the participants are the experts in the study, and they take part in the creation of knowledge (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003).

Qualitative approaches utilise different research designs such as, but not limited to, narrative research, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case studies (Creswell, 2018). Hence, they accommodate several data collection methods, such as interviews, observations, life stories, personal experiences, document analysis, visual texts and images (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). This study considered these data collection methods and settled for interviews as the primary data source. The interviews were supplemented with document analysis, field notes, and diaries. The following section discusses these methods in more detail. More specifically, it discusses how qualitative telephone interviews and a phased approach to data collection, were adopted for the study.

### **3.3.1 Introduction to Qualitative Interviews**

Exploratory research is suitably addressed by interviews and inductive modes of research (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Interviews encompass conversations that can unpack how people live, understand and experience their worlds (Brinkmann, 2018). In addition, they gather information about people's knowledge, values and preferences (Gray, 2004). Interviews can incorporate the past and present as they obtain past reconstructions and current constructs about people's feelings, experiences, claims and concerns. They also give future expectations

and projections (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Hence, it is an ideal method to seek further insights, explore a phenomenon and address the research aim and objectives.

There are various kinds of interviews. These include focus group interviews, which help provide insight into multiple views and interaction dynamics within a group context (Vershina and Rodionova, 2011). They also include one-on-one interviews, which tend to be structured, semi-structured or unstructured, depending on the level of control and adherence to pre-determined questions. In this case, structured interviews have the most control over the sequence of questions with little room for deviation, while unstructured interviews give flexibility and allow participants to discuss the subject. Hence the researcher has minimal control over the interview guide (May, 2011).

After considering the research aim and objectives, the exploratory research design and the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism, this study settled for semi-structured interviews, which are a form of interviews steered by an open-ended interview guide. Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to re-arrange questions, probe further and seek clarity and elaboration as the interview progresses (Rocco, 2003; Cachia and Millward, 2011; Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, given the lack of a fixed structure, the interview questions are also open to allow participants to construct meaning, which is a critical aspect of social constructionism (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Semi-structured interviews also offer greater latitudes in the study, as the researcher may know specific questions to ask but not all the possible responses. Hence, participants can answer the questions freely, creating depth and further understanding of the context and phenomenon (May, 2011).

#### ❖ **The Interview Guide**

Semi-structured interviews use interview guides consisting of a list of questions that direct the interview conversations and ensure consistency in the data collection (Krauss *et al.*, 2009). Interview questions in semi-structured interviews require previous knowledge of the areas being studied (Kallio *et al.*, 2016). In this case, the interview questions were prepared after an appraisal of knowledge through a literature review exercise focused on the study's research aim and objectives. Consequently, the interview guide had main questions and follow-up questions. The main questions covered the study's focus and core topics on the artisans' livelihood strategies, their livelihood resources, the challenges they experience and how they overcome them, their persistence in the informal sector in tourism and the support from

government and relevant institutions. Questions within these topics had follow-up questions that were more specific and aimed at deriving more precise responses.

Additionally, as will be elaborated in section 3.3.3 of this chapter, the interview guide was also enhanced by a pilot study conducted before the full-scale study. The pilot study gave further insights into the questions that needed to be addressed. Hence, it was valuable in creating and enhancing the quality of the interview guide.

All the interview questions were pre-planned, but there was flexibility for spontaneous questions to come up depending on the participant's responses (Kallio *et al.*, 2016). Thus, the interview guide was revisited several times as the study progressed to elicit more focused responses and accommodate emerging themes from the early stages of data analysis (Krauss *et al.*, 2009). Importantly, in line with the guidelines of semi-structured interviews, the interview guide was not rigid. Thus, the order and structure of the questions were flexible.

Before discussing how the semi-structured interviews were conducted, the following section elaborates on how telephone interviews emerged as tools for data collection. It discusses the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on qualitative research, followed by a rationale for qualitative telephone interviews.

### **3.3.2 COVID-19 Pandemic and its Effect on Qualitative Research**

At the start of this PhD in October 2019, the study initially intended to use data collection methodologies and methods that allowed for immersion and engagement with the participants. Thus, the study intended to use participatory methods such as face-to-face interviews and participant observations, where the researcher actively participates in the phenomenon being studied (Bhattacharjee, 2012). However, these initial plans were disrupted at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The pandemic caused travel restrictions and health and safety risks associated with physical contact and interaction. For this reason, qualitative researchers had to reconsider in-person data collection. Additionally, the pandemic created future uncertainty, which made it difficult to postpone data collection. Thus, it necessitated the emergence of alternative methods.

Consequently, the pandemic led to qualitative researchers adapting to alternative data collection methods. These included converting qualitative research methods into online data collection (Dodds and Hess, 2020). Specifically, adapting to digital voice, video, and text-based

tools such as emails and video conferencing platforms like Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet and WhatsApp, to mention a few (Gray *et al.*, 2020;Ndhlovu, 2021). These online platforms and tools provided alternatives to face-to-face interviews and focus groups. The remote face-to-face interviews drew certain benefits, such as the availability of visuals to build face-to-face rapport with participants, the ability to read the body language and the possibility of gaining insight into the participants' contexts. Furthermore, the online-based methods are cost-effective and allow data collection from different geographical locations, which was ideal during the COVID-19 pandemic (Gray *et al.*, 2020;Nind, Coverdale and Meekin, 2021).

The other methods adopted included participants' diaries and individual reflections, which replaced the traditional observations in qualitative research (Moises Jr, 2020). In addition, some qualitative researchers used post services to send and receive data collection tools such as maps, photographs, books and postcards, which provoked participants' responses (Couceiro, 2020). Besides these, others adapted to the pandemic using autoethnographic writing (Nind, Coverdale and Meekin, 2021) and netnography, where they relied on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and blogs to collect qualitative data (Ndhlovu, 2021).

As there was a need to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, the study considered all the mentioned alternative ways to collect data. However, the decision ultimately came down to selecting a data collection method that would achieve the aim and objectives and suit the study context. Consequently, the choice of online tools such as email and video-conferencing platforms was not feasible for this study. The informal sector in Kenya is characterised by a low level of skills and limited utilisation of technology (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004). This meant there would be a high likelihood of scarce engagement, illiteracy, and unfamiliarity with online video conferencing platforms. Besides this, the sector comprises individuals from low-income households (Hope, 2014), which may limit their access to smartphones, laptops and tablets. In the cases where they owned these devices, they risked having constrained access to the internet due to the lack of disposable income to buy internet bundles. Therefore, remote data collection tools that became popular during the pandemic, such as online video conferencing, messaging platforms, and digital participant diary entries, were not viable for the research context.

Consequently, owing to the uncertainty of the pandemic, the lack of physical access to the field, and the elimination of the data collection methods mentioned above, the study

considered telephone interviews. The following section discusses telephone interviews in more detail and elaborates on why they were suitable for data collection.

### **3.3.3 Adapting to Telephone Interviews**

Telephone interviews are a form of qualitative interviews conducted over the telephone and can be an alternative to face-to-face interviews. Nevertheless, given the nature of the Global South and the informal sector, where there may be minimal access and familiarity with telephone technology (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004; Bernard, 2017), this study first conducted a pilot study, as discussed below. As will be expounded, the pilot study's main aims were to assess the access to participants during the pandemic and to determine the suitability of telephone interviews.

#### **i. The Pilot Study**

Pilot studies are small-scale studies conducted in preparation for full-scale studies (Majid *et al.*, 2017). They are used to detect any issues with the research design and assess whether the research instruments are reliable and valid for the study (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this case, the pilot study was instrumental in assessing whether telephone interviews would be feasible to access and collect data from the sampling population.

The pilot study, conducted between May and June 2020, sampled 9 participants through convenience sampling of artisans from the researcher's networks. It involved cold calling, where the participants were informed about the aim of the pilot study and consented to the interview. As pointed out, the pilot study's main focus was to assess the access to participants during the pandemic and the suitability of semi-structured telephone interviews as a data collection tool. Therefore, the interview questions primarily focused on the participant's use of mobile phones. The interviews also touched on the state of the tourism industry and the informal sector in Kenya. In this regard, the pilot study allowed the assessment of questions in the interview guide (Majid *et al.*, 2017). Hence, it was valuable and gave insight into preparing the interview guide for the full-scale study. Specifically, the appropriate questions to ask and the logical flow of the interview. Besides this, the pilot study enabled the researcher to improve their skills in collecting qualitative data, particularly in dealing with participants, building rapport, and conducting semi-structured interviews. Hence, it promoted credible qualitative research (Roksana, Robab Latifnejad and Ali, 2014).

The pilot study affirmed that the topic was relevant and interesting to participants, as many expressed interest in the full-scale study. Overall, the pilot study confirmed that telephone interviews were a suitable alternative to in-person interviews. It also affirmed that semi-structured interviews complemented telephone interviews (Holt, 2010; Cachia and Millward, 2011). Therefore, it validated that semi-structured telephone interviews were a feasible way to collect data in the study. The following section elaborates further on this and discusses the rationale and critical considerations that led to the selection of telephone interviews as a data collection tool.

## **ii. The Rationale for Telephone Interviews**

### **a. Access to mobile phones and participants**

The use of telephone interviews was suitable for the Kenyan context. There is widespread access to mobile telephone devices in Kenya, including in the informal sector. A report by the Communications Authority of Kenya (2020) indicates that there are 57 million mobile subscriptions in the country, representing 119.9% of the population. Thus, the widespread use of mobile devices pinpointed the feasibility of using telephone interviews and accessing participants in the informal sector.

Besides the access to mobile telephone devices, telephone interviews were also ideal for accessing participants. As will be elaborated in section 3.4.1 of this chapter, artisans in the Kenyan informal sector do not have permanent business premises, forcing them to change locations daily. Additionally, authorities often evict *jua kali* from their business premises in urban areas (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018); thus, they lack a guaranteed geographical location. The lack of consistent business premises was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to local and global travel restrictions that negatively affected the Kenyan tourism industry (Muragu, Nyadera and Mbugua, 2021). Consequently, due to the livelihood challenges in the tourism industry, some artisans left their usual informal markets in the urban areas, with some opting to work from their homes and others migrating to the rural areas. Relatedly, the pandemic led to health and safety risks for the researcher and participants, which restricted travel, access to the field and in-person data collection. This meant that the study would only be possible by accessing participants remotely.

Therefore, the lack of permanent premises, the risks of evictions from urban spaces, temporary migrations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the health and safety risks associated with the pandemic presented challenges to accessing participants. For this reason,

as telephone interviews allow for broad access to participants in diverse geographical locations, including those that are hard to reach (Drabble *et al.*, 2016), they proved to be ideal for accessing artisans during the pandemic. Additionally, the telephone interviews also gave the artisans the flexibility to select the location they wanted for the interviews (Lechuga, 2012), meaning that they would be accessible from varied locations despite their lack of business premises.

#### **b. Consideration of participants' schedules and priorities**

Entrepreneurs in the Global South are preoccupied with the business duties of engaging with customers, pedestrians, and crowds in the marketplace (Eijdenberg *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, they have to work hard to secure a livelihood in the informal sector, where they experience poverty and vulnerability (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018), meaning that their priorities may be skewed toward making a living. Therefore, the study had to consider their schedule and day-to-day livelihood activities. For this reason, telephone interviews were ideal for the participants' busy schedules and the nature of work. More specifically, they were suitable because they gave participants the power and flexibility to schedule their interviews (Holt, 2010; Drabble *et al.*, 2016). Thus, enabling them to engage in interviews at a convenient time and place for them when they were unpreoccupied with business and personal duties.

In summary, telephone interviews were an ideal method to collect data because of the contextual nature of the informal sector, the access to mobile phones, and the health and safety risks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following section discusses the other qualitative methods incorporated into the study.

#### **3.3.4 Document Analysis, Field Notes and Diaries**

In qualitative research, meaning is derived from spoken and written texts and words (Saunders, 2019). Therefore, besides the telephone interviews discussed above, the study also incorporated document analysis as a qualitative method. Documents contain records of past and present events that explain an occurrence or a phenomenon. They also depict the social, cultural, political and historical reality, which shape the understanding of a context (May, 2011). The documents sampled for this study included historical and current reports on the research focus and scope, specifically, the tourism industry, the informal sector, and the Republic of Kenya. For example, the study analysed reports from the government of Kenya.

These included reports from the Kenyan Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2020; Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2022), alongside reports and official websites of major parastatals in tourism (Tourism Research Institute, 2019; KWS, 2020; Magical Kenya, 2020; Tourism Research Institute, 2020a; Magical Kenya, 2021; Tourism Fund, 2022). It also analysed reports on the Kenyan informal sector from the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and its relevant parastatals (KNBS, 2018; Ministry of Industrialization, 2022). Alongside these, the study also included an analysis of industry reports and publications (Euromonitor International, 2019; CEIC, 2020; Statista, 2020; WTTC, 2020).

All reports, documents and secondary data were accessed online through official government and institutional websites, verifiable mass media and news outlets, publishers, and trustworthy databases such as, but not limited to, Statista, Euromonitor International, Sage, Scopus, EBSCO host, and Emerald. Thus, ensuring the documents were authentic and credible. The documents were selected to provide multiple perspectives, create further insight into the phenomenon and enrich the forms of evidence (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Hence, ensuring more depth, credibility, and triangulation in the research.

Besides this, the study also considered data from reflective diaries and field notes taken during and after the telephone interviews. Field notes encompass commentaries about what is happening in the research (Van Maanen, 1988), and research diaries are a record of reflections and changes in the researcher and the field (Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015). These were ideal for creating a research trail of the decisions made throughout the study. They also enabled the researcher to recognise their thoughts and feelings during the interviews and identify biases and assumptions about the participants (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). As will be elaborated throughout the chapter, these notes and diaries created rich textual data, forming part of the analysed data. They were also essential in the researcher's reflexivity, discussed in section 3.9 of this chapter.

### **3.3.5 Embracing a Phased Approach to Data Collection**

As alluded to, the COVID-19 pandemic created uncertainty about accessing the field. Due to this, the study incorporated a two-phased approach. In this regard, the initial expectation was that the study would conduct the first phase using telephone interviews, followed by the second phase of face-to-face immersion and engagement with participants. Nonetheless, this did not go as planned. The COVID-19 pandemic created prolonged lockdowns, restricted travel

and continuous health and safety risks. Consequently, both phases one and two used telephone interviews.

The first phase was conducted between November 2020 and January 2021. It involved telephone interviews with two groups of participants, i.e., informal artisan entrepreneurs and officials from relevant institutions. The second phase was conducted 6 to 9 months after the first phase, between June and August 2021. It involved follow-up interviews with some informal artisan entrepreneurs, as shown in table 3.1.

Section 3.4 below discusses the sampled participants in more detail. Table 3.1, in particular, gives an overview of the sampled artisans. It also indicates the participants who took part in the second phase of the data collection. On the other hand, table 3.2 shows the sampled institutions. Away from the sample, section 3.5.1 discusses the phased approach in more detail and explains why it was an appropriate methodological strategy for telephone interviews.

### **3.4 Sampling and Introduction to the Sample**

Due to the qualitative nature of the research, coupled with a short time frame and limited resources, it was impossible to research the entire population, which necessitated sampling. The sampling process began by establishing a sampling population, which is the domain where the sample would be selected, and a sampling frame, which is the accessible section of the target population (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this case, the sampling frame comprised two kinds of participants. The first and main category of participants were informal artisans entrepreneurs in the tourism industry of Kenya, whereas the second category of participants were relevant institutions drawn from either or both the informal sector and the tourism industry in Kenya.

The sampled artisans had to meet the following criteria:

- i. Be an adult based in Kenya
- ii. Be an artisan entrepreneur that makes and sells handicrafts as the primary source of livelihood
- iii. Be an entrepreneur running an informal business enterprise
- iv. Be in the tourism industry and primarily sell to tourists

On the other hand, the institution representatives had to meet one criterion as follows:

- i. Be an official in a government body or institution that engages with the tourism industry and, or the informal sector

The study used two non-probability sampling techniques, i.e., purposive sampling and snowball sampling (Saunders, 2019). Purposive sampling ensured that full consideration and judgement were applied in selecting the research participants to uphold the research aim and objectives (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Thus, given the research objectives and the prime focus on informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, and the relevant institutions, this technique ensured that the research participants met the criteria and were representative of the population. Besides this, purposive sampling was also an ideal strategy to enhance research rigour and credibility (Tuckett, 2005b).

Additionally, given the remote study and the inability to physically access the field, the study also used snowball sampling. In this technique, a few participants were identified at the start, after which they were asked to recommend others who met the criteria (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In doing so, the participants drove the sampling process and were empowered to take part in the process. Artisans have characteristics that make snowball sampling effective. For instance, they work and operate in social clusters (Heying, 2010), suggesting they know each other and are better suited to identify and recommend potential research participants. Hence, snowball sampling, which relies on social networks and dynamics (Noy, 2008), was a feasible way to access artisans. Moreover, snowball sampling accelerated the access to participants and enabled the building of trust between the researcher and the recruited participants.

Due to the remote nature of the study, there was no physical way to verify that the artisans met the defined criteria. For this reason, the participants were vetted by asking questions to confirm what they did for a living, the products they made, and the kind of customers they targeted. Once the participants confirmed that they ran informal businesses and made handicrafts targeted at tourists for a living, they were included in the sample. Besides this, the study also relied on the researcher's judgement, previous work experience and familiarity with the informal sector to assess whether the artisans met the outlined criteria. Despite receiving numerous referrals from the snowball sampling, the vetting process meant that not all met the criteria.

Consequently, all the participants who did not meet the criteria were excluded from the data set. Such individuals included but were not limited to artisans who had formal businesses,

informal traders who sold handicrafts but did not make them and artisans who made handicrafts but did not work within the tourism industry. This process eventually led to a sample of 32 artisans discussed in the subsequent sections.

### **3.4.1 The Sampled Artisans**

Non-probability sampling does not have a defined sample size (Saunders, 2019). Similarly, there are no explicit guidelines regarding the number of participants needed in qualitative research. Hence, different researchers recommend different sample sizes for qualitative research. For example, Baker and Edwards (2012) suggest that one interview is sufficient, depending on the nature and purpose of the qualitative study. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found that between 6 and 12 interviews are sufficient for a homogenous group of participants. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) recommend 5 to 25 as an ideal number of participants in qualitative research. Adler and Adler (2012) advise a wide range of between 12 and 60 participants, with 30 being the average ideal sample. Whereas Clarke, Braun and Hayfield (2015) recommend a sample size of 15 to 20 participants and more than 30 for sole data sources.

Given the lack of overarching rules on the number of participants and interviews, the study was not focused on the size of the sample but on the quality and depth of the data. Specifically, the intricacy, nuance and details that made the data rich (Fusch and Ness, 2015). Hence, the recruitment of participants and data collection persisted and stopped when data saturation was reached.

Data saturation occurs when the emerging data does not help to understand or expand further on ideas (Flick, 2013). Thus, the recruitment of participants stopped when no new themes or insights emerged from participants. Ultimately, the study sampled 32 artisans, comprising 18 men and 14 women, over the two phases. The second data collection phase made it possible to have follow-up interviews with 14 of these 32 artisans. Hence, some artisans were interviewed once, while others were interviewed twice. Consequently, the study conducted 46 interviews with artisans in the two phases. All the sampled participants consented to take part in the interviews, as stipulated in the ethics guidelines discussed in section 3.8 of this chapter.

Moreover, all 32 artisans met the criteria outlined above. To specify, they were all informal artisan entrepreneurs who sold handicrafts for a living. The handicrafts consisted of a range of stone and wooden carvings like animal sculptures, cultural ornaments, and assorted

beaded ornaments such as necklaces, bracelets, keyrings, bangles, belts, and shoes, to mention a few. Additionally, all the artisans operated in the informal sector within the tourism industry. As shown in table 3.1, the sampled artisans had run their businesses for several years, with an average business existence of close to 20 years.

Table 3.1 below gives a summary of the sampled artisans. Appendix 1 shows a more extensive overview of the sampled artisans.

	Participants (Pseudonym)	Gender	Location	Description of the business premise	Age Group (Years)	Business Existence Period (Years)	Types of handicrafts they make	Livelihood strategy
1	Aisha*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	30-40	15	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
2	Bata	Male	Narok	Previously rented a semi-permanent structure in Narok. However, he moved to work from home during the pandemic	40-50	23	Animal carvings	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
3	Chui*	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure and at home	20-30	6	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
4	Dalila	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	15	Animal carving and fibre crafts	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
5	Duma*	Male	Nakuru	Semi-permanent structure on the roadside	50-60	35	Animal carvings and beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – Also has a subsistence farm for family use
6	Farasi*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok but relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	30-40	14	Animal carvings	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
7	Habiba	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	15	Handcrafted bags	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
8	Hawa*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market and at home. Started an online shop on Instagram during the pandemic	30-40	12	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
9	Heroe*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok. He temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	40-50	15	Animal carvings	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – He temporarily left the industry during the pandemic. Has a subsistence farm for family
10	Imani	Female	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure in an informal market	50-60	27	Animal carvings and assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
11	Johari*	Male	Nairobi	Informal structure and open-air market	50-60	34	Animal carvings	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood –Has a subsistence farm for family use
12	Kifaru	Male	Nairobi	Open-air markets and temporary stands in malls	50-60	30	Assorted wooden carvings	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
13	Kongoni	Male	Nairobi	Open-air and informal markets in the city	50-60	25	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – Has a subsistence farm for family use
14	Lulu	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	30-40	7	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood

15	Makena*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air markets, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	30-40	16	Assorted beaded ornaments and handcrafted shoes	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
16	Mamba*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok. He temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	40-50	26	Animal carving (wooden)	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
17	Marini	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market and the roadsides of Nairobi	40-50	12	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood - Started doing people's laundry during the pandemic. This move was driven by an illness whose treatment used all her money and savings
18	Mbwea	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	40-50	20	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
19	Nala	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and at home	50-60	31	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
20	Ndovu*	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure in Eldoret - Temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	50-60	36	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	Handicrafts are a primary source of livelihood - He temporarily left the tourism business during the pandemic. Relies on subsistence farming. Hopes to get back to the industry once normalcy resumes
21	Ngiri	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and at home	40-50	20	Weaved items	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
22	Nyati*	Male	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure and a temporary store inside a hotel. Temporarily moved to the rural areas during the pandemic	40-50	22	Animal carving and assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are a primary source of livelihood - Has a subsistence farm for family use
23	Pendo	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets, the roadsides and at home	40-50	15	Assorted carvings and beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood - She also does bean farming to supplement her income
24	Rehema*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal market and semi-permanent structure in an informal market	40-50	17	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
25	Simba*	Male	Nairobi	Open-air market and semi-permanent structure in an informal market	40-50	12	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood - Has a subsistence farm for family use
26	Sofia*	Female	Narok	A friend's semi-permanent structure. Temporarily moved to the rural areas during the pandemic	40-50	16	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood

27	Sokwe	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	60-70	50	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
28	Swala	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	17	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
29	Tausi	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure	20-30	4	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood – He started selling clothes and shoes during the pandemic to supplement his income
30	Tembo	Male	Narok	A friend's semi-permanent structure. Started an online shop on Facebook during the pandemic	20-30	5	Assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood – He started a photography business during the pandemic to supplement his income
31	Zawadi	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and the roadsides of Nairobi	40-50	20	Assorted carvings and beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood
32	Zora	Female	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure premise in an informal market	40-50	15	Handcrafted bags and assorted beaded ornaments	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood

*Table 3.1: Sampled Artisans*

*Key: \* Artisans that had follow-up interviews (Participated in phases 1 and 2)*

### ❖ The Context and Location of Artisans

As displayed in table 3.1, the study sampled 32 informal artisan entrepreneurs made up of 18 men and 14 women from various popular tourist areas, specifically Nairobi, Narok, Nakuru and Eldoret. These towns were ideal for numerous reasons; for instance, Nairobi is Kenya's capital city. It has two international airports with diverse international routes; thus, it is a centre for international travel for tourists. The city also has a national park that hosts diverse wildlife, cultural and heritage museums, and many international conference facilities, attracting international and domestic tourists. The sample also included artisans from Narok, who work there due to the town's proximity to Maasai Mara, Kenya's most popular game reserve known for the famous wildebeest migration.

Additionally, the sample included artisans from Eldoret, the country's main town in the North Rift. It has an international airport, which eases international travel. The town is also near the highlands, hosting various marathon training camps for sports tourists. Likewise, the town is a popular stop for tourists travelling to other northern and western Kenya attractions. Lastly, the study drew an artisan from Nakuru, a popular tourist destination, because of Lake Nakuru and Lake Nakuru National Park. The town is also very close to Naivasha, famous for

tourist attractions like Lake Naivasha and Hell's Gate National Parks, which have diverse wildlife, nature trails and an extensive range of hotels and resorts (Euromonitor International, 2019;Magical Kenya, 2020).

These cities and towns all exist within the urban areas. Urban areas have the highest concentration of *jua kali* compared to rural areas because of the soaring population and high customer demand (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004). Hence, besides the cities and towns being famous for tourism, they also have a predominant informal sector, thus providing a good ground for studying artisans.

Regarding their physical capital, specifically their locations, business premises and access to infrastructure (DFID, 1999), the artisans operate in informal markets. They do not have permanent business premises and often work in open-air markets that lack basic infrastructures like water and electricity. Case in point, the sampled artisans in Nakuru, Narok and Eldoret operate in informal markets made of semi-permanent structures. On the other hand, artisans drawn from Nairobi run their businesses in informal markets such as the Maasai market, a dedicated market for handicrafts such as sculptures, art, beaded ornaments, and handmade cultural clothing, to mention a few. The Maasai market has no permanent premise, as the market shifts each day of the week. For instance, on Saturdays and Sundays, the market is at the open-air market at the High court grounds within the central business district in Nairobi. On Sundays, the market is also available at Yaya centre mall. On the weekdays, the market happens in different malls across the city. These include the Capital Centre mall on Wednesdays, the Junction mall on Thursdays and the Village market mall on Fridays. There is no Maasai market on Monday and Tuesday. However, the artisans say there was a Tuesday market day at Kijabe Street, which the government removed and redesigned into a recreational park.

On days, the artisans do not go to the Maasai market; they work in workshops at their homes or other informal open markets within Nairobi, namely Kariokor and Gikomba markets. Despite lacking basic infrastructure, artisans remit daily or weekly payments to the county government to operate at these informal markets. Thus, highlighting the challenges they experience in getting physical capital.

### **3.4.2 The Sampled Institutions**

Alongside the 32 artisans, the study also incorporated interviews with 5 relevant institutions drawn from the Kenyan tourism industry and the informal sector, who were

sampled through purposive sampling (Saunders, 2019). These institutions interface with artisans; hence, they were best suited to offer deeper insights into how artisans sustain their livelihoods from the perspective of external stakeholders. Likewise, the institutions were fit to discuss their role in supporting artisans. In so doing, the sampled institutions enriched the understanding of how institutional resources influence livelihoods and gained a holistic understanding of the artisans' livelihoods. Table 3.2 below gives a summary of the sampled institutions.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Role / Designation</b>	<b>Summary of Organisation</b>
Institution 1	Official	An NGO with a focus on supporting communities in the tourism industry
Institution 2	Chief	Government office in a tourism community
Institution 3	Founder	A social enterprise focused on artisans
Institution 4	Official	Institution mandated to support the <i>juakali</i> in Kenya
Institution 5	Board member	Tourism corporation mandated by the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife

*Table 3.2: Sampled Institutions*

### **3.4.3 Cumulative Interviews**

Therefore, considering the 32 sampled artisans, 5 institutions and the 14 follow-up interviews with artisans, the study conducted a cumulative of 51 qualitative telephone interviews. The following section below discusses how the researcher conducted these telephone interviews.

## **3.5 The Semi-Structured Telephone Interviews**

Once the participants were recruited, telephone interviews were scheduled. In some instances, the participants were available at the time of initial contact, whereas, in other cases, a convenient time was scheduled. As a result, the interview times were flexible and ranged from daytime working hours to nighttime.

Before the interview started, there were some pleasantries and friendly discussions to ease the participants. The initial conversations also included an elaborate discussion of the purpose of the study, followed by a discussion of ethics, specifically, what their participation

entailed, anonymity and data usage and storage (Drabble *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, the participants were assured that their participation was voluntary. Hence, they had to give audio-recorded verbal consent to participate. They also had to consent to the audio recording of interviews for record-keeping and transcription. These were essential steps to ensure the interviews adhered to the ethics guidelines (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Besides this, the preliminary discussions also entailed assuring the participants that their experiences, stories, and opinions mattered and contributed to the research purpose (Farooq, 2015). These discussions contributed towards establishing rapport with participants, which may be challenging to establish in telephone interviews (Sweet, 2002).

The interview started with broad questions related to the study. These included demographic and typological questions such as the nature, duration and location of their businesses and the kind of handicrafts they made. The broad questions were followed by more-in depth questions closely related to the study. These included questions on how they made a living, the reasons behind their livelihood choices, the challenges they experienced and how they handled them, their engagement in the informal sector in tourism, perceptions of the industry and institutional environment, and the kind of support they received from institutions. Moreover, the interview questions did not hold back in probing and understanding the historical context of Kenya and the tourism industry. Likewise, the questions were keen to uncover and understand the behaviours and practices that inform the artisans' cultural practices and social contexts. These questions were motivated by the social constructionism philosophical stance, which compels the researcher to study the phenomena in rich detail and to consider the historical, geographical and socio-cultural contexts and how they affect the realities of the respondents (Saunders, 2019).

Overall, the semi-structured interviews had a flexible approach to questions in the interview guide. The participants dominated the conversations, and where necessary, the researcher steered the conversations to maintain the interview flow and ensure that all the key and relevant questions were asked (Cachia and Millward, 2011). The interviews were paced appropriately to ensure enough information was gathered before proceeding to the following questions. Where necessary, the participants' responses were clarified, probed, and follow-up questions were asked. This was essential to ensure that there was no misinterpretation and that the participants felt that their experiences and narratives were heard (Drabble *et al.*, 2016). Consequently, the research participants were the centre of the interviews. Trier-Bieniek (2012)

recommends this as the ideal practice for telephone interviews, which risk being dominated by the researcher.

Due to the lack of visual contact, telephone interviews enabled notetaking without distracting the participants (Cachia and Millward, 2011). Thus, as the participants spoke, the interviews were audio-recorded, and relevant notes were taken without any distractions. Note-taking during the interviews aided in noting the integral points, areas to probe further and follow-up questions. Cumulatively, the notes contributed to the rich description of the data, which is valuable in promoting the credibility and quality of the study (Tracy, 2010). Additionally, as there were no visual cues, it was essential to ensure active listening and that the participants felt the researcher's presence throughout. This was done by including words such as but not limited to "yeah", "hmm", and "aha" (Farooq, 2015). Thus, it promoted participant engagement, which is vital for telephone interviews, where there are more risks of participant distractions that can hamper the data quality (Vogl, 2020). Alongside this, the researcher allowed for a brief silence after the participants spoke. This is a non-verbal probing technique in interviews that prompts participants to keep speaking and allows them to think before continuing with the conversation (Kallio *et al.*, 2016).

The semi-structured interviews ended after all the relevant questions were asked and probed where necessary. They lasted for an average of between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours. This was a relatively long duration, given that telephone interviews are assumed to last for shorter durations than face-to-face interviews (Irvine, 2011). They tend to be shorter because of the high likelihood of shorter responses and participant fatigue that often sets in between 20 and 30 minutes (Carr and Worth, 2001). Therefore, the relatively longer length of interviews may be a sign of good rapport between the researcher and the participant (Cachia and Millward, 2011). Likewise, it demonstrates participant engagement and challenges the bias that telephone interviews must maintain a short duration (Bernard, 2017).

At the end of the interviews, the researcher thanked the participants for their contributions. As the study took a phased approach to data collection, the participants were also asked whether they would be open to follow-up interviews. All the participants had a positive response and said that they would. Such responsiveness suggested they enjoyed participating in the study and implied that the researcher and participants had established trust and rapport.

The participants were also asked to take part in the sampling process by recommending others to participate in the study. In most cases, they agreed to do this and, with consent, shared the contact details of other potential participants. However, in some cases, there was some resistance amongst the artisans, suggesting they were uncomfortable recruiting or speaking to their colleagues about the interviews. Here, the researcher recounted the ethics guidelines and reminded the participants that the study was voluntary. Thus, there was no obligation for them to recruit other participants. Likewise, they were asked only to share the contacts of people who had consented to their mobile phone numbers being shared with the researcher.

After the telephone interviews, the researcher wrote field notes and kept reflective diaries. As mentioned earlier, field notes are commentaries about what is happening in the research (Van Maanen, 1988), and research diaries are a record of reflections and changes in the researcher and the field (Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015). Thus, these included commentaries on the interview, such as the key highlights that emerged, thoughts on the participants, reflections on telephone interviews as a data collection instrument, and any other general feelings about the research process. These notes were taken immediately after the interviews to ensure that no critical insights and reflections were forgotten (Bernard, 2017). Afterwards, the audio-recorded interviews were iteratively translated and transcribed. This process is expounded further in section 3.6 of this chapter, which discusses the data analysis.

### **3.5.1 Key Methodological Considerations for Qualitative Telephone Interviews**

Telephone interviews in qualitative research elicit certain concerns, such as the lack of visual cues, limited durations, and possible difficulties in establishing trust, rapport, and depth (Novick, 2008; Irvine, 2011; Drabble *et al.*, 2016). Thus, the study acknowledged these limitations and developed five effective strategies to overcome them while ensuring methodological rigour. The following section discusses these strategies in detail.

#### **i. Focus on verbal cues to overcome the lack of visual contact**

Telephone interviews are criticised for the lack of visual contact, which may result in the loss of contextual data, restricted interview depth, reduced duration and a lack of trust (Drabble *et al.*, 2016; Vogl, 2020). Therefore, the study made strides to ensure that this was not a limiting factor but an attribute that could be enhanced to yield positive results. This was achieved by paying more attention to what the participants said, alongside all the other non-

visual cues, such as pauses, hesitations, changes in voice, intonation and emotional expressions (Lechuga, 2012). These verbal cues were all included in the transcriptions and data analysis. Consequently, the study had rich textual data. Holt (2010) agrees with this and explains that focusing on verbal engagement results in rich transcribed data. She expounds that telephone interviews force the researcher and the participant to make verbal articulations, resulting in rich textual data and enriched depth, which compensate for the lack of visual cues.

## **ii. Focus on building rapport in telephone interviews**

Rapport is the comparative ease of interaction between the researcher and the research participant, which influences the disclosure of information, trust and quality of the research (Given, 2008). However, the lack of visual contact in telephone interviews can make it challenging to build rapport between the researcher and the participants (Sweet, 2002). For this reason, the study employed several strategies to build and maintain rapport throughout the interviews. For example, the artisans were given an opportunity to participate in snowball sampling, where they recommended other potential participants. As artisans work and live within a social context, this sampling strategy enhanced trust and gave confidence to the recruited artisans to participate in the process. Moreover, by empowering the artisans to participate in the recruitment process, the sampling strategy allowed them to be part of the research, beyond taking part in the interviews, thus enhancing the connection between the researcher and the participants.

Once the participants were recruited, the researcher employed several strategies to build and maintain rapport. As mentioned, the interviews started with informal and friendly conversations that made the participants feel at ease. The initial conversations also drew areas of connection with the participants. For example, the researcher pointed out the similarities and areas of mutual interest with the participants (Drabble *et al.*, 2016). Case in point, the researcher shared that she had worked or lived in Eldoret, Nakuru, Narok and Nairobi with the respective artisans in these cities. Thus, there was a chance for discussion and banter about the cities. The researcher also discussed the various kinds of handicrafts she bought from artisans in tourism, thus drawing a connection around handicrafts. The connection was enhanced by mirroring the participants' language and switching between English, Swahili, or slang, where necessary. Novick (2008) notes that connecting with participants establishes rapport in telephone interviews, which was similar to the case in the interviews.

The relevance of building rapport cannot be overstated. More specifically, as the SLA relies on the participation of the respondents, there is a risk that people may not disclose information on their livelihoods and experiences. Hence why, Morse and McNamara (2013) encourage researchers to be keen on establishing trust with participants to overcome such challenges in livelihood research. McLean (2015) echoes this and explains that a good rapport is necessary for addressing and revealing sensitive livelihood information, such as information on livelihood resources. Therefore, this was a key methodological strategy for the telephone interviews.

### **iii. Managing the insider and outsider positions**

As pointed out, telephone interviews lack visual contact, which may impair the development of trust, rapport, and depth. Given such risks, one of the methodological considerations was managing the insider-outside positions throughout the research to build trust, establish rapport and create depth in the interviews.

On the one hand, the researcher was an insider. She was a Kenyan who spoke Swahili, the local language; thus, she could draw certain cultural and language similarities with the participants. In addition, she understood the social and cultural context, which was valuable in knowing the tone and language to use with different age groups and gender, and the various norms such as reciprocity. The researcher's career experience also spanned working with formal and informal entrepreneurs in Kenya. Hence, she had contextual knowledge of the industrial and institutional environment. This was valuable in telephone interviews because she understood the participants' environment and their contextual references despite the lack of visual contact. Likewise, being an insider created areas of connection between the researcher and the participants, which contributed to building trust and rapport. Overall, as qualitative research pays attention to the context of the study (Creswell, 2007), being an insider had critical contextual advantages.

On the other hand, despite the lack of visual contact, the researcher was transparent about her identity, i.e., her gender, profession and location (Keikelame, 2018), which made her an outsider in many ways. Case in point, the researcher was a young female living in the UK and pursuing her PhD. On the contrary, the artisans lived in marginalised communities, experienced poverty, had basic education, were from diverse tribes and backgrounds, and had different ages and genders. Similarly, despite the researcher's previous professional experience

and interface with institutions, she was an outsider when interacting with officials from the institutions.

Therefore, while the study benefited from telephone interviews, which made some dissimilarities like age and physical appearance invisible (Holt, 2010), the researcher acknowledged that different socio-economic dynamics existed and could influence the interactions with participants (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Therefore, various things were adjusted during the interviews. For example, the researcher simplified terminologies and language where necessary and was mindful of cultural considerations for different age groups and genders. Additionally, despite having contextual knowledge, the research deliberately focused on the participants' experiences and social, cultural, and historical contexts to limit biases and assumptions. Section 3.9 contains the researcher's reflexivity and discusses this in more detail.

In summary, the researcher navigated the insider and outsider positions all through. On the one hand, the study benefited from the researcher being an insider, as she had knowledge of the context and could establish trust and rapport. On the other hand, being an outsider generated curiosity, which made the researcher eager to understand the participants' experiences and realities. Thus, ensuring the study was rigorous and met its aim and objectives.

#### **iv. Use of a phased approach to overcome the limitations of telephone interviews**

As alluded to, the study collected data in two phases, which made it possible to have follow-up interviews with some participants. The follow-up interviews were essential for overcoming certain challenges of remote telephone interviews. More specifically, the second round of interviews was informed by themes from the first round of interviews and data analysis (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Thus, it made it possible to ask relevant questions omitted in the initial interview, probe further into unanticipated themes that emerged, and seek clarification on significant themes from the initial interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 2004).

Relatedly, the follow-up interviews enabled the continuation of conversations. For example, they started with phrases like "*The last time we spoke, you were doing/you said....*" This was valuable for recapping and reminding participants of the previous conversations. Thus, creating a sense of continuity in the conversations and making it possible for participants to express themselves more and disclose information they would otherwise not disclose in one interview (Read, 2018).

Telephone interviews enable real-time access to information from participants (Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015). Therefore, as the follow-up interviews were conducted over different periods, when the participants' circumstances may have shifted, the phased approach made it possible to capture the experiences of participants on more than one occasion over different periods. Hence, it generated a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. This was particularly relevant to social constructionism, which focuses on multiple realities and different accounts of actors (Burr and Dick, 2017).

In addition, the second round of interviews enhanced the time spent with the participants. In doing so, it contributed towards building trust and rapport and promoting rich data, which may not have entirely been achieved in single-round interviews (Grinyer and Thomas, 2012).

Therefore, the phased approach, which enabled follow-up interviews, was an important methodological consideration for overcoming some of the challenges of telephone interviews, like the difficulty in building rapport, the risk of lacking in-depth interviews, and possible data distortion (Lechuga, 2012;Lindsjö, 2012;Drabble *et al.*, 2016).

#### **v. Voice and empowering participants**

Artisans are often marginalised and lack a voice. Therefore, the study had to give participants a voice and empower them to participate. More specifically, the study had to ensure that both the researcher and the participants contributed to the research process and that the researcher was not the sole producer of knowledge (Keikelame and Swartz, 2019). The study also had to be cautious to give agency to the participants. This was achieved in various ways. First, as alluded to, the artisans' participation in the study went beyond the interviews. They actively participated in the snowball sampling process, and some participated in the pilot study, where they assisted in shaping the interview guide.

Second, the telephone interviews gave power and control to the participants (Drabble *et al.*, 2016). For example, the participants had the flexibility to schedule and reschedule the time of the interviews. They also had control over their social spaces, as they participated in the interview from a location that was convenient for them. This was explicitly essential as they were preoccupied with business and personal responsibilities. Hence, they could participate in the research and voice their experiences while controlling their social spaces and time.

Third, as telephone interviews risk the researcher dominating the interviews more than the participants (Irvine, 2011), the researcher implemented strategies to ensure that the interviews avoided this. For example, as mentioned, the interview questions were semi-structured to ensure the participants had room to speak and share their experiences without interjections. The semi-structured questions were also open to allow participants to construct meaning, which is a critical aspect of social constructionism (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Alongside this, the participants spoke for most of the interview while the researcher only guided and facilitated the conversation to ensure the necessary questions were asked and probed. This was necessary to ensure artisans had a voice throughout and shared their experiences and viewpoints. Likewise, the telephone interviews ensured active participation because of the real-time communication between the researcher and the participant (Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015). Hence, as participatory approaches give voice (Coser *et al.*, 2014), the often-marginalised artisans had a voice throughout the interviews.

Fourth, as mentioned before, given the different socio-economic statuses between the researcher and the participants, the telephone interviews were beneficial in hiding some subjective differences (Holt, 2010), such as age and physical appearance. Thus, the participants were not subjected to these differences during the interviews. This may have allowed them to voice their experiences where they would otherwise likely feel intimidated because of biases or preconceived notions. Nonetheless, it is critical to acknowledge that while this was the case, different socio-economic dynamics still existed between the researcher and the participants and were not completely silenced by the telephone interviews (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Section 3.9 discusses this in more detail.

Fifth, the study directly engaged with the participants without using any gatekeepers. Gatekeepers occupy the position between the researcher and the participants in qualitative research, and they may block access to participants and limit their voices (Clark, 2011). In this regard, telephone interviews had the advantage of enabling direct access to participants without the interference of gatekeepers or third parties. Therefore, ensuring that the study prioritised the participants' voices.

Sixth, the study took advantage of the anonymity of telephone interviews (Holt, 2010; Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015) and reaffirmed the participants of anonymity and confidentiality. This was essential in enabling the participants to express their experiences,

grievances, and aspirations, which they otherwise do not voice. They also had a safe space to do so without intimidation from their colleagues, intermediaries, or authorities.

In summary, the strategies outlined above were critical in overcoming the challenges of telephone interviews and in ensuring methodological rigour and rich data quality. By outlining these methodological strategies, the study offers an approach to showcase how telephone interviews can be used to collect remote qualitative data, engage with marginalised participants, and obtain rich qualitative data.

Given these effective strategies, it is prudent to challenge some biases against qualitative telephone interviews, as discussed below.

### **3.5.2 Challenging the Biases against Qualitative Telephone Interviews**

Due to the limitations highlighted in this chapter, telephone interviews are undermined in qualitative research (Lindsjö, 2012). The following section demystifies these biases against telephone interviews. This is not to say that telephone interviews do not have disadvantages, but to highlight that some limitations are exaggerated.

#### **i. Challenging the bias that telephone interviews lack rich data**

As pointed out, telephone interviews lack visual communication of body language, such as facial expressions, gestures, mannerisms, and behaviours. Therefore, they risk being impersonal, which may limit rapport and compromise the depth and quality of the interviews (Vogl, 2020). Despite this concern, telephone interviews in this study produced rich qualitative data. The study produced significant textual data through the transcripts, field notes and diaries. Thus, agreeing with Cachia and Millward (2011), Holt (2010) and Trier-Bieniek (2012), who acknowledge that telephone interviews produce rich textual and descriptive accounts of participants' experiences.

Additionally, while this study did not conduct face-to-face interviews with participants to draw comparisons on data depth between telephone and face-to-face interviews, the study shares the same sentiments with Irvine (2011) and Cachia and Millward (2011). They compared the two forms of interviews and concluded that telephone interviews are at par with other face-to-face interviews. The study obtained in-depth and rich data, showing that

telephone interviews can be a viable way to collect qualitative data, just like face-to-face qualitative methods.

Telephone interviews are also undermined because they risk producing inferior data. They are assumed to be shorter due to the perceived lack of depth and participant fatigue (Lechuga, 2012). However, as mentioned before, the telephone interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours, which is higher than the anticipated 20 and 30 minutes (Carr and Worth, 2001). Therefore, the relatively long durations of the interviews and the rich textual and descriptive data show that the interviews achieved the necessary depth. Thus, while the study did not carry out any face-to-face interviews, it agrees with the views of Sweet (2002), who examines that telephone interviews can produce similar lengths to face-to-face interviews and should not be perceived as inferior in quality and quantity.

As pointed out, telephone interviews may make it difficult to establish rapport, which may compromise the depth and richness of data. Nevertheless, this study highlights how different strategies can enhance rapport in telephone interviews. Thus, while the study did not conduct face-to-face interviews with participants, it agrees with Stephens (2007), who compared the two and found that telephone and face-to-face interviews attained the same level of friendly rapport. These sentiments are also acknowledged by Trier-Bieniek (2012), who validates that telephone interviews are an equal match to face-to-face interviews by elaborating that face-to-face interviews do not guarantee more rapport compared to telephone interviews. Therefore, employing different strategies to enhance rapport in telephone interviews is possible and can contribute to rich data and depth.

In addition, it is prudent to acknowledge that the anonymity and privacy of telephone interviews (Carduff, Murray and Kendall, 2015) enhanced the richness of the data. It allowed the artisans to express themselves openly and share personal stories and experiences. For example, they talked about their livelihood assets, such as finances and other resources, and the challenges they experienced with colleagues and intermediaries. Such topics are sensitive (McLean, 2015) and may be difficult to share in person. Therefore, while there was no physical contact, the privacy and anonymity of telephone interviews enhanced the proximity between the researcher and participants and resulted in rich data.

## **ii. Challenging the assumption that telephone interviews are not suitable for the Global South**

There is an assumption that telephone interviews are unsuitable for conducting research in the Global South (Bernard, 2017). This bias stems from various presumptions. For example, there is a notion that there is no or minimal access to telephone technology and that telephone interviews limit lower-income participants from participating in the study (Breakwell *et al.*, 2006). While these assumptions apply to some contexts within the Global South, they are exaggerated.

In this study, and as mentioned before, there is widespread access to mobile telephone devices in Kenya, including in the informal sector. A report by the Communications Authority of Kenya (2020) indicates that the country has 57 million mobile subscriptions, representing 119.9% of the population. Thus, affirming the access to mobile phones and the feasibility of using telephone interviews to access participants.

Additionally, as will be expounded in the findings, the data collection process highlighted how artisans in Kenya are comfortable using mobile phones. In particular, artisans in the younger demographic are comfortable with internet-enabled social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and various mobile applications. Thus, showing how the above assumption is overstated. Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge that while artisans know how to use this technology, they still have limited access to the internet due to connection issues and the lack of consistent income to buy data bundles.

## **iii. Challenging the assumption of access and unsolicited calls in telephone interviews**

There is a notion that participants have a negative attitude towards telephone interviews because they invite unsolicited or cold calls from researchers, which makes them reluctant to participate (De Leeuw and Hox, 2004; Musselwhite *et al.*, 2007). While this may mainly be the case for some Western countries such as Britain, where there might not be a willingness to pick up unsolicited calls (Khattab, 2007), the study showed that the participants, including the institutions and artisans, were open to picking up cold-calls, where they were introduced to the study. The introductory calls were seamlessly followed by scheduled interviews. In some cases, the participants were available and willing to participate immediately, and the unsolicited calls directly transitioned to the interview. In the instances where the participants missed to pick up

their phones, they returned the calls, which showed their willingness to engage with unsolicited calls. Therefore, it affirms that unsolicited telephone interviews can enable a high response rate and participants' willingness to participate in the study. This can be enhanced by snowball sampling, which enables access to referrals and facilitates introductions.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

After the data collection, an immense amount of raw data had to be made sense of, which necessitated data analysis. Data analysis is a process of describing, categorising, and recognising substantial connections in data. It also involves data reduction, reorganisation and representation to explain the studied phenomena and develop theory (Tuckett, 2005a;Flick, 2013).

There are various methods used to analyse qualitative data, namely; thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006;Braun and Clarke, 2013;Clarke, Braun and Hayfield, 2015;Kiger and Varpio, 2020;Braun and Clarke, 2021), content analysis (Mayring, 2004), grounded theory (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2012), narrative analysis (Riessman, 1993), and discourse analysis (Brown *et al.*, 1983). These methods depend on the nature of the study and the research aim and objectives. Thus, after assessing the suitability of these methods, this study settled for thematic analysis, which provides a way to interpret and communicate findings (Boyatzis, 1998) by recognising, analysing and reporting patterns to make sense of qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2021).

Besides being a good fit for the research aim and objectives, thematic analysis has various attributes that make it a suitable data analysis method. First, it offers flexibility as it can be used in different participatory paradigms (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Hence, this flexibility allowed for the ontological and epistemological assumptions in social constructionism. Second, though not atheoretical, thematic analysis offers theoretical flexibility because it does not have a prescribed theory (Braun and Clarke, 2021). Therefore, it allowed different theories to inform data analysis and interpretation. Third, thematic analysis can be used across a wide range of qualitative data (Kiger and Varpio, 2020); thus, it could accommodate all the qualitative methods used in this study, such as interviews, document analysis, field notes and diaries. Lastly, thematic analysis has proven to be an authoritative qualitative data analysis method as it is widely used in several disciplines and fields, such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, political science, and arts, to mention a few (Boyatzis, 1998). Therefore, it is a credible way to make sense of qualitative data.

An elaborate study on thematic analysis displays a standard guideline for the method (Boyatzis, 1998; Tuckett, 2005a; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Clarke and Braun, 2014; Clarke, Braun and Hayfield, 2015; Kiger and Varpio, 2020; Braun and Clarke, 2021). These guidelines are mainly informed by the six-phase process of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006), shown in figure 3.1. The study adopted these steps to analyse data. Nonetheless, despite the outlined steps, this process was not rigid but flexible, enabling the application of different crafts, analytical skills and reflexivity (Braun and Clarke, 2021). For this reason, the study only used the six phases of data analysis as a guideline and not a rigid process. It was flexible and drew insights, strategies and recommendations for thematic analysis from other qualitative researchers, such as Dey (1993), Rubin and Rubin (2004), Flick (2013), Saldaña (2014), and Saunders (2019), to mention a few.



*Figure 3.1: Six Phases of Thematic Analysis*

*Source: Author's Figure Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006)*

The following section discusses the step-by-step process of the data analysis in this study.

### **i. Data Familiarisation**

Data analysis began with data familiarisation, done in diverse ways. First, the audio-recorded interviews were translated from Swahili to English and transcribed. To do so, the researcher played the interviews several times to ensure that no meaning was lost during the translation and that the participants' perspectives and experiences were well understood.

Translation can be a challenge in qualitative research and can impact the validity of the research (Birbili, 2000; Inhetveen, 2012). Thus, as the interviews were conducted in Swahili, careful consideration had to be placed during the translation to English. The researcher is a native speaker of both English and Swahili. She is fluent and proficient in how both languages are used, including the uses of idioms, proverbs, sarcasm, cultural phrases, and different grammatical structures. Thus, competence in both languages was essential to minimise risks of data misinterpretation and ensure that the translated transcripts-maintained meaning.

During the transcription process, the researcher concurrently made notes and comments (Tuckett, 2005a). These comments were written impressions of the data and signposted the emerging patterns. Thus, they gave ideas of possible codes. In the first phase of interviews, the comments made during transcription also flagged areas that needed further probing and follow-up in the second phase of interviews. These comments were made in separate word documents. In the cases where they were made within the transcripts, they were written in different fonts and highlighted in assorted colours to differentiate them from the participants' transcribed words. After the translation and transcription, data familiarity also included reading and re-reading the transcripts, field notes, reflective diaries and documents to get familiar with the data and take note of the first impressions of patterns and meanings (Braun and Clarke, 2006;Saldaña, 2014).

The data familiarity was rigorous. As indicated, it involved listening to each audio-recorded interview a couple of times, reading and re-reading the transcripts and making comments. It was a time-consuming exercise that took an average of more than two hours per interview. Nonetheless, it was an elaborate way to get familiar with the immense data and a critical stage towards the second step of generating initial codes, discussed below.

## **ii. Generating Initial Codes**

The second step in thematic analysis is the initial coding. A code is an analytical unit that categorises qualitative data by drawing on similarities, differences and relationships (Flick, 2013), thus, allowing raw data to be broken and analysed in meaningful ways (Braun and Clarke, 2006). At this point, possible codes had been established during the data familiarisation. However, the second phase of initial coding was a deliberate approach to identifying codes and collating data related to each code. To do so, only the participants' words from the transcripts were coded, not the researcher's questions and prompts (Saldaña, 2014). This process also involved line-by-line coding of the transcripts, field notes, diaries and documents, which allowed the initial codes to be grounded in the data (Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012). Likewise, coding happened in a semantic and latent manner, where the researcher considered the surface and hidden meanings. The semantic coding considered the obvious and surface meaning of the participants' expressions and words, while the latent coding considered the hidden meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2021). In this case, the initial codes were drawn from the explicit terms and words the participants used; and the thoughts, opinions, feelings, emotions, and ideas they implied or revealed indirectly. Likewise, the initial coding involved examining

the figures of speech like slogans, metaphors and synonyms to draw meaning (Rubin and Rubin, 2004).

To illustrate this, the transcripts had questions from participants, such as, “*Are you able to assist me in any way?*” “*What kind of help do you think we can get as artisans?*” On a surface level, these excerpts implied that the artisans were seeking help from the researcher. However, a more in-depth look at these suggested the artisans’ difficult circumstances, desperation and vulnerability. Likewise, it suggested that the artisans assumed the researcher held more power than them and could resolve their problems or grievances.

As recommended by Braun and Clarke (2021), the coding process was not mechanical but was an interactive process of thinking, reflecting and questioning the data. Thus, the data were examined, and there were reflections on what the data meant, suggested, and how and why the participants felt and acted the way they did (Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012). This allowed for critical and analytical engagement with the data and the identification of semantic and latent codes. Besides this, to avoid obstacles within the thematic analysis, the researcher applied consistent judgement throughout the coding to establish reliability (Boyatzis, 1998).

The coding was first done manually using a pen and paper, which allowed further data immersion (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). This was followed by coding using computer-assisted qualitative analysis software, specifically NVivo. The software helped to systematically and digitally organise, analyse, and interpret data by identifying codes and categories (Ghauri, 2020). Similarly, NVivo made it easy to manage data, find categories and codes and define relationships. The software also had tools that allowed data visualisation using different diagrams such as charts, maps, word clouds, and clusters, to mention a few. These created efficiency and depth in the data analysis. Nonetheless, in agreement with the observations of Dollah, Abduh and Rosmaladewi (2017), learning NVivo was time-consuming as it took several hours to grasp the different functions.

### **iii. Searching for Themes**

After identifying the initial codes, the next step involved seeking themes and collating the codes into the relevant themes. Themes are implicit topics that organise repeated ideas usually expressed by two or more participants (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Unlike codes,

themes capture multiple observations and patterns with shared meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2021).

As alluded to, thematic analysis is flexible. Thus, the researcher sought the themes using different approaches. First, using an inductive approach, where the themes and the codes were drawn from and driven by data. In this case, there was no effort to fit codes into pre-existing themes or frameworks (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This was an essential aspect of data analysis, as it allowed unanticipated themes to emerge.

Second, as thematic data analysis does not happen in a vacuum, the themes were also deductively informed by theoretical, conceptual, and epistemological assumptions (Boyatzis, 1998). For this reason, the themes were also generated by pre-existing assumptions and underpinnings. These include the assumptions from the social constructionism philosophical stance and the conceptual lens, informed by the SLA framework, resilience theory, entrepreneurial theory of resilience, certain aspects of postcolonial discourse, and knowledge of the informal sector and tourism industry. It is critical to specify these assumptions to ensure transparency in thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2021). In practice, Saunders (2019) acknowledges that many qualitative researchers use an abductive approach, where inductive and deductive approaches are iteratively used. Therefore, it was conventional to embrace these approaches in data analysis.

The process also involved examining the codes and themes to group information around particular events and stories (Rubin and Rubin, 2004). Consequently, it initiated the process of drawing different relationships, linkages, comparisons, and patterns between codes to create themes and thematic constructs. This process identified themes based on how they related to the research aim and objectives and not their quantifiable nature (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Hence, the themes identified in this process were not necessarily the most prevalent in the data but those related to the research aim.

To illustrate the above steps, table 3.3 below shows an example of how a theme emerged from the transcripts and codes. As will be elaborated in the findings and discussions, the emergence of this theme contributed towards understanding how artisans sustain their livelihoods.

Examples of excerpts from transcripts	Initial codes	Theme
<p>“It is great to be self-employed.”</p> <p>“I like the independence of running my business.”</p> <p>“This is my business; I am my own boss.”</p>	Entrepreneurial Autonomy	Informal artisan entrepreneurs display entrepreneurial traits
<p>“When the season is low, I use my savings. A businessperson has to have the brain to save money.”</p> <p>“When I started the business, I re-invested everything into the business. So, I kept selling and putting it back into the business.”</p>	Business mindset on financial resources	
<p>“When the tourism season is low, I target other kinds of local customers and domestic tourists.”</p> <p>“I saw in Narok, that there is high competition within tourism, but no one sells on social media, so I saw the opportunity to overcome the competition by getting online...The competition is very stiff. There are many people that are selling the products around that area, so we always compete for the tourists.”</p>	The ability to identify opportunities	
<p>“You also have to know how to negotiate with the customers. For instance, with international tourists, I negotiate differently and make more money compared to the local visitors.”</p>	Business negotiation skills	

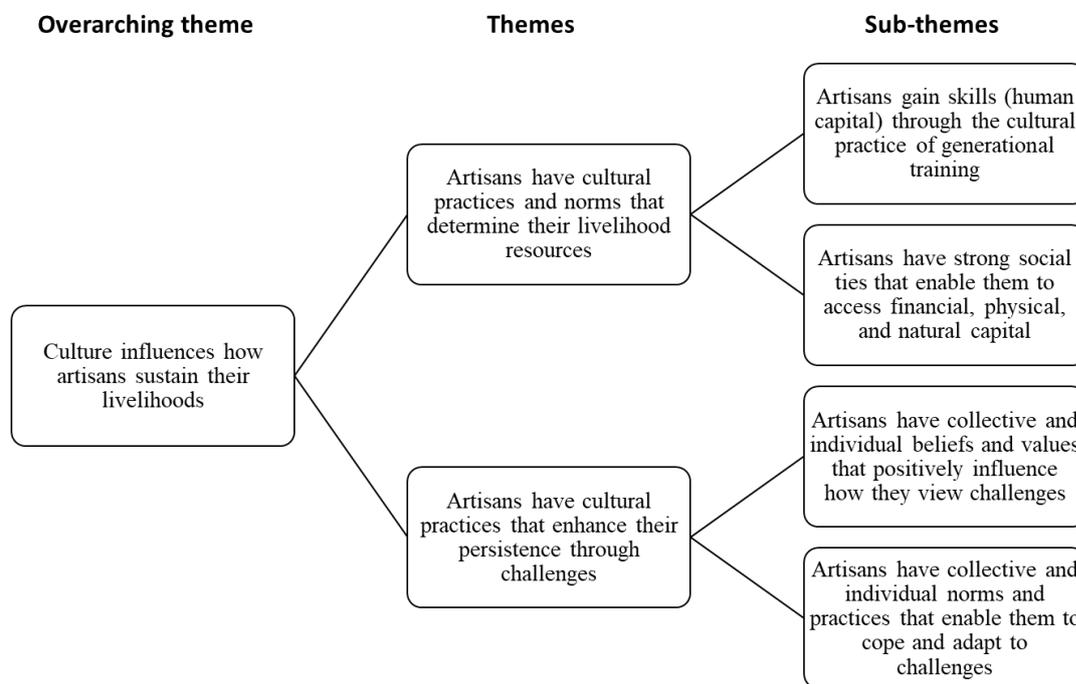
*Table 3.3: Example of the Emergence of a Theme*

The search for themes was first done manually using a pen and paper, followed by the NVivo software. As alluded to, the software has diverse features that enable the visual representation of codes and datasets. These made it more efficient to make sense of the data and draw patterns and relationships.

**iv. Reviewing Themes**

Once the themes were identified, they were reviewed. This was a quality control measure. It involved returning to the themes and checking to confirm they were well related to the identified codes within the dataset. The process also involved going back to the transcripts to check that the themes captured the meaning of the data as they related to the research aim and objectives (Braun and Clarke, 2013). This was a flexible and iterative process that resulted in some themes being broken down further or merging to create subthemes and overarching themes or being deleted.

To illustrate this, figure 3.2 below shows an example of how sub-themes merged to create themes, which then merged to create overarching themes in the data analysis.



*Figure 3.2: Example of an Overarching Theme, Themes, and Sub-themes*

*Source: Author's Figure based on Data Analysis*

## **v. Defining and Naming Themes**

After reviewing all the themes, sub-themes and overarching themes, the next step involved defining and giving appropriate names to them. Doing so was essential to ensure that the themes told a story relevant to the research aim and objectives. It also ensured that the themes were understandable and would make sense to other researchers and readers (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Additionally, naming and defining the themes made it easy to retrieve detailed analysis, providing a suitable way to organise the findings. This was also a flexible and iterative process that allowed for changes to be made and for themes to be refined over time. Ultimately, it ensured that the overarching themes, themes, and sub-themes represented the depth and detail of the data, made sense on their own and fit together to form an overall analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

## **vi. Writing the Report**

The final step of thematic analysis is writing the report (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This chapter is a written report on how data were analysed and interpreted. Likewise, the thesis has chapters with written findings and discussions that address the research aim and objectives.

### **3.6.1 Phase Two Data Analysis**

As alluded to, the study was done in two phases, where thematic analysis was used as guided by the steps outlined above. Nevertheless, there were some slight adjustments in the data analysis in the second phase. At the onset of the second phase, the study already had preconceived notions of the data due to familiarity with the context, themes, and theoretical constructs from the first phase of data analysis. Hence, the first phase of data collection and analysis informed the second phase's focus areas and interview questions, specifically, the areas that needed further insights, probing and follow-up (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). To illustrate, the first phase of data analysis established themes such as the inflexibility towards other livelihood strategies, the involvement of intermediaries in the artisans' livelihoods and the influence of social capital and culture on other livelihood resources. These are examples of themes that needed further probing and understanding. Hence, they were part of the focus areas for the second phase of follow-up interviews.

Due to this, the shift from phase one to phase two of data collection and analysis involved reflexivity to point out all the preconceived notions and biases (Creswell and Miller,

2000). Thus, the findings from the first phase were written down and reflected upon to position the study for the second phase. Reflecting on these made it possible to identify recent changes and shifts in the artisans' experiences and to note the new developments in the theoretical constructs from the first phase.

The themes generated in the first and second phases were, to a great extent, consistent. For example, the themes of the artisans' persistence through challenges and crises, the artisans' vulnerability, and the influence of culture on the artisans' livelihood resources consistently emerged in the first and second phases. However, the second phase of the interviews deepened the understanding of existing themes and thematic constructs. For instance, there was a more in-depth understanding of the artisan's social and human capital and how they used these as livelihood resources. Additionally, it made it possible to make sense of the paradoxes in the data. Nonetheless, given the nature of the thematic analysis, the second phase of data analysis pointed out new themes that were not present in the first phase. In particular, how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the artisans and how they altered their livelihoods to deal with the global crisis.

Besides this, a simple comparison between the transcripts from the first and second phases displayed changes in the artisans' narratives. For example, changes in their locations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, differences in the number of employees, and changes in the ways they adapted to financial constraints. These were valuable to acknowledge and enabled a more in-depth understanding of the artisans' experiences and livelihoods.

Appendix 1 highlights some of these changes. For example, it shows the changes in the artisan's employees and livelihood strategies across the first and second phases of data collection.

### **3.6.2 Concluding Remarks on Data Analysis**

In conclusion, thematic analysis was a valuable way to make sense of the data by recognising, analysing, and reporting patterns. The data analysis also enabled the findings to be interpreted and communicated. The subsequent chapters present and interpret these findings to address the research aim and objectives.

Having discussed how the data was analysed, the following section will discuss the critical issues that ensured methodological rigour throughout the study.

### **3.7 Issues of Credibility, Transferability, Reliability and Triangulation**

Trustworthiness is a critical part of the inquiry process that shows the worth, rigour and quality of research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It can be achieved by assessing credibility, transferability, reliability and triangulation. The following section discusses these areas in detail.

#### **3.7.1 Credibility**

Credibility is parallel to internal validity (Saunders, 2019) and is one of the quality indicators in qualitative inquiry (Tracy, 2010). Lincoln and Guba (1985) outline various strategies to promote credibility and internal validity. These include the prolonged engagement with the participants, which the study achieved in numerous ways. As alluded to, the study used a phased approach in data collection, which enabled follow-up interviews with some participants, thus allowing more contact with participants. The phased approach also meant that the data collection through interviews and document analysis took several months, thus, there was lengthy engagement with sources of data between November 2020 and August 2021. This prolonged engagement was essential to ensure that there were no misinterpretations of data, and that the participant's experiences and culture were well understood. It also fostered trust and rapport between the researcher and participants, which promote credibility (Saunders, 2019).

Credibility can also be achieved by dense and detailed accounts of events in the study, which create a thick description of data (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Relatedly, it can be enhanced by taking field notes and reflective diaries (Noble and Smith, 2015). Thus, the study has a record of the researcher's notes that show a trail of how data was collected, analysed, and interpreted. Similarly, as evidenced by the reflexive account in section 3.9 of this chapter, there is a record of the researcher's reflexivity that covers the interactions with participants, perceptions of the findings and thoughts on the research process. Creswell and Miller (2000) point out that these notes and diaries can also be used as an audit trail to document the researcher's decisions and activities.

Additionally, the study promoted credibility by audio-recording all interviews. As mentioned, these records were made with the participants' consent and securely stored in line with the ethics guidelines. Cumulatively, the rich description of data, transparent record-

keeping of notes, field diaries, and recorded interviews demonstrate that the study is trustworthy, dependable and rigorous (Tuckett, 2005b).

Alongside these, Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Saunders (2019) discuss that credibility can be achieved through peer debriefing. Thus, the researcher and the supervisory team had frequent and elaborate discussions of the findings. Likewise, on multiple occasions, the preliminary findings and interpretations were discussed with other relevant researchers and colleagues within and outside the university. Furthermore, as credibility also depends on the skills and competence of the researcher (Tuckett, 2005b), the researcher went through several months of intense training on relevant topics, such as research methodologies, methods, data analysis and ethics, to mention a few. These were essential in ensuring the research achieved the stipulated quality and rigour.

### **3.7.2 Transferability**

Transferability is a parallel criterion to external validity and an alternative to generalisability in quantitative research (Saunders, 2019). Given the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism and the nature of qualitative research, it is impossible to achieve generalisability. However, the insights from the study may be used to raise views of understanding the phenomenon (Chell and Karataş-Özkan, 2014). Thus, a study is deemed as transferable if it can be used as a guide to study a new sample of participants within or outside the context (Noble and Smith, 2015). For this reason, transferability can be enhanced through a thick description of data. It can also be achieved by having an elaborate description of the research process, right from how the research questions came about, the research design, the context of the research, the findings from the research and the interpretations of these findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Therefore, as pointed out in the previous section, the researcher documented the research process to ensure credibility and transparency. As a result, there is a thick description that can allow checks on whether the study can be done in a different context.

### **3.7.3 Reliability**

Reliability in qualitative research relates to consistency in data collection; thus, it can be achieved by ensuring consistency in the research process (Neuman, 2014). Saunders (2019) elaborates that some of the threats to reliability are participant error which affects or alters how participants think or perform, and researcher error, which can happen if the researcher's

interpretation of findings is altered. He further explains that reliability can be threatened by participants' bias, where they create false accounts of their experiences. Likewise, it can be threatened by researcher bias, which creates subjective views that affect how data is collected and interpreted.

Therefore, bearing these in mind, the study placed strategies to eliminate participant error and bias. These strategies included conducting the interviews at a convenient time and environment to encourage them to share truthful accounts of their experiences. The telephone interviews were particularly beneficial in achieving this, as they offered the participants the flexibility to choose a time and place that was convenient for them. Telephone interviews also enhanced anonymity to encourage the participants to give truthful accounts (Vogl, 2020). Furthermore, the study employed other strategies to limit the misinterpretation of data. These include doing follow-up interviews to probe further and seek clarity, repeatedly listening to the audio-recorded interviews, and reading and rereading the transcripts.

Additionally, strategies were put in place to limit research bias, such as reflexivity, which is discussed in section 3.9 of this chapter.

### **3.7.4 Triangulation**

Triangulation enhances the credibility, dependability, truthfulness and accuracy of the data (Neuman, 2014). It also enhances the depth and breadth of data analysis (Oppermann, 2000) and enables an elaborate understanding of a phenomenon or finding (Thurmond, 2001). It can be achieved in various ways, including using multiple data sources, diverse data collection methods, different theories and engaging other researchers to study the same phenomena (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

In this study, triangulation was achieved using diverse data sources. As highlighted, these included a cumulative of 51 interviews with 32 artisans and 5 relevant institutions carried out over two phases. This enabled follow-up interviews with 14 artisans. Furthermore, as discussed in section 3.3.4 of this chapter, it also included document analysis from relevant government and non-government institutions. Alongside these, the study incorporated field notes written after each interview and the researcher's diaries. Cumulatively, these diverse data sources gave multiple perspectives and deep insight into the artisans' livelihoods.

Additionally, as social constructionism assumes the existence of multiple realities (Burr and Dick, 2017), the multiple data sources were also valuable for checking whether the participants' realities and accounts were credible (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Besides this,

the study's conceptual lens was informed by different theoretical perspectives and concepts, such as the SLA framework, resilience theories, vulnerability, culture, and some aspects of postcolonial discourse. Likewise, the study was informed by multiple fields and disciplinary perspectives within tourism and entrepreneurship. For example, the study drew literature from disciplines such as social anthropology, psychology, sociology, and development studies, to mention a few, which enhanced rigour in the interpretation of findings.

Therefore, by implementing these kinds of triangulation, the study enhanced methodological rigour and limited biases and shortcomings in single research strategies and theories. Appendix 2 gives a more elaborate overview of how the study achieved triangulation.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics encompass moral and professional obligations that guide how participants should be treated. It is governed by principles that ensure the research respects participants' autonomy, maintains privacy and does not harm participants (Leavy, 2014). Thus, the study adhered to several guidelines that ensured the study was ethical and followed all the ethical considerations. Before the data collection, the researcher sought ethics clearance from the Ethics Committee in the Department of Work, Employment and Organisation. This process included seeking ethics approval for data collection by submitting participant information sheets, a consent form, a privacy notice, and interview guides. The ethics approval was sought on three occasions, i.e., before the pilot study and before the first and second phases of data collection.

Research ethics ensure that participation in the study is voluntary (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In this regard, the study ensured that participants gave complete and voluntary consent. As alluded to, before the study began, the participants were taken through a participant information sheet and consent form. These explained the research aim and objectives, participation details, data preservation, and the relevant contact details. It also detailed what the participants could expect before, during and after the interview. However, owing to the nature of telephone interviews and the lack of physical access to the participants, it was impossible to get actual signatures on the consent form. For this reason, the participants gave audio-recorded verbal consent to participate in the interview. Thus, the data set only consisted of participants who consented to participate in the study.

As mentioned, research ethics also aims to ensure participants' privacy (Neuman, 2014). In this respect, the artisans were assured of confidentiality in the study. Case in point, the study anonymised the data using pseudonyms instead of the actual names of participants. Thus, ensuring that their identity remained private. Additionally, as telephone interviews lacked physical or facial references, they promoted the anonymity of participants. This was particularly essential because artisans were often marginalised and harassed. Thus, the anonymity created a safe place for them to express their grievances without feeling intimidated by their colleagues, intermediaries, and authorities.

Alongside these, the researcher safely stored all the textual data in the form of hand-written field notes, diaries, transcripts, and codes in lockable drawers. Furthermore, the soft-copy versions of these documents and the audio-recorded interviews were stored in password-protected files within the University network, specifically OneDrive and Strathcloud. Hence, adhering to data-protection guidelines and privacy.

As alluded to, research ethics ensures that the research does not harm participants. Harm can include physical and material damage and emotional or psychological distress (Leavy, 2014). Therefore, as the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted people's feelings and well-being (Lupton, 2020), it was prudent to ensure that the data collection process did not add to the already existing distress caused by the global crisis (Townsend *et al.*, 2020). Thus, despite the telephone interviews lacking visual contact to assess the emotional and psychological state of the participants, the study focussed on the other verbal cues, such as pauses, tone and tempo of the interviews, to ensure that the research did not create stress or harm to the participants. Alongside these, as ethics starts and ends with the researcher (Neuman, 2014), the researcher also attended ethics training within the university, which was critical in upholding ethics guidelines.

### **3.9 Reflexivity**

Qualitative research can be subject to the researchers' subjectivity and bias. Thus, it is prudent for the researcher to recognise their bias and subjectivities that may impact how data is collected and interpreted (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003). Reflexivity makes it possible to do so. It recognises the researcher's assumptions, beliefs, values, inclinations, biases, power, and privileges based on social, cultural, and historical perspectives that may shape the inquiry.

Reflexivity, thus, enables the researcher to position these assumptions and suspend them in the study (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

The following section gives an account of the researcher's reflexivity. It starts with an overview of how prior experiences and assumptions informed the study. Likewise, it displays the prior assumptions of the participants and the shifts in perspectives. Finally, it gives a reflexive account of telephone interviews and the interactions with participants.

### **3.9.1 Prior experiences and assumptions and how they informed the study**

Before the start of the study, I had contextual knowledge of the field and the participants based on my prior experiences. First, I had professional experience, having worked closely with entrepreneurs in the informal sector. Second, I had the experience of being a tourist within and outside of Kenya. These experiences shaped how I viewed artisans, the informal sector, and the tourism industry.

As a tourist, my trips to Kenyan beaches, wildlife parks, and reserves were accompanied by buying souvenirs from artisans. These included beaded ornaments such as bracelets and keychains. They also included an assortment of stone and wooden carvings. Thus, I was familiar with handicrafts made by artisans. Therefore, whilst the study used telephone interviews that lacked visual connections, I had contextual information on the types and nature of handicrafts made by artisans. However, this information was on a surface level. Hence, the interviews were valuable in giving more insight and depth into handicrafts, such as information on raw materials, skills needed, and the overall process of making them.

Similarly, as a tourist and someone who had worked with entrepreneurs in the informal sector, I had contextual knowledge of the informal markets. Hence, whilst the telephone interviews did not allow for visual observation, I could picture what the participants said about their environment based on my personal experiences. For example, I had experienced crowded markets with a buzz of activities, where sellers would rush and scramble for customers. Thus, I could understand when the artisans spoke about their experiences with brokers, where they would rush and compete to sell to tourists. Additionally, my experiences exposed me to precarious informal markets. Therefore, I could picture the artisans' narrations of the lack of decent business and working environment, where they were exposed to dirt, harsh weather conditions, and insecurity.

### 3.9.2. Prior assumptions about participants and the shifts in perspectives

Due to my tourist and professional experiences, I had preconceived assumptions about the participants and their environment.

In particular, I initially viewed the informal sector as inferior to the formal sector. Entrepreneurs in the formal sector seemed more sophisticated because they had decent work environments, came across as accomplished, and had funds to employ skilled workers, market their brand and utilise advanced technology. On the other hand, *jua kali* entrepreneurs were often low-skilled and worked in precarious work environments, which created the assumption that they were not actual entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, this bias was revealed and eliminated during the interviews with artisans, who, despite being informal, portrayed several entrepreneurial traits. For example, as will be expounded in the findings, they displayed the ability to plan, strategise and exploit business opportunities. Therefore, affirming that my prior professional and individual experiences had created unwarranted biases about the participants.

Besides this, reflections on my experiences as a tourist made me realise how I initially assumed that artisans exploited tourists by charging exorbitantly for their handicrafts. I had memories of dressing down when going to the market, which I believed made me blend in more and gave me bargaining power. I also assumed that driving into some markets as a tourist would make artisans charge you more for handicrafts compared to when you went in walking. These presumptions exposed how I initially regarded artisans and informal traders as exploiters and not as the exploited. Alongside this, I also regarded the informal market as insecure. Though I had not experienced any insecurity, I always clutched onto my handbag and belongings to avoid being mugged. While these were genuine concerns, I now realise that these assumptions do not dignify informal entrepreneurs, such as artisans, who work tirelessly to make an honest living.

Bearing in mind these assumptions and the contextual familiarity and knowledge, I had to be cautious not to allow them to create biases in the study. Thus, I was cautious about positioning myself as a curious researcher. Primarily, I wanted the artisans to own their stories and have their experiences at the forefront of the study without my interference. Consequently, the participants dominated the telephone interviews while I facilitated the discussions. The thematic data analysis was also iterative and cautious to ensure it placed the participants at the forefront. Hence, there was inductive reasoning, where the themes and codes were drawn from and driven by data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Having the participants at the forefront of the study not only helped me to limit the biases but also shifted my perspectives on various things. For example, as mentioned, this study made me reconsider my attitude towards artisans and handicrafts. I now understand that a lot of time and effort goes into making handicrafts and that they are a primary source of livelihood. Likewise, I now understand how artisans are exploited. Hence, I consider it morally wrong to bargain beyond reasonable limits. Furthermore, the study made me appreciate artisans as actual and legitimate entrepreneurs who are not inferior to their formal counterparts. They work hard to provide for their dependents and create employment opportunities that steer their local communities and the general economy. They also play a vital role in the tourism industry by enriching the tourists' experiences and maintaining the culture and heritage of Kenya.

Moreover, considering the artisans' lifestyles and struggles made me appreciate livelihoods more. In this regard, I had initially planned to conduct the interviews during the artisans' working hours. However, given their livelihood challenges, I realised it would be immoral to interview them during their workday when they prioritised making a living. For this reason, telephones were ideal for conducting the interviews outside the artisans' working hours. Thus, in several instances, the interviews were conducted at night and at other times when artisans were not working.

### **3.9.3 Reflections on telephone interviews and interactions with participants**

Qualitative interviews require interactions and connections between the researcher and the participants (Gubrium *et al.*, 2012). Hence, it is worthwhile to share my reflections on the interactions with participants.

As pointed out, the telephone interviews lacked visual contact. For this reason, I felt obliged to be transparent about my identity and study. Thus, the participants knew I was a young female PhD student studying and living abroad, which created the risk of being treated as an outsider. Consequently, I was uncertain whether I would earn the trust, rapport, and depth needed to understand the participants' livelihoods. As discussed in section 3.5.1 of this chapter, I navigated different insider-outsider positions with the participants. As an insider, I was familiar with the cultural and social context. I was born and raised in Kenya, spoke Swahili, and had professional and tourist experience with the artisans. All these helped me to gain access, establish rapport, build trust and enrich depth with participants. On the other hand, as an outsider, I could take a stand back and maintain curiosity in understanding how the

participants sustained their livelihoods. Overall, navigating these positions enabled the study to gain in-depth interviews.

The conversations elicited various emotions as the participants shared their experiences throughout the interviews. For example, the participants' sounded distraught when they shared their experiences of poverty, starvation and devastation. It was tough to hear about such experiences. In these instances, I felt guilty for expecting a lot of engagement from participants experiencing such immense livelihood challenges. On the other hand, I had conversations with several participants who exuded hope and optimism. They uplifted my spirits and gave me hope through the pandemic, which had created bouts of anxiety. Given that qualitative research elicits emotions from the participants and the researcher (Rau, 2020), I expected this to happen. Hence, I navigated the emotions by writing, reflecting, and speaking about them with colleagues who were also going through the same process. Likewise, I had undergone thorough training in qualitative research, which had prepared me for the shifts in emotions when interacting with participants.

The telephone interviews reduced boundaries and perceived social distance between the participants and I. I used my telephone number to conduct the telephone interviews, meaning the participants had direct access to me. Hence, there were instances when they called me after the interviews. Though the calls were outside the scheduled interview times, I responded to them. I thought it was courteous to do so and felt obliged to pick up or return the calls. To my amazement, the calls were about personal lives. For example, one participant called me to ask how I was doing and how the study was progressing. I also had a participant who called to tell me that he had relocated back to town after being in the rural area where he moved to at the peak of the pandemic. The same participant called me on a different instance and told me about his alcoholic son, who had stopped helping him to make handicrafts.

On the one hand, these instances made me realise that the interviews were meaningful to the participants who cared to update me about their personal lives after the study. They also reassured me that I had built rapport with my participants over the telephone, as they were kind to check on my progress. Similarly, the calls revealed that despite the lack of physical access, there was proximity between the participants and me.

On the other hand, the participants' access to my telephone number and my moral obligation to pick up calls created ethical dilemmas. By engaging in conversations outside of the interviews, the participant gave me information that may or may not have been helpful for the study. Hence, the interactions raised questions like "*When does the interview end?*" "*When*

*does the interaction between the participants and I end?*” Unlike immersive methods such as face-to-face interviews and observations, where the researcher can physically remove themselves from the field, telephone interviews made me realise that the end of the interviews did not necessarily mean the end of the engagement between the researcher and the participants.

Additionally, these circumstances created a constant debate between the ethical requirements of seeking consent in each interview and my moral obligation to pick up or return calls. For this reason, and adhering to the ethics guidelines, I did not include these conversations as part of the collected data. Nonetheless, the conversations enabled meaningful reflections on the engagement between the participants and I during telephone interviews.

Alongside this, the cultivated proximity with participants also demanded that I manage expectations and maintain my position as the researcher. For example, I noticed how artisans treated me as a “beacon of hope” and someone who would help them resolve their challenges and grievances. I also felt like they viewed me as an expert who would give them access to relevant institutions in the tourism and informal sectors. Thus, I had to manage expectations by informing participants about the purpose of the interviews, the expected output and what their participation entailed. This meant that the interactions between the participants and I were strictly bound by the study. Therefore, by managing expectations and maintaining my position as a researcher, I subtly restricted the participants from soliciting help outside the study’s boundaries. This included help with their grievances and business and financial needs. In doing so, the study maintained ethical standards and did not give false promises.

While managing the expectations, I was also cautious of how I treated the participants and wanted to make the study beneficial for them, too. Principally, the diverse socio-economic differences between the participants and I had elicited different power dynamics (Kee *et al.*, 2001), which risked making the study extractive and limiting the benefits to the participants. Although the telephone interviews were beneficial in making some socio-economic differences, such as age and physical appearance, invisible, the power dynamics always existed and were affirmed by how the artisans perceived me as a “beacon of hope” and someone who would resolve their challenges. Furthermore, I was cautious that the participants had sacrificed their time and effort to participate in the study amidst a global pandemic. They also trusted me with their experiences despite the lack of physical or visual contact. As such, I wondered whether the study was reciprocal and directly beneficial to the participants.

To enhance how the participants benefited, I made deliberate decisions to include them in the study and gave them agency where possible. To recap, the study had a pilot study, where the participants assisted in shaping the interview guide. They also took part in the sampling process by actively recommending other participants. Besides this, the telephone interviews gave participants the agency to choose their preferred time and place for the interviews. Additionally, they dominated the interviews, where they freely and anonymously shared their experiences and grievances.

To reciprocate their participation, I was always flexible with their schedule, offered a listening ear and picked up or returned their calls whenever they called me outside of the arranged interview schedule. In hindsight, I wonder whether this was enough. I understand other ways that reciprocity is shown in qualitative research, such as offering financial incentives or compensations and involving participants in data analysis and findings write-up (Zigo, 2001; Trainor and Bouchard, 2013). However, the study was restricted by the confines of remote data collection, limited resources and the stipulated timeline of a PhD research. This said, I hope the participants substantially benefit from the study. In particular, I intend to disseminate the research through various outlets. I am confident that the research outputs will give artisans a voice in the development and promotion of the tourism industry and inform policies on entrepreneurship in the informal sector.

In summary, the above reflexivity shares my position as a researcher based on experiences that shaped the study, assumptions that may have created biases, and shifts in perspectives. The reflexivity also shows my engagement with participants and acknowledges that I was part of the study. Importantly, it stresses that I placed participants at the forefront and prioritised their experiences over my experiences and assumptions.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the research methodology and methods adopted in the study. It has outlined the qualitative research design informed by the philosophical assumptions of social constructionism. It has also discussed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the study, which resulted in the adaptation of a phased data collection approach and the use of semi-structured telephone interviews as an alternative to immersive data collection methods. This method was complemented by document analysis, field notes and the researcher's diaries.

The chapter has also discussed how the study recruited 32 artisans and 5 institutions through snowball and purposive sampling techniques. It has also expounded on how the researcher systematically conducted 51 semi-structured telephone interviews over two phases. Primarily, it specifies key methodological considerations enforced during the telephone interviews. It also challenges the existing biases of telephone interviews while demonstrating ways of overcoming its limitations. In doing so, the study offers methodological strategies for using telephone interviews to collect remote data, obtain rich qualitative data and engage with marginalised participants. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates how thematic analysis enabled the rich data to be broken down into codes, the units of analysis. Likewise, it shows how the study inductively and deductively made sense of data to establish patterns, connections and themes that address the research aim and objectives.

Notably, the chapter outlines how the study maintained methodological rigour, quality and trustworthiness by upholding credibility, transferability, reliability, triangulation, and ethics guidelines. Finally, this chapter includes an account of the researcher's reflexivity to display how her professional and individual experiences and assumptions shaped the inquiry. It also gives an account of the researcher's reflections on telephone interviews and the interaction with participants.

Overall, the chapter is integral towards revealing how the researcher conducted the study and sets a foundation for discussing the findings and discussions shown in the subsequent chapters.

## **4. ARTISAN LIVELIHOODS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology and methods. Having collected and analysed the data, this chapter presents and discusses the livelihoods of artisans in the informal sector in tourism. It elaborates on how they gain their skills and venture into business, where they rely on the livelihood strategy of handicrafts. The chapter also delves into the artisans' livelihood within the tourism industry and their interactions with tourists and other customer segments. In doing so, the chapter points to the artisans' experiences in the industry and enables a contextual understanding of how they make a living. Furthermore, the chapter sheds light on the artisans' livelihood resources and displays how culture enables access to these resources.

Overall, this chapter contributes towards achieving the research aim of understanding how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Likewise, the chapter is integral towards achieving the objective that seeks to analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to sustain their livelihoods.

### **4.1 Gaining Skills and Venturing into Business**

As alluded to, artisans manually make handicrafts such as beaded ornaments and wooden and stone carvings. The beaded ornaments include bangles, belts, necklaces, bracelets, keyrings and other knick-knacks, while the carvings include different animal sculptures, like the big five wild animals. To do so, they need skills that form part of their human capital (DFID, 1999). The findings suggest that these skills are integral to the artisans' livelihoods because they allow them to create and sustain business ventures. Furthermore, the skills appear to be ingrained and a distinguishing attribute for artisans.

The following section will delve deeper into the artisans' skills to understand how they acquired them and eventually ventured into business. In doing so, the chapter elaborates on the artisans' human capital and how it forms a basis for their livelihood strategy (Scoones, 1998).

#### 4.1.1 Generational Training

When asked how they learnt their skills, the artisans quickly pointed out that no learning institutions in Kenya offer formal training on handicrafts. Therefore, they learnt handicraft-making skills in informal ways through family members, friends, and other social networks. Notably, the skills are primarily generational, meaning that artisans learnt them from earlier generations, such as their parents and other older relatives; hence, they are not first-generation artisans. The findings further imply that artisans are not the only ones with handicraft-making skills within their family units.

*“My family is full of artists. My late father used to make handicrafts. My brother also makes handicrafts. When we were young, my dad took my brother and me to the curio shops. We watched him and loved it. As young people, the skills got ingrained. My dad used to buy us tools too, so we made the handicrafts, and the skills are now ingrained.” – Mamba*

*“I learnt the skills from my dad, who used to make handicrafts. There are no training institutions in Kenya where you can learn these things. You have to take the initiative and learn by yourself. I saw what my dad was doing and decided to learn from him.” - Duma*

The above implies that the family units, which are social structures (Wilson, 2010), influence how artisans develop their skills. It is also consistent with the literature on artisans, which elaborates that handicraft-making skills are passed across generations (Parts *et al.*, 2011; Ferreira, Sousa and Gonçalves, 2019; Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019).

Notably, the finding suggests that the artisans' skills are ingrained as they are learned through generational apprenticeship. As will be elaborated in subsequent sub-chapters, the ingrained skills predispose artisans to engage in the same livelihood strategy of making handicrafts for several years and generations. This kind of exposure from an early age also makes artisans specialise in making handicrafts. All of these may explain the artisans' minimal interest in other economic activities outside handicrafts. Furthermore, the generational and ingrained skills also set artisans apart from other kinds of entrepreneurs in the informal sector, who are likely to have low levels of human capital because of the lack of elaborate training and specialised skills (Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012). Besides this, these ingrained practices point

to the artisans' culture, which makes it possible for them to reproduce generational skills and durable practices of making handicrafts.

Nevertheless, it is prudent to acknowledge that the customs and practices of generational training might not be sustainable in the future. Some artisans expressed that despite learning the skills from the earlier generations, they will not pass the skills to the next generation, mainly because of the hardships they experience in the informal sector in tourism. Instead, they prefer their children to get educated with the hope of finding less strenuous formal employment opportunities.

*“It is generational, but now I am educating my children so that they get into good careers. I would not want my children to do this kind of work. It is so hard; it has many struggles”-*

*Kifaru*

The above displays the hardships that artisans face and echoes the challenges in sustaining their livelihoods. It also reveals the livelihood outcomes that artisans envision for themselves and the next generations.

Still, the findings underscore that some artisans gained their skills indirectly through observations and passive practice.

*“I observed how my parents were doing it and copied. It was not really about getting trained but more about observing and practising what I was doing. I can say that I learnt the skill from my parent. He used to carve and then started selling, which is what I do now”- Nyati*

Hence, despite the narrative that artisans would not pass these skills through apprenticeship, it is likely that the generations that follow might still passively learn the skills. Therefore, it is also likely that the artisans' skills may persist and continue to form a crucial part of their livelihoods.

#### **4.1.2 Skills as Inborn Talents**

Aside from learning skills through generational training, some artisans believe that their skills are in-born; hence, they occur naturally. The artisans narrate that they have natural talents that allowed them to learn the skills from an incredibly early age. Likewise, they attribute their success and persistence in the competitive informal sector to their inborn talents. They say their

inborn talents make them stand out from their peers and give them a competitive advantage when pricing handicrafts.

*“I had talent since I was a little boy, I knew I had the talent from a young age, so I started painting and doing handicrafts. That is how I started and developed to my current capacity. I learnt the skills from watching others doing it. No one taught me how to make handicrafts; I do not think it is taught. It is a talent. I can make any kind of sculpture. I get the mental picture and then make it from wood.” – Bata*

Therefore, the above suggests that some artisans may have developed their handicraft-making skills outside of social and cultural influences. It also displays their creativity and points to the role of creativity in their skills. In this regard, it shows how creativity may shape livelihood strategies (Elfving, Brännback and Carsrud, 2017).

#### **4.1.3 Learning Skills for Survival**

Evidently, some artisans learnt handicraft-making skills out of necessity to survive. They narrate that poverty, caused by the lack of employment opportunities, forced them to take individual initiatives to learn these skills and seek business opportunities in the labour-intensive informal sector and tourism industry. This suggests that the need for survival and pressures to generate an income play a part in peoples’ decisions to learn handicraft-making skills.

*“After finishing school, there were no school fees to further my studies, so I started learning how to make handicrafts. For many years, I learnt how to make them by myself, I did not have someone to train me”- Farasi*

The above aligns with the literature on the informal sector, which denotes that people learn skills and join the informal sector due to social and economic problems. For instance, King (2001) explains that people engage in the informal sector due to the lack of employment opportunities, low wages and the pressure to secure additional income through other economic activities. These factors may explain why artisans pick up handicraft-making skills to engage in the industry.

To this end, the study has elaborated on how artisans learnt their skills through generational training, inborn talents and out of necessity to survive. The findings suggest that

these skills enabled artisans to make handicrafts, which initiated their entrepreneurial venture in the informal sector in tourism. Having established how artisans gain handicraft-making skills, the following section will discuss how handicrafts form their primary livelihood strategy.

## **4.2 Handicrafts as a Primary Livelihood Strategy**

Livelihood strategies are a range of activities people do to achieve their livelihood goals (DFID, 1999). They are activities that generate a means of survival (Ellis, 2000). Hence, they are a critical part of livelihoods. For this reason, the study explored the artisans' livelihood strategies to understand how they make a living and sustain a livelihood.

As alluded to, artisans in tourism manually make handicrafts sold to tourists as souvenirs. The findings show that these handicrafts are their primary means of survival, thus their livelihood strategy. As mentioned earlier, handicrafts comprise beaded ornaments and wooden and stone carvings. The beaded ornaments include bangles, belts, necklaces, bracelets, keyrings and other knick-knacks, while the carvings include different animal sculptures, especially the big five wild animals. As shown in the sample in table 3.1, the ranges of handicrafts are made by men and women of different ages.

The ability to make and sell handicrafts for a living sets artisans apart from other informal entrepreneurs, such as traders, vendors and intermediaries who may sell handicrafts but do not make them. The handicrafts also distinguish them from other informal entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, such as tour guides and informal hotel and café owners who focus on services for the tourists but do not manually make tourists' products (Minishi-Majanja *et al.*, 2012a; Damayanti, Scott and Ruhanen, 2018; Truong, 2018).

### **4.2.1 Access to Raw Materials and Natural Resources**

Handicrafts are handmade from scratch, meaning that artisans need essential raw materials. These raw materials include wood, soft stone, beads, and accompanying products like leather and paint. Additionally, the production requires necessary tools like wires, knives, needles, and thread. Some of these raw materials, like wood and stones, are natural resources that form part of the artisans' natural capital (DFID, 1999). The most popular wood is ebony, rosewood, and jacaranda. The artisans explain that they prefer indigenous wood because of its durability and effortless ability to chisel. However, indigenous wood is hard to source due to

the Kenyan government's ban on tree-cutting to conserve the environment (KFS, 2021). It is, therefore, illegal to cut such kinds of trees; hence, the artisans say that they must rely on pieces of wood that naturally fall to the ground. In addition, artisans narrate that they must seek special permits from the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to get and transport wood. They add that many bureaucracies and clearances are needed to access these resources, limiting the number of handicrafts made with indigenous wood.

*“In this work, the lack of wooden raw materials is a big challenge... Finding wood is not easy. There is beaurocracy, and you need a lot of clearance to get and transport wood. When you try to buy wood, you will be asked for a lot of documents. They need you to get clearance.*

*They cannot sell the actual tree, just the fallen pieces. Indigenous trees are few in the country, and there is a big drive to conserve them, which is why getting them is so hard and expensive. Only the rich can easily access the indigenous wood. It is very expensive.”- Heroe*

This highlights that there is a barrier to accessing indigenous wood. It implies that marginalised artisans cannot access all the needed documentation to obtain wood. The above narration also suggests that the rich have easier access to wood, thus, displaying the social inequality in access to raw materials.

To cope with the challenges of scarce wood, artisans collaborate with their colleagues and intermediaries to import wood from the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Tanzania. Alternatively, they use readily available wood, which may compromise the quality and durability of handicrafts.

*“Raw materials are hard to find. I use wood, but the government has made it hard to get wood. I usually get some wood called ebony from Uganda and some in Kenya. Handicrafts might seem expensive, but the high price is caused by the process of getting the wooden raw materials and transporting them to the shop.” Mamba*

Moreover, the artisans face challenges in acquiring raw wooden materials locally. Owing to the limited supply, getting wood is expensive and can cost about KES. 10,000 [approximately \$100] per small log. Still, once the wood is acquired from Machakos, Makueni, Meru, Nyeri, Eldama Ravine, and Githunguri, the artisans must incur high transportation costs, increasing their operating costs and limiting their profit margins. Consequently, the prohibitive

costs of wood make wooden sculptures expensive, which the artisans explain are unaffordable for domestic tourists and local customers.

Other natural resources used to make handicrafts are soft stones, which the artisans describe are sourced from Kisii county. The stones are relatively easy to access because there are no present restrictions. Furthermore, the artisans say they collaborate to transport the stones from the source to their work areas, showing how social networks ease business operations. Aside from wood and stones, the other raw materials used for making handicrafts, such as beads, leather, and paint, are not natural resources. The artisans describe that these products are often imported from China and readily sold in local shops nationwide. Nonetheless, artisans outside Nairobi prefer to buy them from Nairobi because they are cheaper than in other towns.

In summary, natural resources form a significant part of artisans' livelihoods because the raw materials make handicrafts, which enable artisans to make a living. At the same time, the limited access to raw materials like wood compromises the ability of artisans to make handicrafts and, ultimately, their ability to make a living.

The findings show that once the artisans have gained their skills, accessed raw materials, and made handicrafts, they actively engage in the tourism industry, which forms the context of their livelihoods. The following section will, therefore, delve into the artisans' livelihoods in the tourism industry to understand how they make and sustain a living.

### **4.3 The Tourism Industry as a Source of Livelihood**

A livelihood is a means by which people make a living (Chambers and Conway, 1992). When asked how they make a living, the artisans explained that they primarily depend on tourism; therefore, they make a living by making and selling handicrafts to tourists. Furthermore, they narrated that the income from the tourism industry had allowed them to achieve different livelihood outcomes and cater to their livelihoods and dependents' needs. Case in point, they have generated income through the tourism industry to educate their dependents, feed their families and meet other living expenses.

*“I make crafted items like animal sculptures for tourists. I depend on them solely... This is the only kind of work that I do. It is what has sustained me so far. This is what I used to educate my children and cater for all the family needs.” – Simba*

The above suggests that the tourism industry can offer a means for people to generate an income and sustain their livelihoods. It also underscores the benefits of the tourism industry to individuals and households and justifies why artisans would operate businesses in the industry. This is not surprising as Kenya is a popular tourist destination in SSA. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the tourism industry makes a GDP contribution of 10.3% (WTTC, 2020), which the artisans' experiences validate. They confirm that the tourism industry contributes to the Kenyan economy, thus reiterating its relevance to livelihoods.

#### **4.3.1 Engagement between Artisans and Tourists: Preference of International Tourists (*Wazungu*) over Domestic Tourists**

Artisans mainly depend on domestic and international tourists for their livelihoods. For this reason, understanding their livelihoods ought to consider the engagement between them and tourists. The following section offers a detailed discussion and points to the complex relationship between artisans and tourists. In particular, the findings highlight how international tourists, commonly referred to as *wazungu* (*mzungu* in singular), a Swahili word for “white people,” are preferred to Kenyan domestic tourists.

Moreover, the findings suggest that artisans do not only work in tourism to make a living, but they also work to get a sense of pride, power, and motivation from their interactions with *wazungu*. Artisans prefer *wazungu* for two reasons discussed below.

##### **i. *Wazungu* generate more income**

*Wazungu* are more likely to generate more income due to two main reasons. First, they buy handicrafts at comparatively higher prices than domestic tourists, which the artisans highly value.

*“Domestic tourists can never pay the same as international tourists. Wazungu usually pay more. The mzungu will buy something and give me good money and profit. All my work is mainly for the mzungu. Usually, a vehicle of five or fewer international tourists is comparable to ten or more vehicles of domestic tourists. You cannot compare domestic and international tourists. Wazungu have a different price compared to locals. Locals will always complain about the price.”- Sofia*

*“I would not say that the domestic tourists are bad, but they are also not good. They buy from us but in small quantities. Their prices are low, and they are not many. You know the economy is bad, so maybe they also do not have money to buy anything from us.”- Aisha*

As the artisans are entrepreneurs, income is essential; thus, they are likely to take up opportunities that give them more money. This is consistent with Çakmak, Lie and McCabe (2018) finding that informal entrepreneurs value economic capital and consider it an essential resource. The findings also display how artisans assume that domestic tourists experience similar problems as them; hence, they may not see the need to buy handicrafts.

Second, the artisans narrate how *wazungu* enjoy cultural and artistic products more than domestic tourists; thus, they offer a ready market, allowing artisans to generate more money.

*“When I make these handicrafts, I make them with wazungu in mind. Wazungu, love these kinds of beads so much. They think that it is associated with the Kenyan heritage and culture, so they love my handicrafts, unlike many local Kenyans.”- Rehema*

Artisans perceive domestic tourists as less interested in buying handicrafts and souvenirs, probably because they constantly see handicrafts and may not be keen on cultural significance. Hence, artisans do not primarily target or prefer them.

Nevertheless, despite the artisans’ preference toward *wazungu*, they say domestic tourists form a crucial part of their livelihoods. Domestic tourists are usually the main customers during low tourism seasons. Notably, it appears they became more significant during the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw reduced international tourists due to global travel restrictions.

*“Local tourists are okay too. They buy the products at lower prices compared to the wazungu, but I am not complaining about that. In fact, they are the ones that have kept me going during this COVID period. They are also good because they refer their friends, meaning that I have to keep a good relationship with them because you never know, they might refer a customer.”- Rehema*

The above implies that despite the artisans making lesser profit margins from selling to domestic tourists, they still generate an income to sustain their livelihoods within the tourism industry.

## ii. Lingerin g colonial legacy

The artisans also narrate that they prefer *wazungu* because they feel good, proud, powerful, and in a better social position when interacting with them. They add that interacting with *wazungu* makes them popular and famous amongst their peers in the informal sector. In addition, they enjoy social interaction with tourists from other countries, with some explaining that such interactions make them learn about other countries.

*“I love interacting with tourists. I like speaking with people from different countries. I feel like I learn more. I am better than other jua kali people, like those who sell clothes in the market. Those are not known. Engaging with wazungu makes you known and famous” –*

*Duma*

*“I love that I get to meet wazungu in my work, like people from America. That makes me happy. I am proud and well-known; I have contacts in America and Australia. I am well known.”- Chui*

Notably, the findings suggest that there is a power imbalance between the artisans and the international tourists. As mentioned above, artisans believe that the *wazungu* are superior, which may be associated with their cultural beliefs about Western people. In this regard, it underscores the colonial history, which held that Western people were superior to Africans. This can be linked to Bhabha (2012) perspective on postcolonialism, which brings to light the stereotypical power that Western colonies have based on their race or skin colour. Wijesinghe (2020) also observes that due to colonial history, the identity of people is likely to be embedded in neo-colonial ideologies, where there is cultural hierarchy and superiority. This may explain why the Kenyan artisans associate the *wazungu* with power, honour, and admiration, which excites their engagement and persistence in the tourism industry. It also elaborates on how Kenya’s colonial legacy and history drive the power imbalance between the locals and Western people in the tourism industry.

More broadly, the interactions between the artisans and *wazungu* highlight how international tourists are not just customers but are a source of pride and self-esteem for artisans, who feel more socially empowered in the tourism industry. The industry allows artisans to engage with *wazungu*, which may not be the case in other industries across the informal sector. This is essential to acknowledge because it highlights the complexity of

operating in the tourism industry. As the findings suggest, the artisans' livelihood strategies and engagement in tourism are not just about making a living but also about their emotions and identity while interacting with *wazungu*.

While the interactions with *wazungu* appear as a source of pride and self-esteem for artisans, it is essential to acknowledge that the embedded power differences and colonial history also have negative implications. For example, the findings also showed that colonial history had deterred PPT approaches by favouring foreign-owned hotels. It also influenced the country's urban planning, leading to evictions and harassment of artisans. The negative implications are discussed in more detail in section 5.4 of chapter 5 and section 8.1.1 of chapter 8.

#### ❖ **Attracting Wazungu**

To attract *wazungu*, artisans narrate that they tailor-make handicrafts to suit them. For instance, they customise the art and sizes of the sculptures to ensure that they can fit regular-sized suitcases and weigh light for the tourists to carry back to their countries.

*“Getting tourist customers for the huge live size animal carving is a challenge because they complain about shipping. The tourists travel back and are sometimes limited by luggage size or shipping. So, I have to consider the needs of wazungu when making the handicrafts”- Bata*

The above shows that artisans prioritise the needs of tourists, as they make handicrafts with the tourists in mind. This may point to their entrepreneurial traits because entrepreneurs know and prioritise evolving customer preferences (Webb *et al.*, 2011). It also shows how the artisans are serious about their profession despite working in the informal sector.

Furthermore, some artisans explain that they have strategically located their businesses in places they perceive as attractive to the *wazungu*. They add that *wazungu* do not like noisy and crowded places; thus, some artisans say they avoid crowded informal markets and prefer selling in places like malls.

*“You know wazungu do not like crowded places; they want a calm and relaxed place. That is why many tourists' businesses are away from town.”- Sofia*

It is apparent that artisans are concerned that the informal markets may not be suitable places for *wazungu* to visit. They perceive their markets as unpleasant, crowded, dirty and insecure;

thus, they are keen to get organised markets and business premises. Likewise, they complain that the informal markets do not readily give them access to *wazungu* and other domestic tourists. This is discussed further in section 5.1, which displays the unfavourable urban planning policies for the informal sector.

#### **4.3.2 The Kenyan Tourism Context and Experiences in the Tourism Industry**

As alluded to, all the sampled artisans work within the tourism industry and primarily depend on tourism for their livelihoods. For this reason, it is crucial to explore and discuss the context of the tourism industry and the artisans' experiences within it. These include an overview of the Kenyan tourism industry, the trends, seasonality, challenges, and emerging issues that directly or indirectly affect the livelihoods of artisans.

The findings show that many artisans are well-informed about the nature of the tourism industry, including the industry dynamics and seasonality. Several reasons inform their industry knowledge: First, the artisans have been immersed in tourism for many years. Case in point, the sampled artisans have been active in the industry for approximately 20 years. Hence, they have amassed several years of knowledge and experience in the tourism industry and know trends, seasonality, customer preferences and informal business operations. Second, the artisans express that they work in clusters and interact closely with their fellow artisans, customers, and other stakeholders like the intermediaries.

*“I like the relationship that I have with my fellow artisans because we work in clusters and groups.”- Ndovu*

These social interactions enable conversations, news communication and grapevine, which may enable artisans to keep abreast of the tourism industry.

The following section, thus, elaborates on the artisans' experiences in the tourism industry based on their individual experiences and shared knowledge.

##### **i. The Turbulent Kenyan Tourism Industry**

Despite the success and positive impact of the Kenyan tourism industry, the artisans complain that the industry does not entirely favour them. This is because it has performed poorly due to economic and socio-political challenges that have grappled the country.

Alongside this, the artisans attest that the institutions within the industry have neglected them, resulting in unfavourable working and living conditions. Therefore, the findings suggest that aside from being beneficial to livelihoods, the Kenyan tourism industry may be turbulent, unstable, and unfavourable for the artisans. The following section discusses this in detail to elaborate on the challenges the tourism industry experiences, including crises, seasonality and inadequate development and promotion.

#### **a. Crises**

##### **❖ Political Tensions**

The findings reveal that the challenges within the Kenyan tourism industry have affected artisans. These include the challenges of political instability caused by general elections that happen every five years. The artisans give an example of the 2007/08 post-election violence, which resulted in the closure of businesses, loss of lives, relocation of people and poor economy. The general elections in Kenya elicit political tensions, which the artisans believe have resulted in many travel advisories against the country, thus affecting international tourism.

Due to Kenya's history of political violence, the election periods are marked by a reduction in tourists, as witnessed in the 2013 and 2017 elections (CEIC, 2020; Buigut and Masinde, 2021). The artisans say that during the election period, it can take up to two years, i.e., a year before and after the elections, for the tourism industry to recover and see an impactful increase in the number of tourists.

*“In the past years, I have felt the effects of when the industry has been affected. For example, in 2007, I was affected by the post-election violence. Usually, during election time, there are fewer tourists, which affects business. Elections also take a long time. It usually takes about a year or so for business to get back to normal.” – Sofia*

*“Our work is disrupted for about two years during the campaign and election period. The year before and after elections, it is tough to find tourists and have money flowing.”-Bata*

This finding displays how political tensions trickle down to the artisans and negatively affect their livelihoods due to the reduced working days, decreased number of tourists and the loss of income. Political tension, therefore, creates a challenging environment for artisans.

## ❖ Terrorism

The findings further show that artisans in tourism are affected by terrorist attacks. They give examples of terrorist attacks caused by Al-Shabaab in Nairobi, such as the West gate mall attack in 2013 and the Dusit D2 hotel attack in 2019. Aside from these, Kenya has experienced several terrorist attacks in the past, such as the 1998 American embassy bombing in Nairobi, the 2002 bombing of a hotel near Mombasa, and the Garissa university attack in 2015, to mention a few (De Sausmarez, 2013; Buigut and Amendah, 2016).

The artisans narrate that they felt a reduction in international tourists after terrorism, which may have been due to travel advisories issued against Kenya. During such crises, artisans believe international tourists visit other destinations, such as Tanzania. Thus, creating a longer-term negative effect on the tourism industry in Kenya.

*“There were times in the past when there were some terrorist attacks, and I felt these effects. Whenever there is any unrest in the country, the tourists do not come. I have heard from the news and my friends that when these unrests happen in Kenya, tourists are given a warning in their countries and asked not to travel here. If they happen to come, the tourists shop very quickly and go; they do not elongate their stays. In fact, during political seasons, tourists leave the country.”-Chui*

*“The country has also had political tensions and terrorism. We in the tourism industry are the first to feel the negative effects. Tourism is usually the most impacted industry whenever there are political tensions, violence and Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda terrorism. For instance, when something happens in America or Europe, people do not travel, so we feel the impact as people working in tourism”- Bata*

This is similar to the views of Fletcher and Morakabati (2008), who discuss that terrorist attacks have negatively changed the perception of Kenya as a tourist destination. Indeed, the terrorist attacks have resulted in travel advisories from key tourism markets such as the USA, UK, Germany and Australia (Akama, 1999; Buigut and Amendah, 2016). Hence, showing their negative impact on the country’s tourism industry.

The findings further imply that the artisans are well-informed about the tourism industry and are keen to recognise when their businesses have been negatively affected. It also

pinpoints how crises such as terrorism affect the artisans despite operating at the bottom of the pyramid. These effects are intense for artisans because they prefer international tourists to domestic tourists, whose flow into the country is affected by turbulent circumstances. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with discussions that recognise tourism ventures as risky (Baker and Coulter, 2007; Reddy, Boyd and Nica, 2020) because of the crises the industry experience.

#### ❖ COVID-19 Pandemic

The findings reveal that the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected artisans' livelihoods because of the enormous reduction in tourists. Tourism declined due to global and local travel restrictions, which the artisans say resulted in the industry's near collapse. They add that establishments in the tourism industry, including hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality areas, temporarily closed, with some entirely shutting down. The artisans further reiterate that the pandemic is worse than any other crisis the country has experienced. Hence, it has surpassed other shocks, such as terrorism and political violence.

*“The tourism industry in Kenya is affected by terrorism and political instability...However, COVID 19 has been the worst attack since terrorism in Kenya”- Nyati*

Indeed, the effects of the pandemic were witnessed across the tourism industry. The Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism reported a 72% drop in international visitor arrivals in 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 (Tourism Research Institute, 2020a). This decline also saw a drastic reduction in the revenue from international tourists, from KES 164 billion in 2019 to a record-low of KES 37 billion in 2020 (Statista, 2020). Consequently, albeit slight improvements in 2022, COVID-19 caused the worst decline in the Kenyan tourism industry.

The artisans narrated that the travel restrictions and poor economic conditions caused by the pandemic trickled down to them.

*“Work in tourism is hard... Tourists cancelled their trips, and the lockdowns happened. COVID cases have gone high. Even if tourists come, they will have to quarantine in their home countries, discouraging them from travelling to Kenya. This means that no tourists are coming now. This work is so tough. I am not the only one complaining; even the tour guides are complaining and saying that business is tough.” – Sofia*

This finding suggests that tourists are essential to artisans' livelihoods in the tourism industry; thus, a decline in tourists directly affects how artisans make a living.

As their livelihoods heavily depend on tourism, artisans have faced adverse livelihood challenges during the pandemic. These include starvation and lack of money for rent and medical supplies. Regardless of this, the artisans explain that they still incur operational costs such as storage fees and transportation costs. These have resulted in very slim margins or losses.

*"This business has many challenges. Especially now, during the pandemic, business is very low. I come to the market, stay all day but still go home without money. This is despite the other expenses like transport costs for the inventory and storage space for handicrafts.*

*Generally, there are no tourists now, so it is a challenging period" -Zawadi*

The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which remains a reality. It has resulted in long-term effects on the tourism industry, such as travel and entry restrictions for domestic and international tourists, changes in tourism events, and health and safety concerns, which threaten tourism sustainability (Chang, McAleer and Ramos, 2020). These effects impact the environmental, social and economic conditions and continue to be felt in many tourism destinations (Moreno-Luna *et al.*, 2021). In this regard, artisans in tourism are now more vulnerable than ever as their sustainable livelihoods are threatened.

## **b. Seasonality**

Alongside the crises discussed above, the findings show that the Kenyan tourism industry is seasonal, meaning that the flow of tourists and income from tourism fluctuates throughout the year.

*"Tourism business is very seasonal. There are seasons when the tourists do not show up, which makes business tough. This is one of the main issues with tourism." Chui*

*"Tourism industry is seasonal; it has high and low seasons"- Ndovu*

The artisans know the seasonal changes and their implications on their businesses and livelihoods. They say the high seasons are in April because of the Easter holidays, followed by July to December, with December being the peak. On the other hand, the low seasons happen from January to March, followed by May, June, and sometimes October. Nonetheless, the

artisans feel that the COVID-19 pandemic elongated the low season in tourism. Thus, in 2020 and 2021, the months, which would otherwise be characterised by high seasons, did not meet the artisans' expectations.

*“The business is very seasonal. At the moment [December 2020], the season is low because of COVID. It would otherwise have been a high season because of Christmas. I would have been having a boom in sales, but that is not the case this year.” – Heroe*

The seasonal phenomenon is not new to tourism. As mentioned earlier, the tourism industry is known to experience seasonal changes all around the globe. It experiences natural seasonality caused by changes in the climate conditions and institutional seasonality caused by human decisions, such as those influenced by religious, cultural, ethnic, and social factors (Butler, 1994). In the case of Kenya, the findings show that the high tourism seasonality is skewed towards recognised holidays like Easter and Christmas. The high season has a positive impact on the artisans' livelihoods. They get comparatively higher income due to increased operations. Meaning they can save money, manage their living expenses, and increase their livelihood resources. Contrastingly, the low season negatively impacts the artisans' livelihoods. Due to the reduced number of tourists, artisans receive less income and may be forced to close their businesses temporarily.

*“Sometimes, during the low seasons, I relocate to my rural home in Machakos. Though I do not shut the business completely, just in case I get a few tourists... Though I know some areas like Mombasa, artisans like me completely close their businesses in the low season and go home because there are no tourists.” - Duma*

The above is aligned with Baum and Lundtorp (2001) discussion that low seasonality may lead to the temporary closure of businesses and reduced operation and revenues. In particular, it displays how this phenomenon in the tourism industry, albeit expected, may threaten livelihoods.

### **c. Inconsistent Tourism Performance and Competition**

The artisans say the tourism industry has lacked consistent performance over the years. In particular, they point out a declining trend in the tourism industry.

*“Tourism started to decline a long time ago. Even before the pandemic, tourists were not coming in large numbers compared to the past. I have done this for about 15 years and feel the difference. It is not the way it used to be long ago.” – Aisha*

*“For the last 4 or 5 years, the tourism industry has not been doing well. I do not know exactly why this has been happening, but obviously, this year has been the worst cause of COVID-19. There are no tourists.” – Kifaru*

Despite the artisans’ experiences of declining tourism, an analysis of Kenya’s tourism performance over the last couple of years shows that the tourism industry has consistently grown except during crises such as the political instabilities caused by general elections, terrorist attacks and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, key industry reports express that tourism has performed well outside these shocks (Statista, 2020). This suggests that these reports may not reflect the artisans’ actual experiences in the tourism industry. It also implies that industry reports should consider the voices of people who work in tourism.

When asked about the causes of the inconsistent and declining performance, the artisans swiftly blame the government. In particular, they express that the government is not proactive in attracting international tourists and promoting domestic tourism.

*“I blame the government. They spoilt our work. Because of them, the tourists do not come anymore... they need to open up the country for more tourists”- Aisha*

Alongside this, they attribute the inconsistent performance to the competitive environment across SSA.

*“Tourism was very good in Kenya. The only challenge is that the industry is highly affected by things like terrorism and political violence...My colleagues and I usually talk about how tourism is highly affected during these tough periods in Kenya, so tourists go to other countries like Tanzania. Kenya loses tourists to other countries”- Heroe*

Mayaka and Prasad (2012) and Irandu and Shah (2016) discuss that Kenya’s tourism is challenged by competition from other countries that offer similar products like wildlife and beach tourism. The competition is further heightened by underdeveloped infrastructure, which Akama (1999) says makes the country vulnerable to losing tourists to other countries that offer

similar products. Owing to the competition, Kenya is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in SSA, behind countries like South Africa and Namibia, all of which offer competing tourism products (WEFORUM, 2019). This is not to say that the Kenyan tourism industry is performing poorly but to point out that Kenya has opportunities to compete with other destinations to increase the flow of tourists.

It is essential to acknowledge that livelihoods are tied to the tourism industry; hence, an inconsistent performance in the tourism industry poses a threat to people who live at the margins of society (Tao and Wall, 2009), including the artisans.

#### **4.4 Use of Handicrafts to Venture Out of Tourism**

As pointed out, artisans primarily depend on international and domestic tourists for their livelihoods. Nevertheless, they say that the tourism industry is not entirely a reliable source of livelihood because it experiences many shocks and stresses that create inconsistent income. These include the challenges of low seasonality, competition, and crises such as political instabilities, terrorism, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the findings show that artisans are forced to seek alternative ways to sustain their livelihoods outside the turbulent tourism industry.

Artisans do this by selling handicrafts to other customers. However, they express that these customers are few and only form a small proportion of their overall customers. These customers include middlemen, who, in many cases, are wholesalers that buy handicrafts in large quantities to sell to curio stores, neighbouring countries like Uganda and Tanzania and other international markets. They generate a high sales volume when they buy in larger quantities and play a crucial role in sustaining artisans' livelihoods, especially during the low tourism seasons and crises. The other customers include households that buy sculptures as home decorations and locals that buy beaded ornaments like necklaces, bracelets, and belts as fashion accessories or gift items. These customers are found in the informal markets, and in some cases, they are also found on online platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram.

*“When I am not making animal sculptures for tourists, I make some sculptures for the church, such as crosses. Having the church orders is better than staying idle at the market.”-*

*Simba*

*“Initially, the business was good and busy, but now it is not busy as I only depend on the local tourists. Right now, I am making local orders, which include household items and ornaments”-Duma*

The finding confirms Jena and Mahapatra (2009) discussion that handicrafts have multiple uses, including decorative and utilitarian purposes and, therefore, the potential to provide varied sources of income from a diverse range of customers. Thus, artisans have the flexibility to diversify outside the turbulent tourism industry. Besides this, the findings reiterate that handicrafts are central to how artisans make a living. Therefore, they are significant in supporting artisans to sustain their livelihoods within and outside the tourism industry.

Nonetheless, one of the institutions that work closely with artisans in tourism describes that it is still a challenge for the artisans to diversify their customers outside of tourism.

*“Artisans target tourists, and they do not think that anyone else can buy handicrafts. They fail to use the same skill to make other handicrafts that the locals would buy. They still want to stick to animal sculptures like giraffes and some beaded ornaments. Some are not good quality that the local customers, including you and I, would buy...There is also another challenge of quality control. Maybe because of a lack of capital and the need to make things cheap, they use bad-quality raw materials. Some items are also not done very well, so a local customer would not want to have them. Someone like me and you might not want to buy them either.” – Institution 3*

The above suggests that the artisans’ ingrained norms and practices of selling to tourists limit their ability to diversify their customers outside of tourism effectively. It also suggests that artisans have not fully understood the needs of other customers as they are used to targeting tourists. Furthermore, it highlights how the artisans’ scarce resources are a limiting factor to diversifying their customers. This is because the quality of their handicrafts may not be attractive to local consumers.

#### **4.4.1 Engagement between Artisans and other Customer Segments**

The findings further show that diversified customers mean a lot to artisans. They say they do their best to build customer loyalty and referrals by maintaining telephone contacts and good rapport. Still, the artisans narrate immense pressures to get such customers. They share

their experiences of winning customers through physical altercations with fellow artisans, which echoes the competitive nature of the informal sector and paints a picture of ‘survival for the fittest.’ The findings further imply that the artisans pride themselves in being well-known and popular amongst the customers. They enjoy customer interactions and express enthusiasm about how the customers drive them. This highlights the importance of these customers in artisan ventures and reiterates how they keep the artisans motivated to make handicrafts. In fact, many artisans admit that interactions with customers enable them to persist during challenging periods in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

Despite the positive outcomes, diversified customers come with some challenges. For instance, unlike tourists who pay for handicrafts upfront, the artisans narrate that the other customers are more likely to buy handicrafts on credit and are prone to defaulting on payments, thus generating losses. Besides this, it is also evident that artisans lack contracts to protect themselves due to informality in their businesses. Hence, they lack formal agreements or documentation when customers buy handicrafts on credit. All the arrangements are by word-of-mouth, which does not favour the artisans.

*“Sometimes I can get customer orders, but they do not give me any deposit for the order. In cases like this, getting money to fund the orders is hard. It is always a struggle fulfilling such orders, but I also do not want to disappoint my customers.” – Aisha*

This finding displays some of the challenges artisans experience in their day-to-day activities and shows how customers can heighten vulnerability. However, on the flip side, it shows that the lack of such customers is also frustrating and can create a challenging environment for the artisans.

#### **4.5 Inflexibility to Engage with Other Livelihood Strategies: A Paradox**

Aside from primarily making and selling handicrafts, some artisans say they engage in non-economic activities, such as small-scale subsistence farming, to supplement food for their households. Nevertheless, as expounded in appendix 1, this option is only available for very few artisans who have land resources that they can cultivate.

*“Aside from being an artisan, I do very small-scale farming at home, which helps my wife and provides food for the family. Farming does not help much, though. It is just for household use.” - Ndovu*

Subsistence farming is a common livelihood choice in many SSA countries (Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019). However, aside from the few artisans with land resources that allow them to do non-economic subsistence farming, the findings suggest that artisans are not flexible to engage in other economic and non-economic activities to supplement their income and resources. During the interviews, the artisans elaborated that handicrafts were their primary livelihood strategy. Moreover, they narrated that they had not pursued other livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts, with some reiterating that they had always worked in the tourism industry despite the challenges.

*“I have never tried any other kind of work. Whether there are tourists or not, this is all I have done in my life...I have never left the tourism industry. I have done the same job of making and selling handicrafts since I started”-Kifaru*

This is intriguing and paradoxical because the informal sector has opportunities for easy entry into other kinds of work due to comparatively low skills and capital requirements (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004;Koens, 2012). Therefore, artisans possibly have opportunities to engage in other livelihood strategies within the informal sector. Additionally, this is unlike sustainable livelihoods literature that denotes that people use different and diverse strategies to generate an income (Chambers and Conway, 1992;Farrington *et al.*, 1999). Livelihood literature in tourism specifically points out that people rely on different sources of income (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008) and that those on the margins of society have many sources of income to sustain their livelihoods outside of tourism (Tao and Wall, 2009).

Furthermore, this contradicts Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012) discussion that tourism entrepreneurs have diverse sources of livelihood aside from tourism, and they engage in other economic activities during periods of decline like the low seasons in tourism. Therefore, the reliance on one livelihood strategy and the inflexibility to other economic activities distinguishes artisans from other people who operate on the margins of society. It also distinguishes them from other tourism entrepreneurs who experience similar livelihood challenges.

#### **4.5.1 Reasons for the Inflexibility to Engage with Other Livelihood Strategies**

The artisans say they do not engage in other economic activities for several reasons. Some are victims of circumstances; they lack employment opportunities or have limited

financial resources. Thus, they cannot raise sufficient capital to engage in other economic activities.

*“Now there are no tourists. I just depend on the peanuts I am getting. Even though I was to go into a different kind of work, capital is a big problem. If I were not doing this, I would probably start selling other things that anyone can buy, but I have no capital “- Farasi*

This highlights how structural factors such as the lack of employment opportunities and capital can limit the artisans’ livelihood strategies and their ability to diversify their income outside the turbulent tourism industry and the precarious informal sector.

On the other hand, the findings show that artisans have a level of agency, which is their ability to understand and control their actions (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2001). This is highlighted in how they chose not to engage in other economic activities for several reasons. For instance, the artisans explain that they enjoy interacting with tourists, specifically *wazungu*, which they cannot achieve while working in other industries within the informal sector. This motivates them to remain in the tourism industry and not seek alternative income-generating activities to sustain their livelihoods. Besides this, the findings suggest that artisans have engaged in tourism for an average of nearly 20 years, which is a long time. The extended period has created familiarity, which may make the artisans reluctant to switch their sources of livelihood.

*“For the tourism industry, I will never leave it. It is ingrained, and it is in the blood.”-  
Mamba*

*“I fully depend on this. I am used to this and very familiar. When I try other kinds of work, they do not do well. In fact, I do not think I will do anything else aside from this”- Zawadi*

Through agency, people have the autonomy to maintain familiar practices despite the changes around them (Papacharissi and Easton, 2013); thus, the artisans can maintain the regular practice of making handicrafts despite the inconsistent performance of the tourism industry.

Additionally, the artisans are skilled, which they explain has made them inflexible to engage in other kinds of work in the informal sector. Nonetheless, as indicated in section 4.4 above, due to livelihood pressures and the turbulent nature of the tourism industry, the findings show that the ingrained skills have allowed some artisans to tap into other customer segments while primarily relying on handicrafts. This highlights how the artisans can diversify out of

tourism and engage with other industries in the informal sector to sustain their livelihoods. However, while the ingrained skills allow artisans to diversify their customers and sources of income, it is apparent that it still makes them inflexible towards engaging in other livelihood strategies within the informal sector.

Furthermore, it appears that the artisan's inflexibility towards other economic activities stems from their desire for creative fulfilment. Making handicrafts allows artisans to engage with their creative side, which they cannot easily achieve elsewhere. The findings also suggest that artisans prioritise their creative fulfilment over financial gain. Thus, they do not seem pressured to earn more by diversifying their livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts. This creativity may be attributed to cultural practices that expose artisans to handicraft-making skills from an early age. It might also be due to their social context, as artisans are surrounded by other creative artisans and family members who may positively influence their creativity. This is not surprising because artisans are described as creative entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Nonetheless, it is worth acknowledging.

Therefore, the above findings imply that artisans may be unique from other entrepreneurs in the informal sector. They do not identify and take up business opportunities like other traditional entrepreneurs (Beattie, 2016). Instead, they are limited by several factors that make them inflexible to other economic activities and livelihood strategies. These factors, including skills, lingering colonial history, desire for creative fulfilment, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, are extensively discussed in chapter 7, elaborating on varied factors that motivate artisans to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism.

#### **4.6 Culture and the Access to Livelihood Resources**

To this point, the study has discussed how artisans make a living through handicrafts. To recap, the artisans narrate how tourism has been lucrative for their businesses. Through sales from the industry, they meet their day-to-day living expenses, support the livelihoods of their dependents and sustain their businesses. Moreover, the income from the tourism industry is supplemented by income from other customer segments like intermediaries and local customers that buy handicrafts for various uses.

Nonetheless, the findings show that the artisan's livelihoods involve more than how they make a living. This is because, while the artisans can generate an income from selling handicrafts, the income is minimal and inconsistent due to shocks and stresses in the informal

sector and the tourism industry. Their income is also limited because they persist in the same livelihood strategy and are inflexible towards diversifying outside handicrafts. This implies that how they sustain their livelihoods is complex and involves more than how they make a living from handicrafts. Consequently, it implies that due to the minimal and inconsistent income, artisans use other kinds of resources to sustain their livelihoods.

Besides this, the findings reveal that the artisans' livelihoods are complex because they are not independent but rather influenced by the cultural practices within their social structures. It is apparent that artisans live and work in a social context and enjoy social networks and relationships between them and their friends, families, colleagues, customers, affiliations, and intermediaries, to mention a few. These social units are a part of social structures (Wilson, 2010), which display the artisans' connectedness and social capital. The findings further suggest that it is through such social structures that the artisans' cultural practices emerge.

As discussed in section 2.6, culture encompasses people's long-standing and distinctive ways of life within a society (UNESCO, 2001). It denotes the shared meaning and how people with specific backgrounds and affiliations behave individually and within society (Huggins and Thompson, 2015). Likewise, culture is a social structure (Hays, 1994) and comprises the ways of life that society interprets and adapts (Gunnestad, 2006). Generally, culture is the sum total of people's systems of beliefs, behaviours, norms, values, attitudes, skills, customs and tangible and intangible knowledge that are preserved and passed from one generation to the other (Daskon, 2010; Andreatta and Ferraro, 2012; Irandu and Shah, 2016).

In this case, the findings highlight how culture, depicted by the artisans' behaviours, customs, norms, and practices within their social contexts, influence how they sustain their livelihoods. In particular, how they access livelihood resources, which the SLA prescribes as livelihood assets like human capital, social capital, financial capital, physical capital, and natural capital (DFID, 1999). The following section delves further into this and discusses how the artisans' cultural practices within their social structures enable them to access other livelihood resources to sustain their livelihoods.

#### **4.6.1 Cultural Practices that Enable Access to Human Capital**

As alluded to, human capital incorporates skills, knowledge, ability, labour, health, and physical capability used to pursue livelihood strategies (Scoones, 1998). The findings reveal

that cultural practices are ingrained in how artisans access human capital, mainly through their family units, colleagues and friends, as discussed below.

#### **i. Cultural practices in family units that enable access to human capital**

The findings suggest that artisans have ingrained norms and practices that enable them to access human capital. First, as previously pointed out in section 4.1, artisans learnt their skills from immediate family members and relatives such as parents, siblings, and grandparents. Likewise, the family units are the primary place artisans develop an interest in learning handicraft-making skills. The skills are also passed across generations, thus, revealing how this norm and practice is integral to the artisans' primary livelihood strategy.

Second, as part of family units, artisans get access to labour from family members. Many artisans claim their children and relatives are the most important people in their businesses because they provide labour. These family members are expected to work at the businesses and provide help and support in various areas, such as operating the informal shops, transporting inventory, and helping in production. They are instrumental in helping artisans make a living, hence contributing to their sustained livelihoods.

*“The family has stepped in to help and support me. I work with my wife. When my daughter closes school, she also does this because she is interested in making handicrafts. She is studying fashion and design in school, so she is artistic. I am actually making some handicrafts with her as we speak now. I also have a son, but he is in school now. He has tried to get the business online for us. He knows all the technical stuff that I do not know.”*

*Kongoni*

Notably, the family members are not recognised as formal employees because they do not get paid for their work, have no legal employee contracts, and do not get any employee benefits. Instead, they provide free labour through informal arrangements with the artisans.

*“I do not have employees; I do everything by myself. In case the work is too much, I have people within my family who help, though I do not pay them anything. We just generally help each other in life “- Hawa*

When asked why the family members helped, the artisans said they offered support because they had witnessed how the business had supported the entire family.

*“My children developed an interest in making handicrafts because they know the benefits. They support me in the business because they understand the benefits too. They see how the business has brought us this far in life. The business educated them from grade one till now, when they are in college. They see it as a valuable kind of work with benefits.” Kongoni*

The above implies that all the members of family units have a collective responsibility to sustain their livelihoods, which is driven by specific desired livelihood outcomes and aspirations. Additionally, it suggests that the help and support from family members are voluntary. Generally, such voluntary behaviours are norms (Kreps, 1997) that people have.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that it is customary for the family members to work in informal businesses because there is no formal obligation; instead, a social and cultural expectation. This may be because the businesses sustain the livelihoods of the artisans and their entire households. Due to this, the family members may feel the need to participate and support the artisans to make a living. Additionally, this customary practice of family members providing labour may explain why artisans’ skills are passed across generations. For example, while children and other family members work for artisans, they are naturally groomed and trained to become artisans.

**ii. Cultural practices amongst colleagues and friends that enable access to human capital**

In addition to gaining access to human capital from their family members, the findings also reveal the relationship between artisans, friends, and colleagues that harness their human capital and support livelihood sustenance. Case in point, some artisans narrate how their friends offer labour and support, such as help procuring and transporting raw materials, operating the ventures, and sharing business knowledge, which the artisans say have been essential in sustaining their businesses.

*“I get raw materials from Nairobi. They are cheaper. I usually have friends that I have in Nairobi, so when I need something, I call them over the phone, and they help me to source and deliver them.”- Tembo*

Moreover, as artisans work in clusters, they narrate how their friends share knowledge and information during their interactions. These include information on the tourism industry, market trends, technology, and general news, which are necessary for planning and navigating

the competitive informal sector and the turbulent tourism industry. Such knowledge and information are part of the artisans' human capital.

#### **4.6.2 Cultural Practices that Enable Access to Financial Capital**

Financial capital consists of capital bases like cash or credit, savings, and other economic assets for pursuing livelihood strategies (Scoones, 1998; DFID, 1999). It is otherwise referred to as economic capital and is deemed the most important for informal entrepreneurs (Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018); thus, the resource forms a significant part of artisans' livelihood and cannot be understated. The findings suggest the artisans' cultural practices within their social structures of family units, affiliate groups, friends, and colleagues enable them to access financial capital. The following section discusses this in detail.

##### **i. Cultural practices within a *chama* that enable access to financial capital**

The findings reveal that artisans are part of affiliate social groups popularly called *chama*, a Swahili word for 'group' or 'body.' The *chama* forms part of the artisans' institutionalised social capital and is immensely popular amongst the *jua kali*. This confirms Häuberer (2011) discussion that social capital could be institutionalised by adopting a common name. The *chama* is mainly made up of groups of women, with few cases where men are involved. The interactions and arrangements in the *chama* are very informal, but the findings suggest they are well organised. There is no definite number of members in a *chama*; nonetheless, each *chama* has stipulated goals. They also have an organised list of members, arranged meeting days and a schedule of operations. In some cases, they have officials, such as a chairperson, treasurer, and secretary, who oversee the daily activities. Some also have constitutions that govern the groups' day-to-day running, thus displaying their coordination. Notably, *chama* is based on trust, friendships, community, and shared values.

*“There is no discrimination within the chama because we all work together, and we have known each other for a long time. We have built trust over time. We do not have any unreliable people in the chama.”- Aisha*

*“The women in my chama have been very supportive. They are also my friends, so we talk about life and different things. I really like my chama. We are actually meeting next Friday... We are mostly women, so you know, everyone can get busy with their businesses and families*

*or children, but we still manage to meet now and then” – Rehema*

Thus, *chama* offers a platform for networking and social interactions, which the members enjoy. Furthermore, each *chama* is customised and organised to suit the member’s needs and preferences, encouraging each member to have a voice and be comfortable.

Notably, it is unsurprising that the *chama* is more popular amongst female artisans. This is because numerous studies have found that female entrepreneurs tend to have more social groups and networks that assist them in business ventures and help them overcome challenges (Dzisi, 2008; De Vita, Mari and Poggesi, 2014; Iodice and Yourougou, 2016).

#### ❖ ***Chama is an Alternative to Traditional Financial Institutions***

In addition to enabling socialising and networking, *chama* offers artisans a platform to seek and manage financial resources. In doing so, they cope with the lack of financial resources. The findings suggest that artisans shun loans from banks and other financial institutions. Therefore, *chama* provides an alternative to loans from these institutions. They are less formal, built on trust, do not require collateral or minimum deposits, are inexpensive, and have more flexible processes.

To elaborate, *chama* enables artisans to save and access money informally. The members collectively save a stipulated amount of money for a specified period. The savings accumulate, and the members receive all their savings at the end of a specified period. For example, each member can save approximately KES 500, after which they would receive all their savings yearly or quarterly.

*“The chama really helps a lot. I have two chamas. They are very small. One is a merry-go-round. I save about KES. 500 there. I build up the savings then, after about a month or two, I get money from the merry-go-round. The money from there helps and supports me financially.” – Aisha*

These savings create financial cushions, as members can get their savings during emergencies. Similarly, the cumulative savings from the entire *chama* can go towards helping or supporting a member in an emergency, such as medical emergencies that create unexpected medical bills. The funds also support members during holidays such as Christmas, where they can receive their savings and use them for festivities.

*“The chama is all women. We have an account where we save our money. We financially help each other in the merry-go-round. The chama also helps with emergency funds. In December, we get our saved funds, and everybody gets some money for Christmas”- Zawadi*

Besides this, the findings reiterate that *chama* enables access to financial resources through social capital. Thus, it suggests that social capital can be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

As portrayed, the *chama* is built on mutual trust and friendships, suggesting minimal chances of discrimination or harassment within the groups. It is made up of people with shared interests and social power. Thus, it is an elaborate example of bonding social capital, which Kawachi *et al.*, (2004) explain as a kind of social capital with a trusting and cooperative social relationship among members of similar identities. Due to this homogeneity within the *chama*, the members can have a voice. Therefore, it enables a suitable environment for artisans to voice their challenges and get social and financial help from each other. Importantly, it is integral to sustaining artisans’ livelihoods by reducing their financial vulnerability and promoting their well-being, which DFID (1999) showcases as desired livelihood outcomes.

## **ii. Cultural practices among friends and family that enable access to financial capital**

The findings reveal how artisans seek financial capital from friends, family, and colleagues during dire financial needs like medical bills and emergencies. This is possible because of the shared values and practices of friendship, trust, and community, which enable them to reduce financial vulnerability.

*“Sometimes, when there is an impromptu need for money, I get money from my friends, I loan money from them and then return the borrowed money.”- Heroe*

The above shows that artisans can capitalise on their relationships and social ties during periods of financial distress. It also confirms Bourdieu’s ideology that economic capital cannot be independent of social capital. Likewise, it underscores that capitals are interrelated and can be transformed into another (Bourdieu, 1986). In this case, the artisans transform their social capital into financial capital when needed.

### 4.6.3 Cultural Practices that Enable Access to Physical Capital

The findings show that artisans work and engage in clusters with shared commonalities like a tribe, gender, or product range. These clusters create cooperative social communities of mutual and beneficial relationships, displayed in how the artisans commonly refer to each other as brothers and sisters.

*“As artisans in jua kali, we are like brothers. We have a good relationship” - Duma*

*“We have a good relationship as artisans. We are like brothers and sisters, and we help each other whenever necessary. We are also united.” – Nala*

Owing to the close relationships, artisans can access physical capital. As pointed out, physical capital is a recognised livelihood resource that includes basic infrastructure, tools and equipment that promote productivity. It also includes secure shelter, the supply of water, affordable energy, and transportation (DFID, 1999), which are resources for sustaining livelihoods.

The artisans narrate how their friends and colleagues, whom they work alongside, play an essential role in sustaining their livelihoods by providing physical capital such as business spaces and premises. These premises are rent-free, meaning that the artisans do not incur rent. Thus, they save money for other livelihood needs.

*“I have a friend that has given me some space at his business premise. He usually sells curio items. So, he gave me some space to place to sell beads...He gave me the space for free. I do not pay any rent to him. It is just out of goodwill that he gave me the space.” - Sofia*

The above suggests that the artisan’s access to physical capital is possible because of the values of goodwill and trust built within the friendships and colleagues. They have shared commonalities, work in the same environment and experience many similar challenges, so they have a collective understanding that enables them to support each other. Likewise, their relationship suggests that they have customary practices that enable them to gain livelihood resources despite being marginalised.

## 4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the artisans' livelihoods in the tourism industry. It has detailed how they gain their skills mainly through generational training, inborn talents and out of necessity to survive. Based on these skills, artisans develop their livelihood strategy of making and selling handicrafts. This gives them the opportunity to run informal businesses in the tourism industry where they engage and interact with domestic and international tourists, popularly known as *wazungu*. Nevertheless, while artisans depend on tourism, they experience diverse challenges caused by shocks and stresses such as crises and seasonality, which force them to use handicrafts to diversify their customers out of the industry. In this regard, they also sell handicrafts to other local customers and intermediaries such as brokers and middlemen.

Notably, the artisans maintain their livelihood strategy of handicrafts and are inflexible towards other economic activities. For this reason, they have limited financial resources but have devised ways to utilise other livelihood resources. In particular, the findings suggest that the artisans' culture and cultural practices have fostered their social capital through their relationships with friends, family, and colleagues. Based on these relationships, artisans access essential resources such as financial, human, physical and natural capital. Consequently, enabling them to combine all these resources to sustain their livelihoods.

Therefore, this chapter gives a detailed account of the artisans' livelihood strategies in the informal sector in tourism and discusses how they use different resources to sustain their livelihoods. In doing so, the chapter contributes towards achieving the objective that seeks to analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to sustain their livelihoods. It also gives a glimpse into the challenges that artisans experience to sustain their livelihoods, which the study expounds on in chapter 6. Overall, the chapter is significant towards achieving the aim of understanding how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Further theoretical implications from this chapter are extensively discussed in chapter 8.

## **5. THE INFLUENCE OF INSTITUTIONS ON SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: A CASE OF THE KENYAN GOVERNMENT**

The previous chapter discussed the artisans' livelihoods in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Given this understanding, it is apparent that artisans do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they operate within an institutional context that influences how they sustain their livelihoods. The following chapter addresses this.

During the interviews, the artisans were asked several questions to investigate how institutional resources influence their livelihood. These questions included but were not limited to the support they receive from institutions, their relationship with the government and other relevant institutions and how different structures affected their livelihoods. As pointed out, the study also sampled five institutions that interface with artisans in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Hence, they were best suited to offer deeper insights into how artisans sustain their livelihoods from the perspective of external stakeholders. These institutions were asked several questions concerning their involvement and views on the tourism industry and the informal sector. They were also asked about their policies, plans, support, and perceptions of artisans, to mention a few. Furthermore, as pointed out in chapter 3, the study also carried out document analysis and sampled various institutional reports pertinent to the tourism industry and the informal sector in Kenya to enable a more in-depth understanding.

The following chapter will discuss these findings. It will first discuss the key institutions in the informal sector and the tourism industry to offer a contextual understanding of the institutions in Kenya. This will be followed by a discussion of how relevant institutions influence the livelihoods of artisans. Additionally, it will highlight how intermediaries form part of the structures influencing how artisans sustain their livelihoods. More specifically, the study will display how the Kenyan government, alongside the relevant laws and policies on the informal sector and the tourism industry, are unfavourable for artisans. Similarly, it will underscore how relevant institutions perceive the informal sector as inferior.

It is essential to address this as institutions have the authority and ability to enable and empower people to access livelihood resources and support them during shocks and stresses (Morse and McNamara, 2013). In contrast, they can also offer barriers and limitations that affect sustainable livelihoods (Scoones, 1998). Therefore, they ought to be considered in understanding the livelihoods of artisans.

## 5.1 Institutions in the Informal Sector and Tourism Industry of Kenya

The study draws on the SLA framework, which denotes institutions as transforming structures and processes that affect and influence how people sustain their livelihoods. As mentioned in section 2.3.2, structures are the “hardware” and include the private and public institutions that create and implement policies. This comprises the government, the public sector through executive, legislative and judicial arms, and the private sector. These institutions are responsible for creating structures that control people’s livelihood strategies and outcomes. On the other hand, processes are the “software” that determine how structures operate and interact. It comprises policies, legislature, culture, and power relations that influence livelihood decisions (DFID, 1999).

The document analysis revealed that the Kenyan government, through its executive, legislative, and judicial arms, has set up various institutions, policies, and regulations that govern both the informal sector and the tourism industry. Within the informal sector, the government has mandated various institutions to oversee trade, commerce, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). These include the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and Enterprise Development, which hosts various state corporations, such as the Micro and Small Enterprises Authority (MSEA), responsible for entrepreneurship and the business community in Kenya (Ministry of Industrialization, 2022).

Aside from the government institutions, the country also has various private institutions, such as The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI), a membership-based trade support institution that seeks to protect the commercial and trade interests of the business community in Kenya (KNCCI, 2022). There is also the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), a collective body of the private sector in Kenya seeking to grow businesses by voicing policy issues affecting enterprises, including start-ups and MSMEs (KEPSA, 2022). Additionally, there is the Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Associations, responsible for supporting *jua kali* businesses. Nonetheless, despite the name, this institution, alongside all the major institutes and corporates, focuses on formally registered businesses, thus, the informal sector does not have a recognised body that exclusively oversees its operations.

Within the tourism industry, the government has a dedicated Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, which is responsible for overseeing, planning, and governing the tourism sector. The

ministry also oversees various government tourism parastatals. These include the Kenya Tourism Development Board (KTDB), responsible for promoting local investment in tourism enterprises; Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS), which oversees wildlife management and conservation; Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), which is responsible for marketing and promoting tourism and Brand Kenya initiative, aimed at promoting the image of Kenya both locally and internationally. It also includes the Tourism Fund, a state corporation whose mandate is to mobilise resources to finance tourism development (Kareithi, 2003; Harris, Doan and Wilson, 2012; Mayaka and Prasad, 2012; Tourism Fund, 2022). These institutions carry out vital functions within the tourism industry. Key to note, however, is that none of these functions closely interface with the informal sector despite the predominance of the informal sector in the tourism industry.

As a member of the United Nations, the international community also influences the Kenyan government and institutions. For example, United Nations agencies like the ILO and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) may direct how Kenyan institutions govern the informal sector and tourism industry, respectively. More precisely, these agencies give policy recommendations on aspects such as formalisation of the informal sector (ILO, 2015). They also offer directives on sustainable tourism development, tourism's contribution to poverty reduction, and other relevant policies and codes of practice governing the global tourism agenda (UNWTO, 2022). For this reason, the Kenyan government directly or indirectly follows guidelines and policies laid out by the relevant international institutions.

It is prudent to outline the above institutions, as they operate within the tourism industry and the informal sector and are likely to interface directly or indirectly with artisans. Furthermore, recognising these institutions enables a more in-depth understanding of the institutional context in Kenya. Having discussed these, the following sections will elaborate on how the government and relevant institutions affect the livelihoods of artisans.

## **5.2 Government Institutions in Kenya Heighten Vulnerability**

### **i. Negligence by the Government and Relevant Authorities**

The findings suggest that the Kenyan government has neglected artisans. The artisans express that they do not feel recognised despite their added value to the tourism industry and

the general economy. Similarly, they complain that the government does not support them and that the relevant policies within the country do not acknowledge them.

*“The first challenge is that the government does not recognise us. They support other SMEs, but they have neglected us in their aid. We are nowhere on their radar. For example, some markets got water and tanks for sanitation during the pandemic, but the artisans in jua kali did not get any of that.” – Marini*

*“There is no permanent premise for us artisans. Other countries like Tanzania have their markets for jua kali and handicrafts but not here in Kenya. We have not been considered by the government at all. There is no place that recognises artisans. We are not considered in planning and are completely neglected despite creating employment. They think that we are not well educated, but we are intelligent, and we employ people. There is no sub-sector for handicrafts too.” – Kongoni*

Furthermore, the artisans narrate that they lack representation and do not have any institutions to champion their grievances. They add that they are unaware of institutions or bodies to direct their grievances as the ones they ought to go to do not offer any support, leaving them feeling neglected. Notably, the findings suggest that artisans have tried to dialogue with the respective county and national governments but have been unsuccessful. They explain that the government is heavily interested in tax collection instead of offering the necessary support to ensure a healthy business environment for them to thrive.

*“I have gone to many offices to request support, like the support with a permanent premise, but the promises are not fulfilled. I have been to the county government, which makes false promises. I have also been to the tourism ministry, which does not give us any help at all. They are actually the worst; they ignore us and tell us to go back to the county for help. The tourism ministry can gain a lot from artisans, but they harass us.” – Tausi*

*“I feel like the government oppresses and harasses us. It is only interested in taxing what we make. The government only oppresses us. It does not help us at all. It does not value us at all. Sometimes, they come and inspect our products because they think that we are deceiving them. They think we have a lot of money, but we make very slim margins.”- Mamba*

This reveals that the government's priorities may be misaligned with the artisan's interests. It also suggests that institutions heighten the artisan's vulnerability, despite their responsibility to reduce vulnerability in the informal sector (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018). Likewise, it confirms Uekusa (2019) discussion that marginalised people are less likely to receive support from the necessary authorities and government.

## **ii. Inconsideration in Urban Planning**

### **a. Harassment and Eviction from Business Premises**

The artisans explain that authorities oppress, harass, and evict them. For example, the artisans at Maasai Market in Nairobi say they initially had a Tuesday marketplace in Kijabe street that the government took away. The same government promised an alternative market, but this is yet to be actualised. Due to this, the artisans have reduced working days and income, negatively impacting how they make a living.

*“On Tuesdays, we used to have a market day at Kijabe Street, but when the pandemic started, the government took the market from us. It is now Michuki Park. The Tuesday market was good because we only paid KES. 50 to the county. It was snatched from us by the government. That is where we would get money to sustain us, to raise fees for the children and cater for living expenses.” Zawadi*

The artisans in Eldoret also narrate how the government evicted them and demolished their structures during a road expansion exercise. Besides this, they describe that the county government perceives their presence by the roadside as undesirable and damaging to the town's beauty. Thus, the government has evicted them, confiscated their property, and demolished their premises without offering alternative markets.

*“I was chased away from where I used to sell my products. I had a structure that the county government demolished during a road expansion exercise. They later promised to give us a new location to run the business, but they did not. They then changed their minds and said they did not want us to have our business in the town of Eldoret.” - Ndovu*

This is similarly the case in other informal markets in the Global South; for example, Brata (2010) points out that vendors in the informal sector are likely to be evicted by authorities because they may use up spaces that are unintended for informal businesses. The harassment by authorities also suggests that the government considers the informal sector undesirable in urban planning. It further suggests that the government may view the Western urban planning model as the most ideal. Okwaroh and Opiyo (2018) highlight this and discuss that neoliberal ideas drive urban spaces in SSA; thus, the informal sector is undesirable as it does not fit the Western model of urban development. For this reason, the informal sector is left without business premises for their livelihoods.

Moreover, the harassment by authorities is highlighted in the artisans' description of their dirty work environment despite paying the authorities to clean it. They also lack basic infrastructures like water in the markets, which is a sign of negligence from these authorities.

*“The government is neglecting us. They do not do their part in cleaning this market, and we pay them to clean. Maybe that is why the tourists are not coming here because rubbish is everywhere. We need a clean market, and we need a building where we can work” – Rehema*

These are examples of how the relevant institutions compromise the artisan's business premises. They lack decent workspaces, which increases their vulnerability. The findings imply that the artisans would be less vulnerable if the government prioritised their needs, offered decent workspaces, and considered them in urban planning and development.

#### **b. Lack of Urban Planning to Enable Access to Tourists**

The lack of consideration in urban planning is further highlighted by artisans who complain that they do not have immediate access to tourists. For example, artisans in Nairobi express that the locations of their informal markets are not ideal for international tourists. They narrate that when international tourists land at the airport, they go straight to the city hotels or travel to other tourist destinations like the Kenyan coast and the national parks and game reserves, which limit their immediate interactions with these tourists.

*“It would be great to have the tourists come to the market. They seem to land at the airport and visit places like Maasai Mara or the coast. They do not go around the city or to the market, so we miss out on them. It would be great if they passed by and if we interacted with them directly.” - Makena*

The artisans add that the informal markets where they operate are not ideal locations for tourists; hence they face the risk of reduced income from tourism.

*“We sell on the roadside. The vehicles pass there. It is congested, dangerous and not pleasant. Remember, we are the ones that bring tourists here, so I am not sure how tourists feel about coming to buy handicrafts from us on the roadsides. They probably do not like coming to the roads.”- Dalila*

*“We need a place where we can access tourists easily. Tourists also need a place to access us without walking for long or getting lost easily. Our location makes it hard for tourists to spot us unless tour guides direct them here”- Tausi*

The above excerpts imply that artisans who operate in informal markets in urban cities and towns do not get direct access to tourists unless through organised tours by the travel agents or the tourists’ initiatives. Many artisans further explain that an ideal situation would be the government intervening and creating avenues for direct interaction with the tourists. They propose organised city tours, cooperation of tour operators, and the promotion and marketing of informal markets. These grievances also suggest that the Kenyan government’s priorities for tourism development may not directly align with the artisans’ livelihoods.

### **5.2.1 Informality: Source of Negligence and Marginalisation**

The informal sector comprises businesses not registered or regulated by the state (Hart, 1973); thus, it is often considered illegal. Nonetheless, the findings show that while the artisans in Kenya have not registered their businesses and are not formally recognised, they work and operate openly. Thus, the state does not consider them illegal. Nevertheless, despite their open operations, the findings suggest that the artisans’ informality is the main reason the government does not support them.

As mentioned, the study incorporated interviews with relevant institutions, who were asked questions about their support for artisans in the informal sector in tourism. When asked about this, one of the institutions elaborated that it was difficult to support the informal sector because they are not registered.

*“For you to be supported, you have to be organised. You have to be registered and recognised. For instance, the hotels easily get support because they have a strongly organised group that lobbies for their interests. There are none that are artisan-related, aside from a few external groups that take private initiatives to do this out of their own interests. So, it is tough for government initiatives to support informal artisans in tourism.”-*

*Institution 5*

This implies that, unless they get formalised, the informal sector may continue to be neglected despite their prevalence. The findings also suggest that there may be a subtle push for the formalisation of the informal sector by requiring them to formalise to get government support. This may be due to the government’s need to increase tax revenue and bases and gain regulatory control (ILO, 2002).

**i. Reasons for Unregistered Businesses**

To holistically understand their engagement in the informal sector, the artisans were asked why they were informal. The findings show that the artisans have not registered their businesses for several reasons: First, many do not know how to register their businesses or why it is necessary.

*“I have not registered because I do not know how to. I will need assistance to be able to do it.”- Farasi*

*“The business is so small, nothing big that requires registration. I do not think a small business like mine needs to be registered.” Makena*

The above is a sign that there is no public awareness of the business registration process. In contrast, an examination of the relevant government reports and policies highlights that the Kenyan government has made strides to promote business formalisation and awareness. This has mainly been through establishing Huduma Kenya, an initiative to decentralise government services, including business registration, through online portals and local offices across the country (Huduma Kenya, 2021). However, the findings show that this information is unknown to artisans in the informal sector, showing that the government’s efforts may not be effective for *jua kali*.

Second, the artisans have not registered their businesses because they do not understand the benefits of formalisation.

*“I have not registered with the government. I do not know what registering means or what benefit it would have” - Hawa*

An overview of the Kenyan government portals, such as Huduma Kenya, does not explicitly show any benefit of formalisation. Similarly, no clear publicised policies explain the benefits of formalisation to the *jua kali*. Thus, suggesting that there is a lack of government initiative or interest in promoting this awareness.

Third, the artisans explain that the business registration process in Kenya is expensive. For example, the formalisation process includes the costs of conducting business name searches and depending on the kind of business being registered, the cost can range from KES.800 to KES.10,000. Besides this, the process includes attaching documents such as Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) pin, tax compliance certificates and identification cards, to mention a few. Similarly, business registration requires filing returns and tax remittance, which the artisans say are added costs to their informal businesses. Moreover, they convey that they work on slim margins, do not make ends meet and have inconsistent income, making it impossible to meet additional formalisation costs.

*“I have thought of registering the business, but I do not have money to register the business. It is expensive. I barely make ends meet.” - Twiga*

The above findings suggest that the informal sector in Kenya exists due to cumbersome registration processes and the costs associated with formalisation. This is aligned with the legalists' school of thought on formalisation, which argues that the informal sector exists due to the avoidance of costs, legal and regulatory compliance and the time and effort associated with doing so (Chen, 2012). Additionally, the above findings suggest that formalisation is a limited option for artisans. They experience livelihood pressures and poverty, which do not give them any disposable income to engage in business registration and compliance. Likewise, they have small-scale operations, which implies that their informal business models cannot support formalisation. Notably, it underpins that as long as the artisans face these livelihood challenges, they will be less likely to formalise their businesses.

Despite the highlighted reasons for informality, some artisans suggest that they might register their businesses in the future on the condition that their businesses grow and generate more income. The artisans assume that registration can accrue benefits such as more bargaining power, opportunities for international and local exposure through exhibitions, and formal recognition in the market. More so, they believe that formalisation might allow them to advance their businesses in the future.

*“My business is not registered. I think I will register in the future to get into international exhibitions like in the USA, Canada, and other countries. I would like to register the business so that I can have a company and be able to advance” - Zawadi*

The finding suggests that artisans may perceive the formal sector as beneficial to their ventures. It also shows that the artisans are open to registering their businesses should they have guidance and supportive policies.

The discussion above offers a detailed understanding of *jua kali* from the perspective of artisans. It presents the reasons why the artisans have not registered their businesses and shed light on the context. In summary, the artisans freely operate in the Kenyan informal sector. However, their informality limits the support they get from the government. This is because, despite the government being aware of its existence, the informal sector is not formally recognised. Thus, the government has an obligation to extend its support to the informal sector despite the business registration status. The government also has an obligation to ease the formalisation process by making it seamless, accessible, and affordable for the informal sector.

Notably, the findings also reveal that it is likely that formalising *jua kali* may take a while to actualise, despite the formalisation push by institutions such as the ILO (ILO, 2015) and by academic researchers (Lafuente, Szerb and Ács, 2018) who call for the formalisation of the informal sector. This is because the country still lacks supportive or explicit policies and guidance on business registration processes for the informal sector. Consequently, the informal sector is likely to continue being neglected.

It was crucial for the study to shed light on this to understand why institutions may not support the informal sector. Doing so enables a more elaborate understanding of how they influence the sustainable livelihoods of artisans.

### 5.3 The Disconnect between the Government and Artisans

The findings show disconnections between government institutions and the artisans. For instance, there is an apparent disconnection regarding the definition and characteristics of the informal sector. To illustrate, one of the institutions that participated in the interviews is mandated to support *jua kali*. Despite this, the findings show that the institution only deals with fully registered businesses with business registration certificates. This displays that the parastatal does not deal with the actual informal sector but only supports formal businesses despite the obligation to do so. Therefore, there is a misalignment between its obligations and activities. The finding also implies that there might be a subtle push for the formalisation of the informal sector. This is because the parastatal no longer recognises or caters for the informal sector. Instead, it only offers support to formally registered businesses.

*“We are an umbrella body for jua kali in the country. We do policies for jua kali and the government...All our members have registered businesses. We offer support to them as mandated by the government. For instance, during this pandemic, we have supported over 1 million people in the informal sector through MasterCard and given them funds for their businesses. This has been through the Chamber of Commerce...It is an interest-free loan, which they will pay slowly, with a grace period. For anyone to get our support and funds, they must be actual, registered businesses.”- Institution 4*

This disconnection is also apparent in the institution’s expectations of *jua kali*. For instance, they expect the *jua kali* to access them via their website, which most people in the *jua kali*, including the artisans, may not access.

*“We have existed for several years, and we have many offices across the country. We also have a website that anyone who needs our services can access. Jua kali can access us in many ways. Usually, I tell jua kali that they can open the website and find any information they want about us. There are also the SME handbooks that anyone, including jua kali, can easily access.” –Institution 4*

Evidently, the institution expects the informal sector to access them via their websites, which may be an uphill task. Case in point, the artisans attest that some institutions expect them to reach out via email, which is not viable as they do not have email addresses and lack easy access to the internet.

*“A parastatal wants jua kali to register themselves to get their support, but their procedures do not make sense. You know, jua kali people do not have emails. They just have regular phones. The parastatal wants people to register themselves on the phone, which is hard because people do not know how to use emails and such technology. The best way is to simplify everything outside the internet because people like us do not know how to use the internet.”- Duma*

Besides this, the interviewed private institutions explain that the government is disconnected from the artisans on the ground. For instance, the government’s policies, primarily made in the country’s capital city of Nairobi, do not benefit or reflect the broader context of the informal sector in tourism.

*“I do not think the government is doing much to ensure the local people benefit from the tourism industry. They make policies in Nairobi [Kenya’s capital], and there is a big disconnect with what is happening on the ground. The industry needs to be regulated and controlled so that the locals benefit regardless of their location. The tourism industry in Kenya needs to find ways that the locals can benefit.”- Institution 1*

As mentioned, it is apparent that there is a subtle push for formalisation and that the informal sector may not receive institutional resources or support if they do not register their businesses. Nonetheless, it is also clear that the relevant institutions have not made significant efforts to ease the formalisation of the informal sector. Consequently, the informal sector is expected to register its businesses to receive institutional support, but the institutions are not playing their part in easing this process. For example, artisans in the informal sector are expected to raise money for business registration and compliance despite their slim margins and low income. They are also expected to initiate business registration despite their lack of knowledge of the process. These display the misalignment between the government and the informal sector.

The above disconnections between government institutions and the informal sector are crucial to highlight because these institutions shape livelihoods (DFID, 1999). In the case of Kenya, the findings suggest that the misalignment between relevant institutions and the informal sector may prevent artisans from having favourable policies and accessing resources to support their livelihoods. Government institutions are responsible for supporting the

informal sector and reducing vulnerability (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018). Therefore, the government must eradicate such disconnections by letting artisans have a voice in policy formulation and ensuring favourable ways for artisans to access them.

## **5.4 Influence of Colonial History on Institutions**

The findings suggest that Kenya's colonial history and legacy shape and influence institutions in the tourism industry and the informal sector. The country was colonised by the British, but despite its independence in 1963, it is likely that the colonial influence still lingers in its governance, economic and political structures (Lonsdale and Berman, 1979). This is essential to consider as the social constructionism philosophical stance compels the researcher to explain the phenomenon in rich detail, including its geographical and historical context (Saunders, 2019). Thus, the following section discusses this in detail and points to how colonial history influences the institutional context and livelihoods of artisans.

### **5.4.1 Lack of voice and Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) approaches**

The findings suggest that artisans lack a voice in the tourism industry. They narrate that the Kenyan tourism industry ignores them as it focuses more on wildlife conservation and big chains of hotels.

*“The government is focussing a lot on SMEs and hotels but has not focused on us. Other people in tourism get attention, even animals [wildlife] get attention but not jua kali”- Duma*

*“We have been forgotten completely. The tourism ministry does not recognise us. They only know the big hotels and tour guides; here, we are unknown. I wish they paid more attention to us because we also help tourism”– Rehema*

Generally, it appears that the Kenyan government and other relevant institutions do not support PPT approaches, aiming to unlock opportunities for the poor and marginalised people (Goodwin, 2005). This is shown in how artisans do not receive trickled benefits from the tourism industry. Instead, they are neglected, and their interests are ignored. This is also witnessed in the Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism's COVID-19 relief fund of 2020, which offered relief funds to established hotels, wildlife conservation measures and Utalii College

(Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2020). However, while the relief fund was helpful in the recovery of the tourism industry, it did not consider or show any plans to support the informal sector. This suggests that players within the Kenyan tourism industry are treated unequally.

Jaakson (2004) attributes such inequalities to colonial legacies rooted in institutions. He explains that tourism benefits are unequally distributed regionally and socially in countries with colonial histories. Akama, Maingi and Camargo (2011) also attribute the lack of tricked benefits to the local people to the Western model of tourism development, which promotes the negligence of marginalised people and communities in the tourism industry. Likewise, Wijesinghe, Mura and Bouchon (2019) explain that the voices of the poor and marginalised people are rarely heard in the tourism agenda due to neo-colonialism and colonial history. Therefore, the lack of support for informal artisans in tourism may be attributed to the country's colonial history that influenced the governance, economic and political structures of Kenya (Lonsdale and Berman, 1979).

PPT can be achieved by acknowledging certain principles. These include the participation of the poor in tourism decisions, considering the poor's economic, social and environmental livelihood concerns, distributing the tourism benefits to the poor, and linking tourism businesses to the poor people (Ashley, 2000a; Duim and Caalders, 2008). Therefore, Kenya has an opportunity to support informal artisans in tourism by implementing PPT approaches.

#### **5.4.2 Neo-colonialism in Kenya's tourism industry and its effect on artisans' livelihoods**

The interviews with relevant institutions point out that the Kenyan tourism industry is still influenced by colonial history. For instance, the institutions admit that the locals do not benefit from the industry; instead, the benefits are felt by foreign investors who have heavily invested in Kenya's hospitality and tourism industry. Nkrumah (1965) elaborates that foreign influence on past colonies is a form of neo-colonialism, where colonialism lingers on through different economic or financial interests. He emphasises that such financial capital benefits foreigners but not the locals, which is similar in Kenya.

*“The tourism industry has a colonial past. It was handed over to the Kenyans, but if you check, very few Kenyans actually run the tourism industry. At least, this has been my experience, having worked in the industry my entire career...In Kenya, there is a lot of foreign investment in tourism. There is a lot of money going outside the country, but the community is not getting any benefits. For instance, in the Maasai Mara, about 70% of the people who manage the hotels and hospitality places are foreigners. The other 30% are Kenyans, but out of these, very few locals are from the local communities. These local people can work, but foreign investors do not trust the local communities. My organisation, therefore, works to ensure that the locals benefit. They deserve to work in not only low-cadre jobs but also management jobs. Local people, including artisans, should have a chance to make impactful decisions in tourism and hospitality”- Institution 1*

The institution further recognises that the development and promotion of the Kenyan tourism industry are skewed towards international tourists.

*“The Kenyan tourism industry was never built for the local people or the domestic tourists. For instance, where I have worked, most visitors are international tourists. The smaller proportion are domestic tourists who work in embassies and consulates in Nairobi. The ordinary Kenyan like you and I will find it hard to visit. During the high season, the night price is about \$1,000. During the COVID period, it is about \$200, which is still expensive for the locals. This is why I say that the tourism industry was never built for the locals but the international tourists.”- Institution 1*

Akama (2004) also attests to this. He points out that international tourists and investors dominate the Kenyan tourism industry; as such, minimal tourism benefits get to the locals, which he attributes to Kenya’s colonial history. In line with this, Manyara and Jones (2007b) agree that due to its colonial history, Kenya experiences neo-colonialism; thus, foreign investors are heavily involved in the industry and control the tourism resources in the country. Furthermore, Jaakson (2004) also attributes the lack of tricked benefits to neo-colonialism, which he says has made a few elites enjoy the benefits of the tourism industry while the local people and communities remain neglected. He explains that due to neo-colonialism, the tourism industry in the Global South is dominated by foreign investors, which the findings suggest is also the case in Kenya.

Due to the British colonisation, the development and promotion of tourism in Kenya are influenced by Western ideologies, such as the focus on the economic interests of tourism and less on the local communities (Akama, 2004). To demonstrate this, Kenya's tourism performance is measured by analysing the number of international arrivals and departures alongside the revenue generated from these international tourists. This is evident in tourism reports released by the Kenyan government, where there is a broad economic focus on revenue generated from international tourists (Tourism Research Institute, 2019; Tourism Research Institute, 2020b). This is not to say that the focus on the economic value of international tourists is unjustified but to point out that the local players in the tourism industry, including the artisans, are not prioritised in the tourism agenda.

Given the findings from the interviews with artisans and relevant institutions, it is evident that Kenya's tourism development and promotion does not wholly consider artisans. Due to the negligence, the artisans' vulnerability is heightened because of the lack of relevant support from the government, limited livelihood resources and a lack of a conducive institutional environment for making a living. Therefore, the country's colonial history affects how institutions manage the tourism and informal sectors, which subsequently affects the artisans' livelihoods. Holistically, the effects of colonial history cannot be ignored when understanding how institutions affect artisans' livelihoods.

#### **5.4.3 Impact of colonial history on urban planning and the artisans' physical capital**

As highlighted in section 5.2, the institutions responsible for the urban planning of towns and cities do not consider the livelihoods of artisans. As alluded to, artisans narrate that they are perceived as inferior, unpleasant, and not aesthetically pleasing; thus, they are evicted, and their temporary structures are demolished. As mentioned, this may be linked to Okwaroh and Opiyo (2018) observation that the urban spaces in SSA are driven by Western ideologies, which deem the informal sector as undesirable because it does not fit the Western model of urban development. Likewise, it could also be attributed to Kenya's colonial history, whose values have led to the perception that the informal sector is inferior to its formal counterparts. This is also highlighted by Sambajee and Weston (2015), who explain that owing to the colonial history, the informal sector lacks a supportive business environment despite its prevalence.

## **5.5 Intermediaries and the Livelihoods of Artisans**

As mentioned, within the SLA framework, structures and processes incorporate the private sector that controls people's livelihood decisions and outcomes (DFID, 1999). The findings show that these can include intermediaries who link artisans with tourists and other customers. In this case, the intermediaries specifically include brokers, who act as intermediaries by managing the business transactions between the artisans and the tourists; tour guides, who act as intermediaries by being the point of contact between tourists and artisans; and middlemen, made up of wholesale and retail traders who buy handicrafts from artisans to sell to the end-users.

These brokers, tour guides and middlemen are part of structures that affect the livelihoods of artisans. They undermine livelihoods and create a challenging environment for the artisans through manipulation, oppression, and misuse of their powers. Contrastingly, they can create a conducive environment for artisans' livelihoods, as they offer opportunities for cooperation and co-dependency during a decline in the tourism industry. The following sections discuss this in more detail:

### **5.5.1 Intermediaries undermine sustainable livelihoods**

Intermediaries create challenges that heighten the artisan's vulnerability in several ways. First, intermediaries like tour guides and brokers manage and determine the artisans' access to tourists. For example, as tour guides guide tourists during their visits, they decide on the places they visit and only facilitate tourist access through a fee or a commission. Similarly, brokers, who tend to be more socially powerful and influential, are often the first point of contact between tourists and artisans. Owing to this, they determine and influence how the tourists interact with artisans in the market. In many cases, they cause limited interaction between the artisans and tourists, which results in artisans making less money and lacking the power and freedom to interact and sell to tourists.

*“There are people that make accessing wazungu hard, so sometimes, I cannot sell directly to a mzungu because there are people that prevent it. For example, the tour guides make it hard to access them. In fact, some of them can beat us up.”- Tembo*

Additionally, the findings reveal that these brokers take over the transaction process by managing the bargaining and selling conversations between the artisan and tourists. Consequently, they affect the prices of handicrafts because they sell them to unsuspecting tourists at inflated prices to gain a commission from the sales or to benefit from the profit margins. In doing so, they directly interfere with the prices of handicrafts, which affects the artisans' profit margins and may negatively affect the tourists' experiences.

*“We work with tour guides; they bring us tourists. When they do so, you have to give them a little money so that they bring other customers the next time. Otherwise, they will go to a different shop if you do not give them money. I have an informal relationship with the tour guides. Once I meet them, I speak with them nicely and ask them to bring customers when they have tourists. They, nonetheless, have to be given money to do that. They affect the business because I have to consider them when pricing the handicrafts.” - Heroe*

Relatedly, the artisans explain that middlemen oppress them because they buy handicrafts at very low prices and on credit, with some defaulting payments.

*“I do not like the middlemen...They always want to buy from me for a very little price, but they sell to tourists at a very high price. So, they make more profit than me. They are oppressive. For example, they can buy handicrafts for KES 1,500 and sell them for KES. 5,000, which does not make sense.”-Tembo*

The artisans readily agree to middlemen's prices because they are desperate to make sales, especially during the low tourism season. Unfortunately, this exploits the artisan, makes them more vulnerable, and threatens the sustainability of their livelihoods.

Moreover, the artisans narrate that the brokers and tour guides physically fight them in extreme cases. Nonetheless, they do not report such issues to the authorities because the intermediaries are supposedly more powerful, influential, and connected to the police. Thus, they allegedly bribe and talk their way out of police custody.

*“The market can have money on a good day, but the brokers make things hard for us. Sometimes these brokers beat us up, but we cannot do anything because they also know the police, so even if I were to take them to the police, nothing would happen to them.” - Simba*

Despite this, the artisans seem to tolerate the brokers and tour guides. They say they are accustomed to being treated that way. They lack a voice and are desperate for sales, making them settle for such harsh treatment. The artisans say it is better to persevere and make a sale than to openly oppose the brokers and tour guides and risk missing out on selling opportunities. This is a sign that artisans are vulnerable. Their desperation for survival makes them prone to oppression and manipulation, hence why they need a voice. By conforming to such treatment, the artisans risk their livelihoods by losing opportunities to directly access tourists, lacking the freedom to negotiate prices, and missing opportunities to optimise profits.

One of the institutions interviewed perceives that this hostile treatment by brokers is due to the artisans' low literacy levels, which makes them vulnerable.

*“A challenge I see is in regard to the levels of literacy. Many of these local artisans are not well educated; they have not gone to school. So, they are taken advantage of by a few elites in the communities. Brokers are notorious for doing this. They take advantage of the artisan's illiteracy and powerlessness. They lie to artisan a lot.”- Institution 1*

Thus, the above suggests that artisans may have lower literacy levels, which heightens their vulnerability.

At the same time, this kind of relationship suggests a power imbalance between the artisans and intermediaries. In this regard, the study recognises the recommendations by Sakdapolrak (2014), Didero (2012) and De Haan (2012), who point out the relevance of considering power relations in sustainable livelihood research. They incorporate Bourdieu's theories, which recognise power relations in societies (Thieme, 2008).

### **5.5.2 Intermediaries promote sustainable livelihoods**

Despite the challenges intermediaries create for artisans, the findings show that intermediaries and artisans co-exist in the informal sector in tourism. Owing to this, intermediaries are also sources of resilience for the artisans and play an active role in promoting their sustainable livelihoods. For example, the intermediaries, such as middlemen, play an essential role in forming part of the artisans' customer segments. In many cases, they have more financial resources; hence, they tend to buy handicrafts in bulk, which gives artisans opportunities to sell off their handicrafts in massive quantities. Furthermore, the middlemen are crucial in sustaining the artisans' sales during the low tourism seasons. This is because they

have more resources to sell to several parts of the country, including neighbouring Uganda, Tanzania, and other international markets throughout the year.

*“During the low season, there are people who take the handicrafts to other countries like Tanzania. During these times, I depend on such people. They are usually Kenyan middlemen. They do not buy at good prices. They buy at very low prices, then add a markup when they sell the items abroad. Due to this, the profits are minimal, but the little profit is better than having nothing.”- Twiga*

Therefore, by doing so, middlemen promote artisan handicrafts, increase their reach and, ultimately, the income they make for a living.

To benefit from intermediaries, artisans narrate that they befriend brokers and tour guides, who facilitate direct access to tourists and help them survive the competitive environment. In this regard, artisans profit from forming a cordial relationship with the intermediaries.

*“When tourists come to the market, I have a broker that directs them to me. I have to have someone to direct them because there are so many brokers, which is a challenge.”- Hawa*

Likewise, some artisans say that they sometimes engage brokers as their salespeople. They have an informal arrangement with them, where brokers promote the sale of the artisans' handicrafts in exchange for a commission. This offers a solution where artisans and brokers benefit in the competitive market. Thus, it is an example of how social networks are beneficial in ensuring sales and supporting artisans' livelihoods.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter gives a detailed account of how institutions influence the livelihoods of artisans. It outlines the various institutions in Kenya to give contextual knowledge of institutions in the country. It also discusses how the government heightens the vulnerability of artisans through negligence and inconsideration in urban planning, where they are evicted from business premises and lack direct access to tourists. In this regard, the chapter shows how informality could be the reason for the artisans' negligence and marginalisation. Yet, the government has not enabled favourable conditions for formalisation. The business registration and compliance costs make formalisation an expensive affair for artisans' who primarily rely

on inconsistent income from tourism. Besides this, the business registration process is unclear as artisans lament the lack of guidance.

The chapter also exposes the disconnection between the government and artisans. On the one hand, it shows how the government takes pride in the informal sector and recognises them for their input towards growing the economy and the entrepreneurial culture. However, on the other hand, it reveals how the same institutions meant to protect artisans are a source of vulnerability. Moreover, the chapter also highlights how the colonial history of Kenya continues to shape the tourism industry and the informal sector. In particular, it shows how artisans lack a voice and how the tourism industry lacks PPT approaches because the focus is mainly on international tourists and the dominant big chain of foreign-owned hotels. These colonial effects are also evident in Kenya's urban planning, which does not favour the open-air markets and semi-permanent business premises where artisans operate.

Besides the government, intermediaries have also emerged as part of the institutions that impact how artisans sustain their livelihoods. The intermediaries, comprised of tour guides, brokers, and middlemen, heighten vulnerability by limiting direct access to tourists, exploiting artisans with unfair prices, defaulting on credit, and intensifying competition in the informal sector. However, intermediaries have also emerged as valuable in supporting artisans to expand their customer segments outside tourism. Hence, they help artisans to sustain a living during a decline in tourism. In some cases, intermediaries also collaborate with artisans to access tourists and other customers, enabling them to deal with competition.

Overall, this chapter gives more insight into the livelihoods of artisans. Furthermore, it shows the institutional factors that affect the artisan's livelihoods from a macro level. In this regard, the chapter helps to address one of the research objectives that seeks to investigate how institutional resources influence the livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the tourism industry.

## 6. VULNERABILITY IN LIVELIHOODS

To this point, the study has established that artisans make and sell handicrafts for a living. They have persistently worked in the tourism industry for many years and generations, where they have sustained their livelihoods. However, it is evident that several challenges have accompanied this. Therefore, this chapter will discuss the challenges that artisans experience to sustain their livelihoods in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

As mentioned, Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019) elaborate that the studies on artisans in the informal sector in tourism have focused on their successes but neglected their plight and challenges. Thus, there is a need to fill this gap and highlight the challenges artisans face. Besides this, as depicted in figure 2.1, sustainable livelihoods require understanding how people cope and recover from stresses and shocks that create challenges and make them vulnerable (Chambers and Conway, 1992). As alluded to, stresses are predictable, worrying, and usually continuous. They include aspects such as the inevitable seasonal changes and a decline in resources. On the other hand, shocks are traumatic, unpredictable, and sudden impacts, such as epidemics, floods, fires, and political occurrences like political instability, wars, and terrorism (DFID, 1999). Alongside these, vulnerability is also associated with poverty and marginalisation (Christophe-Gaillard, Texier and Cannon, 2008), meaning that people who are socially isolated, defenceless, and have limited resources are vulnerable.

As shocks and stresses create challenges that make artisans vulnerable and affect their sustainable livelihoods, it is vital to discuss them. By doing so, this study achieves one of its objectives, which seeks to explore the challenges informal artisan entrepreneurs experience in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Hence, this is an essential chapter and a building block towards understanding how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry.

The artisans' vulnerability is displayed throughout chapters 4 and 5, for instance, in their limited livelihood resources like physical and financial capital, negligence by relevant institutions, the unstable tourism industry and the precarious informal sector. Although their vulnerability is displayed in previous chapters, it is essential to reiterate these critical points as they expound on the challenges that artisans experience when striving to sustain a livelihood. Hence, this chapter is dedicated to this.

## **6.1 Fluctuations in the Tourism Industry Heighten Vulnerability**

Due to fluctuations in demand, artisans in the tourism industry experience financial distress and poverty. As alluded to in section 4.3.2, the income from the Kenyan tourism industry is inconsistent due to seasonal changes and crises that have affected the industry, including the COVID-19 pandemic. This is not unique to Kenya, as the global tourism industry is fragile and prone to shocks and stresses. These include changes in seasonality, political instability, natural disasters like tsunamis and earthquakes, attacks like terrorism, economic recessions, and competition (Dieke, 1991; Butler, 1994; Jaakson, 2004; Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008; Harris, Doan and Wilson, 2012; Dahles and Susilowati, 2015). These shocks and stresses adversely affect the industry and, consequently, the livelihoods of people who depend on it. They result in reduced tourists, minimal working days and a decline in income from tourism. These effects continue to be felt even after the shock or crisis (Baker and Coulter, 2007). Thus, they threaten the sustainability of livelihoods.

The institutions that participated in this study share similar sentiments and admit that the tourism industry offers a challenging environment that threatens livelihoods. This is due to the industry's inconsistent performance, which the COVID-19 pandemic worsened because of travel restrictions and poor economic conditions (Chang, McAleer and Ramos, 2020).

*“I have worked in the tourism industry my entire career. The tourism industry is very volatile. At the moment, we have the COVID-19 pandemic, and then there will be elections in 2022. In fact, there is already a high political climate. These effects are not only be felt by the artisans but by the whole industry.” – Institution 1*

The above shows that the tourism industry may not entirely be a reliable industry to support artisans. Despite this, it is intriguing to acknowledge the artisans' agency in persistently working in the tourism industry despite the challenges they narrate.

## **6.2 Financial Distress Heightens Vulnerability and Poverty**

As alluded to, the artisans' primary source of income is handicraft sales to domestic and international tourists. The artisans narrate how the tourism industry has, in the past, been lucrative for their businesses. Through the sales from the tourism industry, they have met their day-to-day living expenses, supported the livelihoods of their dependents, and sustainably ran

their businesses. However, the artisans experience financial distress caused by many factors stemming from the difficulties in making sales, slim margins and manipulation by intermediaries and customers that buy on credit. These are discussed in more detail as follows:

Firstly, as discussed above, the sales in tourism are inconsistent because of external factors and crises that affect the industry. The artisans highlight that the Kenyan tourism industry is affected by political instability, especially during the election periods, terrorist attacks caused by Al-Shabaab, seasonal changes, and the COVID-19 pandemic. They narrate that these situations drastically affect the tourism industry and reduce the number of tourists; thus, it makes it difficult to make any sales and generate income.

*“Tourism business is unpredictable. You could stay a whole week without selling.” - Nyati*

*“There are times when I come to the market and am idle because there are no tourists or customers. I cry actual tears. Sometimes, I make about KES 200 or KES 300, which are peanuts but better than nothing. It is really difficult to sell handicrafts sometimes.” - Pendo*

Secondly, handicrafts have slim margins, which means that the financial incentives from the sales are limited.

*“We make very slim margins. They think that we make a lot of money because the products are expensive, but raw materials are also very expensive, we make little profit” - Mamba*

The small margins further suggest that artisans can only generate a significant income if the handicrafts are sold in large volumes and operational costs are minimised. Unfortunately, this is hard to achieve, given that artisans manually make handicrafts (Tregear, 2005; Ferreira, Sousa and Gonçalves, 2019; Hoyte, 2019). Thus, limiting their ability to produce large volumes of handicrafts. Similarly, the artisans attest that recurring operational costs are challenging to control and minimise. Consequently, they find it difficult to maximise their profits.

Thirdly, the artisans' sales are also affected by intermediaries like middlemen, tour guides and brokers. These intermediaries determine the access to tourists, thus directly affecting the level of income. They also decide the prices of handicrafts, which impact the artisans' profit margins. Additionally, due to the high competition for tourists and the need for eased access, artisans experience constant pressure to bribe intermediaries, specifically brokers and tour guides. In doing so, they take money from the businesses, which may compromise

their income. Moreover, the artisans narrate how middlemen and brokers notoriously buy handicrafts on credit. However, due to the informal agreements, they default on payments and generate losses. Therefore, the findings show that these intermediaries form part of the financial challenges that artisans experience.

Fourthly, the findings reveal that income is determined by the selling prices, which the artisans say are always negotiable and depend on the bargaining power of the customers. As alluded to, international tourists tend to pay more for handicrafts than domestic tourists; however, there is no fixed price for handicrafts. Therefore, when desperate, the artisans sell handicrafts at throw-away prices.

*“The prices of handicrafts are negotiable. There is no fixed price. So, it brings challenges, which can result in desperation. For instance, when you meet with a rich person, you might be desperate and decide to settle on any price they give you. That is a challenge”- Heroe*

The desperation affects their income and displays the artisans’ challenging experiences. Similarly, desperation makes them more vulnerable as they quickly settle to sell at prices that oppress them. This illustrates the informality of pricing and raises the need for structured costs, which the artisans say would stabilise sales income and minimise customer exploitation.

Lastly, it appears that the lack of access to credit facilities from financial institutions such as banks, cooperative societies, and microfinance institutions heightens the artisans’ financial vulnerability. These institutions need collateral or a minimum deposit that the artisans cannot attain; thus, the financial system alienates them. Besides this, the few artisans with active bank accounts express that the loan application processes are long and are unaware of the entire process. Moreover, the banks charge high-interest rates that make the loan expensive to service. For this reason, many artisans fear borrowing from financial institutions due to the concern of defaulting on loan repayment. Hence, limiting their options for financial aid.

*“I have never sought money from any bank or SACCO [Savings and Credit Co-operative Society] because I fear defaulting on the loan. It is expensive, and I fear I may not have money to service it.”- Kifaru*

The above reveals that the structural environment and policies hinder how artisans seek financial breakthroughs and aid. It also suggests that the informal sector lacks favourable policies and a supportive environment to seek financial aid from financial institutions.

Furthermore, it alludes that financial institutions have neglected and failed to consider businesses in the informal sector within their procedures. Alongside these, the findings are consistent with existing literature, which denotes that the informal sector does not have easy access to credit from financial institutions due to factors such as lack of collateral (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004). The limited access to credit facilities means that artisans, alongside their families and dependents, must depend on unsteady and insufficient financial resources to sustain their livelihoods, which risks creating poverty.

In summary, the findings suggest that artisans experience financial distress due to reduced income caused by the lack of sales, slim margins, unstructured pricing, intermediaries' interference, and limited access to credit facilities.

### **6.2.1 Livelihood Struggles Caused by Financial Distress**

As a result of reduced or lack of financial resources, the artisans' financial distress is manifested through livelihood challenges like poverty, starvation, and a lack of rent, medical supplies and school fees for their dependents. Furthermore, the lack of finances is echoed in the lack of capital to invest in permanent business structures and raw materials. Thus, suggesting that artisans are in a constant state of adversity, where they struggle to survive.

*"I have many challenges. I am home now. I have kids that will be going back to school. I do not know how I will manage to take them to school. There is no money. There are no sales.*

*There are no customers" – Nyati*

The challenges highlighted above were prominent throughout the interviews. On many occasions, the artisans sought help from the researcher:

*"Once you finish the research, is there any help that you can give to us?"- Sofia*

*"If you get anything, please help us. If you hear about any support or money, please let me know."- Duma*

It is possible that the artisans viewed the researcher as a 'beacon of hope' and as someone who could resolve some, if not all, their challenges. The above also implies that artisans lack a voice and a platform to share their grievances; hence, they do so at any available opportunity. It also suggests that artisans are vulnerable and desperate for assistance. Generally, it highlights the challenges and livelihood struggles that artisans experience.

In summary, the above displays how low and inconsistent income results in the artisans' financial distress and increased vulnerability. Likewise, it reveals how structural factors beyond the artisans' control can heighten financial vulnerability. Notably, it reiterates that financial capital is necessary for the artisans' sustained livelihoods.

### **6.3 Limited Physical Capital and Heightened Vulnerability**

Physical capital is an essential resource for sustaining livelihoods. It entails tools and equipment that promote productivity and basic infrastructures like secure shelter, supply of water, affordable energy and transportation (Chambers and Conway, 1992; DFID, 1999). Thus, limited access to this resource will likely make people more vulnerable. In this regard, the findings point out that artisans have limited access to physical capital, which has made them vulnerable. The following section elaborates on this, specifically, the lack of permanent business premises, harassment and eviction from business premises, and the lack of tools and equipment.

#### **6.3.1 Lack of Permanent Business Premises**

It is apparent that most artisans do not have a permanent business premise. Instead, they work either in open-air markets or semi-permanent structures. This is mainly because of the limited financial resources that do not allow them to rent out premises with permanent structures. It is also due to the informality of their businesses, which do not allow them to get rental agreements.

The findings further suggest that this causes many challenges for the artisans. For example, due to the lack of a permanent premise, most artisans are forced to constantly transport handicraft inventory from one place to another, resulting in added transportation costs and slim profit margins.

*“The challenge is that there is no permanent business premise. At Maasai market, we have to go to different markets each day, which is very expensive because we pay for transport and storage every time. It would have been better to get a permanent place where we can sell our items.”- Kifaru*

The constant transportation also increases the risk of handicrafts breaking or getting spoilt while in transit; thus, the artisans are forced to persevere or seek nearby storage spaces.

Nevertheless, the storage stores come at extra costs, which many artisans say they avoid by turning their homes into workshops. The lucky few artisans in Nairobi who can afford to rent workshops manage to do so in informal markets such as Kariokor and Gikomba, where they also work in clusters of artisans with shared commonalities like tribe, gender, or product range.

The absence of permanent structures exposes the artisans to adverse weather conditions such as heavy rainfall and the scorching sun. Consequently, they are forced to close their businesses and reduce working days, especially when it rains. Likewise, the artisans narrate how customers are less likely to visit the open-air market during heavy rains or scorching days. Furthermore, artisans say handicrafts get spoilt due to exposure to these adverse conditions. Case in point, they complain that the scorching sun erodes the paint on wood and stone carvings and that some handicrafts crack and break due to long-term exposure to the sun.

*“I usually go to Maasai market, but because it is an open-air market, there are challenges of adverse weather conditions. For instance, when it rains, the business stops. The sun can also be scorching during the hot seasons, which spoils the handicrafts.” Nyati*

The artisans are forced to implement temporary solutions like using umbrellas to adapt to harsh weather conditions. They narrate that they initially used polythene papers to protect themselves. However, the government has since banned polythene papers, thus limiting their options to umbrellas, which are cumbersome to carry and may be too small to cover all their handicrafts.

*“During the rainy days or scorching sun, we use umbrellas. Those who can afford tents have them. The government banned polythene papers. Otherwise, they would have been good for covering against the sun or rain. I have lost some inventory because of the sun rays, which discoloured them... As we speak, I am at the market using an umbrella to shield me from the sun. It would be great to get a shade at the market.” - Zawadi*

It appears that operating in open-air markets also risks the health and safety of artisans. They are exposed to many risks, such as vehicles ramming into them while running their businesses by the roadside. Other hazards include constant exposure to dust and a dirty environment, which compromise their health and safety while striving to make a living.

*“In Kariorkor, I operate in the open market by the roadside. There is dust, and the motorists are ruthless. One time, I was selling by the road, and a vehicle rammed into me. Everything got scattered on the road. I screamed, and people selling at the market came to help me. Luckily, I was not hurt badly, but I lost a lot of property. The sad thing is that the driver of that car did not care much. He was a rich man. He got off, drove away, and returned to life as usual. Cars ram into people here all the time, but the government has ignored it completely even after we have reported it several times.” - Rehema*

The informal and open environment also exposes wooden handicrafts to insects and termites that eat the wood.

*“Another challenge is that I have handicraft inventory that termites and insects have destroyed. We work in the open, so the insects just come. It is hard to control” - Ndovu*

The artisans say that all the challenges can be resolved by a conducive environment free from pests and insects, which destroy their sources of livelihood.

Due to the challenges mentioned above, some artisans are forced to rely on their homes as workshops. However, this poses further challenges like the lack of optimum visibility of their handicrafts, reduced interactions with tourists and constant transportation of handicrafts between their homes and the market.

*“I sell the handicrafts at Maasai market, but it is not permanent, and you cannot go there when it rains, so I have to operate from home. The problem with this is that tourists cannot come to my home, so it is difficult to make a living” – Sokwe*

Therefore, it is evident that the lack of a permanent business premise negatively affects the livelihoods of artisans. Some desired livelihood outcomes within the SLA framework include more income, increased well-being, and reduced vulnerability (DFID, 1999). However, the limited physical capital means artisans are forced to work in open-air markets and impermanent structures. These create challenges of reduced working days that limit generated income, high transportation and storage costs, risk of spoilt inventory, and health and safety risks, to mention a few. Cumulatively, these challenges heighten the artisans’ vulnerability and compromise their livelihood outcomes.

A permanent premise would allow the artisans to work in a stable environment, reduce the inventory transportation costs, minimise movements between places, protect themselves

and their handicrafts from adverse weather conditions, and significantly reduce the health and safety risks associated with operating by the roadside or in the open air. However, a permanent space would also mean that the artisans would have to pay rent, which may be unattainable due to inconsistent income and slim profit margins.

### **6.3.2 Harassment and Eviction from Business Premises**

As elaborately discussed in section 5.2, artisans are harassed and evicted from business premises. To recap, the artisans narrate that their lack of business premises and roadside operations makes the government perceive them as undesirable in urban planning. Hence, the government institutions evict them and destroy or confiscate their handicrafts. As alluded to, this is also the case in several informal markets in the Global South, where authorities evict players because they use up spaces unintended for informal businesses (Brata, 2010). As mentioned, this can be due to Okwaroh and Opiyo (2018) observation that the urban spaces in SSA are driven by neo-liberal ideas, which deem the informal sector as undesirable because it does not fit the Western model of urban development. Likewise, it could also be attributed to Kenya's colonial history, whose values have led to the perception that the informal sector is inferior to its formal counterparts. This is highlighted by Sambajee and Weston (2015), who explain that owing to the colonial history, the informal sector lacks a supportive business environment despite its prevalence.

### **6.3.3 Lack of Tools and Equipment**

As alluded to, equipment and tools form part of people's physical capital needed to make a living (DFID, 1999). However, the findings show that the artisans lack the necessary tools and machinery to make handicrafts due to the lack of financial resources.

*“There are limited tools and materials in jua kali. I manually make handicrafts using my hands. There are some machines for different production processes like filing and cutting, but the lack of tools is problematic. I do not have the funds to access the latest machinery and tools. I have to keep using my hands, but it takes a lot of time.” – Kongoni*

The finding confirms that artisans use manual techniques (Hoyte, 2019; Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019), implying that they heavily rely on their hands, which may slow the production process. Furthermore, as they cannot afford the latest machinery, their production will likely

remain informal and operate on small scales. This will likely compromise the artisans' livelihoods as they compete with mass-produced handicrafts imported from countries like China (Grobar, 2019). Hence, they need tools and equipment to aid the production of quality handicrafts in the competitive informal sector.

## **6.4 Negligence and Harassment by Government, Institutions, and Intermediaries**

### **6.4.1 Government and Relevant Institutions**

As elaborately discussed in section 5.2, it is apparent that the government and other relevant institutions neglect artisans. As a result, the artisans do not feel recognised despite their value to the tourism industry. They also lack supportive structures and policies. For instance, the Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism does not have active supportive policies for artisans in the industry. Besides this, the informal sector is not acknowledged in the ministry's reports. To demonstrate, a sample of the current annual reports reveals that the ministry heavily focuses on international tourism, marketing Kenya as a tourism destination, and wildlife conservations (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2020; Tourism Research Institute, 2020a; Magical Kenya, 2021). This is not to say that these focus areas in tourism are wrong, but to point out that the informal sector in tourism is not recognised in the relevant reports.

On the other hand, the national and county governments appear to ignore the informal sector in urban development. As mentioned, the informal sector is perceived as inferior and not aesthetically pleasing; thus, the *jua kali* has been harassed and evicted. Similarly, urban and tourism planning does not consider the access of tourists to the informal markets, limiting the exposure of artisans to tourists. This implies that the government and relevant institutions have not prioritised the needs of the informal sector. It also suggests that the interests of the government and other relevant institutions are misaligned with the artisans' interests. For this reason, the artisans lack a voice and a platform to air their grievances.

As pointed out earlier, the Kenyan government and other relevant institutions likely do not support PPT approaches. As a result, artisans do not directly receive any trickled benefits from the tourism industry; instead, they are neglected and marginalised. Government and institutions are responsible for reducing vulnerability in the informal sector, which they can do by ensuring favourable policies and offering the necessary support to sustain livelihoods (Okwaroh and Opiyo, 2018).

### **6.4.2 Intermediaries**

As explained in section 5.5, intermediaries are part of structures that offer a challenging environment for the artisans. They are manipulative; hence, they use their powers to oppress artisans. These include brokers and tour guides who abuse their power and influence to determine access to tourists. They exploit artisans by having access fees, managing transactions and price negotiations, and affecting profit margins. On the other hand, middlemen manipulate artisans by defaulting on credit and buying handicrafts at exploitative prices.

Furthermore, the brokers and middlemen, who also serve tourists, intensify the existing competition within the informal sector. The sector already experiences high competition due to the ease of entry and minimal capital requirements, coupled with the sale of similar commodities and a high supply of goods (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004; Koens, 2012). Hence, the intermediaries threaten the artisan's source of livelihood. Moreover, intermediaries appear more powerful, influential, and connected to the police; thus, they allegedly bribe and talk their way out of police custody whenever artisans report them. This displays how the artisans lack a voice and a platform to air their grievances. It also displays how the artisans lack structures to support and cater to their needs.

Alongside this, and as highlighted earlier, intermediaries may create an unpleasant experience for tourists. They do this by driving and selling handicrafts at inflated prices and deceiving tourists about the markets and artisans. Thus, in extreme cases, they risk the reputation of the tourism destination and the possibility of repeat customers, which ultimately affects artisans who work in the same areas.

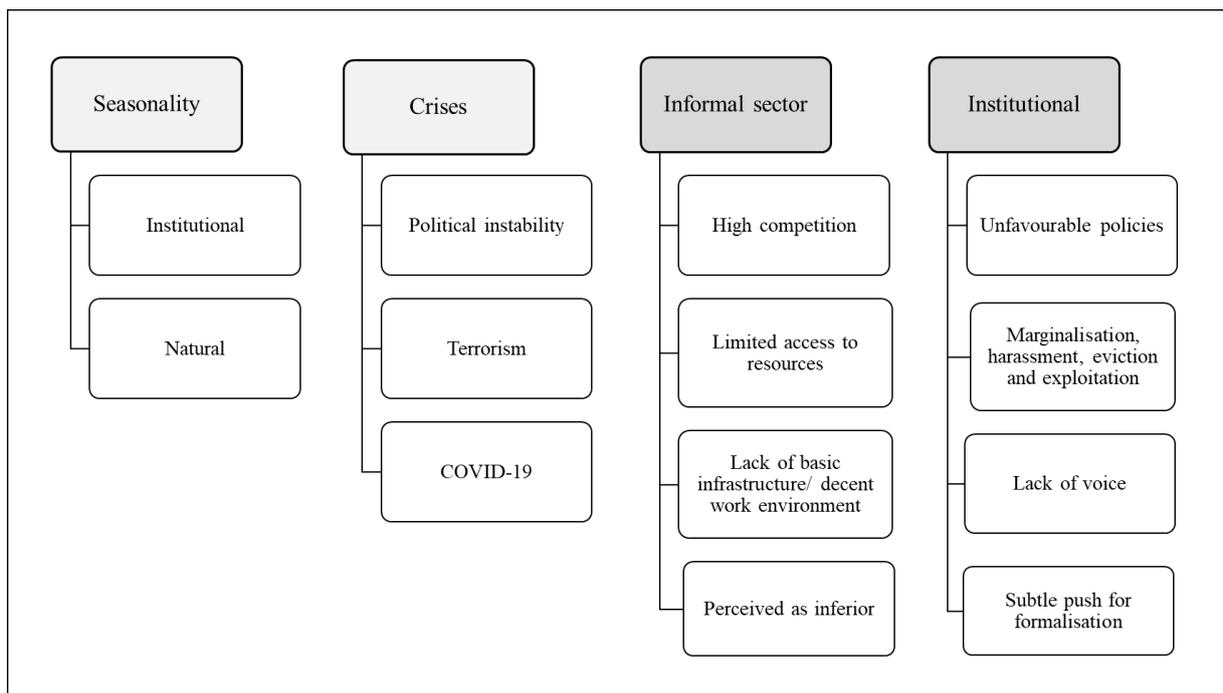
Therefore, the discussion above reveals how intermediaries heighten the artisans' vulnerability.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

To this end, it is evident that artisans are in a constant state of adversity that makes them vulnerable. They experience ongoing challenges in the tourism industry and the informal sector. More specifically, in the tourism industry, they experience seasonality and crises such as political instabilities, terrorism, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic, which create fluctuations within the industry. They also operate in the informal sector, where they experience high competition, limited access to resources such as financial and physical capital

and are perceived as inferior. In addition, they work in an institutional context, where they do not have a voice, lack favourable policies, and are marginalised, harassed, evicted, and exploited by the institutions meant to protect and support them. Likewise, they experience subtle pressure to formalise their businesses, as government institutions only support registered businesses.

Based on the findings, Figure 6.1 below depicts the challenges that artisans experience. These challenges make them vulnerable and are a threat to their sustainable livelihoods.



*Figure 6.1: Challenges that Artisans Experience*

*Source: Author's Figure Based on Findings*

While the study was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have intensified challenges, it is evident that these challenges existed or would exist without the pandemic. Thus, it is likely that this would still be the case had the COVID-19 pandemic not happened. It is pertinent to reiterate that these challenges are continuous, which suggests that artisans experience constant adversity and vulnerability.

Overall, this chapter has addressed one of the objectives, which seeks to explore the challenges informal artisan entrepreneurs experience in the informal sector and the tourism industry. The chapter is also a building block towards understanding how artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry.

## **7. RESILIENCE IN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS**

The previous chapter discussed how artisans are vulnerable because of the challenges they experience. However, despite their vulnerability, they persist in working in the informal sector in tourism. The findings show they have worked within the context for several years and generations. In particular, the sampled artisans have operated their businesses for an average of approximately 20 years. This implies they have found ways to handle the challenges caused by turmoil, crises, instability, and uncertainty in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

Therefore, this chapter is dedicated to understanding how informal artisans handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry. The chapter will address these research objectives in two parts. First, it will discuss how artisans handle the challenges they experience through coping and adaptation. Second, it will discuss the motivators and driving factors that enable artisans to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism while facing challenges. Notably, the chapter will discuss how these are linked to the resilience of artisans and reiterate the essence of the concept in explaining the phenomenon. In doing so, the chapter will contribute towards understanding how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges.

### **7.1 Handling Challenges through Coping and Adaptation**

As pointed out, the Kenyan tourism industry is not new to crises such as political instability, terrorism and the recent COVID-19 pandemic (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008; Mayaka and Prasad, 2012; Buigut and Amendah, 2016; Muragu, Nyadera and Mbugua, 2021). This implies that artisans are not new to crises, which are known to heighten the vulnerability of marginalised people in tourism (Baker and Coulter, 2007). They also experience seasonal changes in tourism, which create fluctuations in demand for handicrafts. Besides this, they also experience the precarious informal sector where they are neglected and harassed by authorities and intermediaries, perceived as inferior, and lack basic infrastructure and essential resources. Likewise, they work in a competitive environment that threatens their business sustenance. Artisans attest that these crises and challenges have impacted their livelihoods; hence, they have devised ways to cope and adapt.

The ability of artisans to cope and adapt to crises and challenges is essential to consider. This is because sustainable livelihoods can be assessed by the ability of people to respond to crises (Johnson, 1997) and their ability to cope and adapt to shocks and stresses (DFID,1999; Chambers and Conway, 1992). All of which translates to their resilience.

Given this understanding, the findings point to the artisans' resilience. The following sections will discuss this further. It will first discuss how artisans cope and adapt to seasonality, a recurring phenomenon in the tourism industry. This will be followed by a discussion of how they cope and adapt to crises and the other challenges they experience in the informal sector in tourism.

### **7.1.1 Coping and Adaptation to Tourism Seasonality**

As pointed out, the tourism industry is highly seasonal. To recap, the artisans say that the high tourism seasons are in April because of the Easter holidays, followed by July to December, with December being the peak. On the other hand, low tourism seasons happen from January to March, followed by May to June, and in some cases, October. Seasonality, albeit known to the artisans, is part of the stresses of the tourism industry, primarily because they affect how artisans make a living. For example, seasonality may result in fewer tourists and loss of income, meaning that artisans do not consistently make a living throughout the year.

The seasonal phenomena elicit various reactions from the artisans. For instance, during the low seasons in tourism, some artisans display sentiments of optimism and perseverance, which suggest that they are familiar with the phenomena and remain hopeful that seasonality will follow the same patterns each year.

*“I know that the low season is just a part of life, just like there is a time for soaring and harvesting, there is a time for high and low season.”- Sofia*

This also suggests that artisans are resilient, as the entrepreneurial theory of resilience prescribes such sentiments of hope, optimism and perseverance as the dimensions of resilience (De Vries and Shields, 2006;Ayala and Manzano, 2014;Korber and McNaughton, 2018).

Notably, the findings show that artisans have found ways to navigate the low season. For example, during this period, the artisans narrate that they take the time to focus on making

high volumes of handicrafts. This is in readiness for the high season, characterised by a higher number of tourists.

*“I do nothing else; I just stay on during the low season and await the high season. During the low season, I make my handicrafts so that in the high season, I will have enough inventory to satisfy the tourists.”- Nyati*

Due to fewer tourists and reduced income from the industry, some artisans temporarily stop their business operations and migrate to rural areas where they depend on subsistence farming. This is consistent with the discussions of Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012), who point out that informal entrepreneurs tend to temporarily close their businesses and open back up during the high seasons. Thus, suggesting that it is a usual practice.

On the flip side, the artisans say business is good in the high seasons. During these periods, they save money and prioritise major living expenses such as paying school fees for their dependents and paying rent for their homes. They also take this time to pre-plan their businesses and buy raw materials.

*“During the high season, the business is usually very good. So, at that time, I get to save a lot of money and make the main payments like school fees and college fees for the kids. I have to plan my expenditure all the time so that I prioritise major expenditures when I have the money”- Duma*

The above shows that artisans have found ways to cope with this phenomenon and display their ability to plan and manage seasonality. As mentioned, seasonality is a prominent phenomenon in the tourism industry (Martin and Martinez, 2020). Thus, it is not new to artisans, who are accustomed to it, having experienced seasonality since time immemorial.

Moreover, the findings suggest that the familiarity and experience with this phenomenon have resulted in artisans’ adaptation over time, evident in how they plan and manage seasonality. Adaptation involves living and dealing with changes over time (Berkes, 2007), which the artisans seem to have achieved, given their response to seasonality. These successful responses to stressful events are a form of resilience (Sonn and Fisher, 1998), demonstrating the artisans’ adaptation to the tourism industry. Likewise, their ability to plan and manage the seasonality in tourism displays their entrepreneurial and strategic traits.

Nevertheless, despite the seasonal changes being certain and expected, the findings highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the seasonal patterns in tourism, which shocked the artisans. For this reason, the pandemic is likely to trigger diverse ways artisans will cope with future seasonality in tourism. Thus, there is a possibility of changes to their future coping and adaptation strategies.

### **7.1.2 Coping with Crises and Other Challenges in the Informal Sector and the Tourism Industry**

Having discussed how artisans cope and adapt to the recurring seasonality, the following section will discuss how they cope and adapt to crises and other challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. In particular, the section will elaborate on how they cope and adapt through the temporary closure of business, intensified use of handicrafts to diversify customers, use of social capital, and the use of technology through mobile phones, social media and financial technology.

#### **i. Temporary Closure of Business**

To cope with crises in the tourism industry, some artisans temporarily close their businesses, with some temporarily relocating from the urban areas to their rural homes. However, the artisans narrate that they only do this in extreme crises, such as the post-election violence of 2007/08, which led to political tensions, safety fears and a steep decline in tourism (CEIC, 2020; Buigut and Masinde, 2021). The artisans further describe that these political tensions are felt whenever there are general elections in Kenya, like in 2013 and 2017, making them uncertain about the tourism industry. Notably, the artisans narrate that they always return to the tourism industry after stability is restored, which can sometimes take several months.

*“During the 2007 post-election violence, I left the tourism industry because sales were low... but as soon as things in the industry started picking up, I came back to tourism.”- Sofia*

Besides this, the findings suggest that some artisans temporarily closed their businesses during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in early to mid-2020. The drastic decline in tourists, local travel restrictions, and future uncertainty drove this. The artisans describe this as

necessary because they experienced low income and losses. Therefore, the temporary closures were needed to save money on operational costs such as rent.

*“There are no tourists that can buy my handicrafts for now, so I moved to the rural area. I still have inventory in the store. I will go back once the COVID situation gets better.”- Nyati*

While the pandemic continues to be a reality, the artisans who closed their businesses say they remain hopeful that local and global travel restrictions will ease. The follow-up interviews done between June and August 2021 revealed that some artisans had resumed partial or complete operations in the tourism industry despite the uncertainty. Likewise, they acknowledge that the tourism industry has ups and downs, suggesting they are used to dealing with crises. This familiarity with crises in tourism may explain why they remain optimistic about returning to the industry despite temporarily closing their businesses.

Key to note is that despite the temporary closure of businesses, the artisans keep making handicrafts. Case in point, the artisans who temporarily closed their businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic said that they kept making handicrafts from their homes.

*“I still make handicrafts while at home. I actually have some here at home, so when I go back to Nairobi, I will take them with me. I cannot help it. I find myself making them all the time.”*

*- Nyati*

*“When the pandemic happened, I moved from Narok to my rural home in Nyeri. I am still making handicrafts... This art is something that comes from the heart. Even when I do not have any orders or tourists, I just find myself doing it.” Mamba*

This implies that despite business closures or relocations, making handicrafts is a continuous process. It also suggests that it is an ingrained practice, hence, the artisans’ persistence in making handicrafts.

## **ii. Intensified Use of Handicrafts to Diversify Customers**

As pointed out in chapter 4, the findings show that artisans primarily depend on the tourism industry for their livelihoods; thus, this is their main economic activity. Nonetheless, due to livelihood pressures and the turbulent nature of the tourism industry, some artisans have adapted to challenges by diversifying their customers outside of tourism. As highlighted, these

customers include households that buy sculptures as home decorations, local people who buy beaded ornaments like necklaces, bracelets, and belts as fashion accessories and locals who buy handicrafts as gift items. It also includes intermediaries who buy handicrafts for resale. The findings show that the move to diversify customers intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which artisans described as necessary because of the decline in tourism.

By diversifying their customers, the artisans made a living during the pandemic while maintaining the making of handicrafts. Thus, displaying the relevance of handicrafts in assisting artisans in diversifying their livelihoods outside of tourism.

*“My main customers were tourists, though the pandemic reduced the number of tourists. Things are slightly better now compared to last year in 2020. I get a few tourists here and there. However, because of COVID-19, I have had to look into other customers. Now, I also sell to middlemen who export handicrafts to other countries.” - Dalila*

Diverse sources of income and the availability of other resources increase people’s options for livelihood strategies, which may increase their resilience (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003). While artisans do not actively engage in other economic activities, handicrafts have become valuable in diversifying livelihood strategies outside tourism. This means that artisans who take up such opportunities may have greater chances of achieving increased working days, reduced vulnerability and more income, which are the desired livelihood outcomes for many poor and vulnerable people (Scoones, 1998; DFID, 1999). Therefore, generating income from selling handicrafts to diverse customer segments allows artisans to build resilience and cope and adapt to the turbulent tourism industry and the precarious informal sector.

### **iii. Reliance on Social Capital to Cope with Challenges**

The findings show that social capital, which includes social networks, affiliate groups, and connections (Scoones, 1998), helps artisans cope and adapt to limited resources, crises and the precarious informal sector in tourism. This is displayed on various occasions. For example, as highlighted in chapter 4, artisans get financial support from their social networks, such as the *chama*, friends, family, and colleagues during crises.

*“There are times when people do not have bus fares to get them home, so they loan from each other. If you do not have friends or if your spouse does not have a job, you will really suffer.” - Zawadi*

The financial support enables artisans to cope with financial vulnerability, hence boosting and providing a cushion for their financial capital. Besides this, the artisans draw on their friends to aid with business premises, thus helping them continue their operations and cope with the lack of physical capital. Furthermore, to deal with competition, artisans draw on their social capital, specifically intermediaries like middlemen, brokers, and tour guides, to help them access tourists and distribute their handicrafts.

The above aligns with the discussions of Häuberer (2011) on social capital theory. She denotes that social relationships based on trust and norms form a basis for people accessing embedded resources. It also aligns with Bourdieu (1986) theory of capital, which denotes that people with good social capital tend to access more resources than those with minimal social capital. The findings show that these resources may include financial and physical capital that artisans can access through their social capital.

In addition, the artisans draw strength and motivation from their interactions with fellow artisans, customers, and family members, who build their resilience during challenges like crises and low tourism seasonality. This suggests that artisans find comfort and cushion in their social relationships and networks.

*“I rely on my sisters when I have financial challenges. I call them, and they send me money... I depend on my relatives when I do not have any more alternatives. They also encourage me and give me hope to keep pushing. In this life, you need to have people around you; otherwise, you cannot survive” – Habiba*

*“As artisans, I would say that we are all friends. We have each other’s shoulders to cry on. We know each other very well, too.” - Aisha*

As pointed out in chapter 4, the fostered social relationships are part of the artisans’ norms and practices, thus highlighting how symbiotic social and cultural practices such as providing communal support and looking out for each other can be a source of resilience for artisans. Through such norms and practices, the findings suggest that social structures and culture help people gain resilience (Webb, 2018). Therefore, the findings further imply the

need to consider culture in resilience, which Fleming and Ledogar (2008) acknowledge is still underdeveloped in resilience research.

In summary, the findings highlight the essence of social networks in sustaining informal business ventures and reiterate that social networks are one of the artisans' survival tactics and a source of resilience. It confirms Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012) discussion that social capital can be a source of resilience for informal entrepreneurs in tourism by providing support whenever there are limited livelihood resources and during periods of disruption in the tourism industry. It also confirms Uekusa (2019), Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton (2003) and Istanabi (2020) discussion that people with higher social capital demonstrate more resilience in their livelihoods. Therefore, social capital is an essential resource in enabling artisans to sustain their livelihoods by enabling coping and adaptation strategies. Moreover, the findings show that cultural norms and practices that foster social capital should be considered while theorising the resilience of artisans.

#### **iv. Use of Technology to Cope with Challenges**

The informal sector operates with limited technology (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004), which the findings suggest is the case for many artisans who do not have access to advanced technology. Despite this, the findings show that artisans use technology on their mobile phones to cope and adapt to challenges such as competition and a lack of financial resources. The following section discusses this in more detail. In particular, it discusses how artisans use mobile phones to cope with competition, social media platforms to diversify customers and conduct research, and financial technology to cope with financial distress.

##### **a. Use of mobile telephones to cope with competition**

Mobile phone devices are the main form of technology that artisans use. The findings show that they use the technology as a competitive advantage. For example, some artisans use mobile phones to deal with competition in the informal sector by taking customer orders over the telephones. Thus, winning them without physically competing for them in the market. This is important for the artisans because they operate in a highly competitive environment where similar products are targeted toward the same customer segments (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004; Koens, 2012; Damayanti, Scott and Ruhanen, 2018). Thus, they need to stand out amongst their competitors to make a living.

The findings also show that artisans use telephone technology to maintain relationships with their local customers and secure sales and referrals.

*“My phone is always on. I do not have a problem with people calling me because I usually get orders through the phone too. That is why I always pick up my phone... I even get orders from abroad through the phone.”- Sofia*

In this regard, the artisans use technology to cope with the stresses of competition and access the market, which is essential for their livelihoods. Hence, it highlights how technology, albeit minimal, can be used as a resource in the informal sector.

#### **b. Use of Social Media Technology**

##### **❖ Intensified use of social media to diversify customers outside of tourism**

Alongside using mobile phones to cope with competition, the findings show that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, artisans from the younger demography intensified the use of social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook. The artisans narrate that the pandemic significantly reduced the number of tourists, which increased the competition for a few tourists. Therefore, as the industry had no guaranteed income, they switched to using social media platforms to diversify their customer segments outside the primary tourist customers.

*“I saw in Narok that there is high competition within tourism, but no one sells on social media, so I saw the opportunity to overcome the competition by getting online...The competition is very stiff. Many people are selling handicrafts around that area, so we always compete for the tourists... The online business helps because a customer comes to me directly. I do not have to scramble for the customer...At the moment, social media is really helping and supporting me. My online customers refer their friends, which is great. Through social media, I can also get a class of customers that do not like coming to the market. People do not want to be out, and about these days, so social media helps in that way. I have been on Facebook since the pandemic. It has helped me tap into other kinds of customers”- Tembo*

Thus, social media can be a competitive advantage for artisans. It allows them to increase their reach and deal with intensified competition for tourists and other customers in the informal

sector. Furthermore, by managing the competition, the artisans can sustain their ways of making a living, especially during the turbulent periods in the tourism industry.

Nevertheless, the use of social media presents other challenges to artisans. For instance, due to their informality, there are risks of payment defaults, late order payments, and online scams.

*“I recently started an online shop on Instagram to sell handicrafts. I started the online shop this year when the pandemic hit [2020]. It is yet to pick up. Sales are not very good. Once I sell online, I arrange delivery for the customers. Sometimes, I arrange to meet with the customer when making the delivery. Customers make the order online. Some make a deposit, others pay in advance, and others do not. It varies from customer to customer. But it is very challenging. In fact, I am still hurt by what happened recently. I had looked for money and people to make handicrafts, and the customer blocked me online. I got an online order from a customer [intermediary]. He wanted many bracelets for the American Elections. The bracelets were for Biden and Trump. The arrangement was that I would make the bracelets and then send them to America, after which he would send me the money on delivery. I mobilised people and money, but the customer went quiet. I made everything, and the customer never got back to me. I felt like he was very unfair and rude. These are some of the challenges that I go through daily.” - Hawa*

The above suggests that informality likely drives such incidences. The artisans lack advanced business processes that ensure due diligence and formal contracts with local and foreign intermediaries or customers. Evidently, the reliance on word-of-mouth and informal online agreements exposes artisans to risks of getting scammed and heightens their vulnerability. Furthermore, the above also suggests that foreign intermediaries do not respect the artisans’ labour. This may be because of colonial history, which led to unequal power dynamics where the colonialists were viewed as superior and socially powerful (Bhabha, 2012). While this was not explicit here, the implied power dynamics between the artisan and the foreign intermediaries should be acknowledged.

Furthermore, the artisans describe how online businesses create risks of tourists knowing the prices of handicrafts beforehand, limiting them from selling their products at premium prices to optimise their income. Likewise, they attest that handicrafts do not have a fixed price; hence, they tend to get sold to international tourists at inflated prices, which is less likely to happen when they are sold online.

*“Online businesses affect us because many people sell online now, so the tourists know the price and challenge the price you give them. Some tourists say they can get handicrafts in their countries at cheaper prices. It is not like a long time ago when there were no online businesses.”- Bata*

The use of social media technology means that customers, including tourists, have visibility and access to the prices of handicrafts; thus, the artisans appear to lack opportunities to maximise their profit margins by selling handicrafts at premium prices.

Therefore, the findings show that using social media and telephone technology is one of the ways artisans cope and adapt to the shocks and stresses in the informal sector and the tourism industry. It is a plausible way for artisans to diversify their customers, increase visibility, and manage the competition. In so doing, they can sustain their businesses for a longer time, which positively sustains how they make a living. Nonetheless, the informality of businesses appears to create more risks for artisans who use online platforms to sell handicrafts. This suggests that social media technology may only be successful for the informal sector if the platforms are used appropriately and if formal agreements or contracts are enacted to protect artisans.

It is also critical to reiterate that access to the internet and social media platforms is still limited as many artisans use minimal technology and rely on traditional ways of doing business offline.

#### **❖ Use of social media to conduct market research and cope with competition**

Aside from using social media platforms to diversify customers outside of tourism, the findings reveal that artisans from the younger demographic use social media as a competitive advantage to conduct market research and gather industry news and trends. The artisans elaborate that the research allows them to make handicrafts with attractive designs; hence, they stand out against their competitors and improve their craft. Furthermore, they use smartphones to do market research on their competitors, such as the bigger curio shops and other formal counterparts.

*“I have a very good smartphone. I do not know much about technology, but the phone helps me to stay connected with my customers. Through the phone, I am also able to do some research. I have to research to keep up. So, I usually research the designs out there so that*

*customers can see my unique designs when they come. Through the research, I am also able to see what other bigger shops are doing in the design of their handicrafts”- Chui*

Market research allows artisans to benchmark their businesses and work on ways to improve. They are also able to enhance their creativity, which is critical for handicrafts. This is acknowledged by Suleiman (2021), who denotes that creativity in artisans can be enhanced using social media, which allows them to get ideas on how to modify or innovate designs. Thus, it is essential for artisans because social media may help them cope with the competition.

Nonetheless, using social media to research and modify handicrafts raises a question of authenticity. The more handicrafts are redesigned, the more they are likely to be less authentic and lack originality. This is also likely to promote negative commodification, where the meaning of cultural artefacts is modified to suit the tourists’ or customers’ needs while compromising the true meaning (Cole, 2007).

### **c. Use of Financial Technology (FinTech) to cope with financial distress**

Despite lacking access to bank accounts and loans, the findings show that some artisans utilise their mobile devices to seek short-term loans from micro-lenders and financial institutions.

*“Safaricom has an advanced MPESA system on the phone called Fuliza, so I use it when necessary to get an advanced loan. However, now, I cannot use Fuliza because I do not know where I will get the money to pay back the loan.” – Nyati*

*“There are mobile money loans like Tala, but the limit is small. They can give you about KES. 250, which is not helpful. They also charge a lot of interest and are expensive. You are likely to run at a loss with those mobile loans.”- Tausi*

As mentioned, the artisans do not have easy access to loans from banks and prominent financial institutions. Thus, they opt for mobile loans at institutions such as Fuliza by MPESA and Tala. These mobile money platforms allow the informal sector, including artisans, to readily access short-term loans and overdraft services through their mobile phones (Awani *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, financial technology allows them to cope with limited financial resources and

overcome the hurdles of accessing credit, such as the lack of collateral or specified minimum deposits.

Due to digitalisation, financial institutions can attract people who do not have access to traditional banking services; hence, there are more opportunities for financial inclusion of the poor in SSA (Alexander, Shi and Solomon, 2017). Yermack (2018) also points out that the advancements in technology and the development of communication infrastructure in SSA have increased financial inclusion among “unbankable” people. This may explain the artisans’ access to financial capital through financial technology.

Nonetheless, the findings show that some artisans are still apprehensive about using such technology due to the high-interest rates and the risks of getting poor credit scores. This implies that the artisans have similar perceptions of the credit risks associated with financial institutions and FinTech platforms. Hence, FinTech is not necessarily a panacea to the artisan’s financial challenges.

## **7.2 Sources of Resilience: Factors that Motivate the Persistence of Artisans in the Tourism Industry**

To this end, the chapter has discussed how artisans handle the challenges they experience through coping and adaptation and how these are associated with their resilience. However, while recognising this, it is also prudent to acknowledge that artisans have persistently worked in the challenging context for several years and generations. This suggests that there are factors that motivate their persistence, which can also translate to their resilience through the years.

As alluded to, research in sustainable livelihoods denotes that resilience is the ability of people to bounce back after facing livelihood challenges, thus, the ability to reduce and recover from vulnerability through coping and adaptation (Gwimbi, 2009). However, this definition may be problematic and simplistic because it does not consider the complex underlying factors driving and motivating vulnerable people to develop coping and adaptation strategies. Moreover, it ignores people’s values, norms, practices, aspirations, and cognitive styles that cause them to remain resilient.

On the other hand, within entrepreneurship studies, resilience is individualistic, as it focuses on personality traits and the entrepreneurs’ efforts to bounce back (Bernard and

Barbosa, 2016). As a result, the entrepreneur's social and institutional context is ignored, and the underlying factors and drivers of their persistence are not holistically considered. For this reason, the study went a step further to investigate these factors and considered the artisans' cultural, social, and institutional context to understand the sources of their resilience and the factors that drive and motivate them to persist in working in the challenging context. This was also an essential consideration as the social constructionism philosophical stance compels the researcher to explain the phenomenon in rich detail and consider the historical, geographical and socio-cultural contexts and how they affect the realities of the respondents (Saunders, 2019).

Therefore, the following section will discuss the artisan's sources of resilience and the factors that motivate them to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism despite their several challenges. In particular, it will discuss eight sources of resilience that strongly emerged from the data. These include the interaction with international tourists; skills and talents for making handicrafts; sense of independence and desire for autonomy; and the preservation of culture and heritage. They also include passion fuelled by creative fulfilment; traits of optimism, hope and perseverance; the necessity to generate income and support family members; and aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes. In some cases, these relate to the artisans' inflexibility towards other livelihood strategies, discussed in section 4.5.1.

### **7.2.1 Interactions with International Tourists: *Wazungu***

During the interviews, the word “*mzungu*” (*wazungu* in plural), a Swahili word for a white person, came up often, implying that artisans associate the tourism industry with white people. As pointed out in section 4.3.1, it is plausible that *wazungu* influence artisans to pursue livelihoods in the tourism industry. For instance, the artisans say they enjoy the interaction with *wazungu* customers.

*“I love interacting with tourists. I like speaking with people from different countries. I feel like I learn more. I am better than other jua kali people, like those who sell clothes in the market. Those are not known. Engaging with wazungu makes you known and famous” -*

*Duma*

*“I am motivated by the interactions I get with tourists from different countries. I meet tourists from all over the world, like America and Europe. I get to meet new people. The thing is, I*

*never know when I will meet these tourists, so I have to keep going to the market and wait to meet them.”- Habiba*

*“I am motivated by different interactions. Tourism allows me to deal with wazungu from other countries and not just from around, which is nice. Wazungu are good. I like it when I interact with them; they tell me so much about their countries, and we become friends”-*

*Farasi*

The above finding further suggests that artisans feel pleased and empowered when interacting with the *wazungu*. The interactions with *wazungu* specifically make them feel popular and better than other informal sector workers. The artisans narrate that they always look forward to such interactions and are elated by the possibility of establishing contact with *wazungu*.

As alluded to in earlier discussions, this may be a sign of power imbalance between artisans and international tourists and may highlight the perceived power that *wazungu* have. This can potentially be traced back to the country’s colonial history, which still lingers in how the local Africans perceive Western tourists as superior. Wijesinghe (2020), in particular, elaborates that colonialism promoted cultural hierarchy and supremacy, which is witnessed in the relationship between artisans and international tourists. Thus, the perceived power of the *wazungu* may explain why artisans feel superior when they associate themselves with international tourists. This may also be linked to Bhabha (2012) perspective on postcolonialism, which highlights the stereotypical power that Western colonies have based on their race or skin colour.

Besides this, the findings highlight the relevance of *wazungu* and other international tourists. Aside from these tourists playing a pivotal role in helping artisans make a living, they also appear to motivate artisans to work in the industry persistently. Notably, the interactions with *wazungu* boost the artisans’ confidence and sense of dignity, hence why they stay hopeful despite being vulnerable and marginalised. Cumulatively, these interactions, which create the feeling of prestige and popularity, may also contribute towards the artisan’s symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Therefore, the deep-rooted colonial legacy may explain why artisans persistently want to work in tourism and are inflexible towards other economic activities within the informal sector. This is because the tourism industry provides opportunities for artisans to engage and interact with *wazungu*, which they will likely not get in other industries.

While the study recognises these post-colonial effects, it is also prudent to note that it was carried out over telephone interviews and did not have immersive interactions with the artisans to assess their behaviours when engaging with tourists. Nonetheless, it is highly likely that the artisan's engagement with international tourists is not performative. This is sensible to acknowledge because postcolonial effects on the tourism industry may result in the performance and performativity of local communities when interacting with tourists (Vitorio, 2019). This is likely to drive inauthentic interactions between tourists and local communities. However, the findings suggest that the artisans' drive to persist in working in the tourism industry comes from the fulfilment they gain when interacting with tourists, not from a performative aspect.

### **7.2.2 The Skills and Talents for Making Handicrafts**

The artisans say that their skills and talent motivate them to make handicrafts, remain in the informal sector in tourism and cope with the challenges they experience. Thus, suggesting that handicraft-making skills and talent may be a source of resilience for artisans.

*“When COVID hit, I temporarily left tourism. But because it is my talent, I will keep doing it...I will keep making handicrafts in tourism because it is my talent.” – Heroe*

As discussed, the artisans' skills are primarily passed across different generations through cultural practices. Hence, they are ingrained skills that may form part of their embodied state of cultural capital (Huang, 2019). The findings suggest that such inherited and ingrained skills may result in the artisans' inflexibility towards other livelihood choices. This is similar to the findings of Simard *et al.*, (2019), who elaborated that artisans' skills may make them lack interest in pursuing other livelihood options. Likewise, the artisans' inherited skills may limit their scope of skills, thus restricting them from pursuing other economic activities outside the making of handicrafts. This is also elaborated by Daskon (2010), who explains that people with inherited skills tend to continue with their inherited skills because they lack other skills, which may allow them to pursue other ways of making a living.

Closely related to the above, the findings reveal that the sampled artisans have worked in the context for several years and generations. Hence, they appear to have amassed skills that have created a sense of familiarity and expertise, which drive them to work in the context.

*“I do not know anything else, so I cannot say I may quit my business. Even if I get money and go to the market to buy and sell clothes [a common business in the informal sector], that would not be my work. I would rather stick to the kind of work that I know. It is the work of my hands. If I said that I would quit tourism, I would be lying”- Aisha*

The familiarity may be due to the artisans’ habitus, which Crossley (2001) says is a force of habit and familiarity. Thieme (2008) and Dijk (2011) further elaborate that habitus results in ingrained practices and accumulated and internalised behaviours, which may explain why artisans have deeply rooted practices of making handicrafts over several years and generations. Likewise, this is acknowledged by Artayani *et al.*, (2020), who, while studying pot-making artisans, elaborate that resilience and persistence in making pots cannot be separated from habitus that has been culturally passed across generations. Notably, it appears the familiarity of using their skills and talents to make handicrafts makes artisans inflexible towards engaging in other livelihood strategies despite the diverse challenges they experience.

Additionally, artisans have gained specialised skills and expertise while working in the tourism industry for several years, which the findings suggest is a source of resilience. For example, due to their experience, skills and talents, the artisans can handle challenges like competition in the informal sector in tourism.

*“Competition amongst the artisans is not that big, especially for the talented ones. Because of talent, we can design different things. Few people can challenge that because only a few can make the same good quality and unique handicrafts. The competition is high among people who only know how to make the basic items. Very few and countable people have the extreme talent and skills to make uniquely crafted pieces. This makes us stand out from the rest”- Bata*

This is consistent with the views of Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl (2012), who found that tourism entrepreneurs with expertise survive and work longer in the industry. This is because they have dealt with shocks and stresses in the past; thus, they have the skills and capacity to deal with future uncertainties or challenges in tourism.

Therefore, the above reiterates how skills and talents distinguish artisans from the rest of the informal sector. Moreover, their skills and talents may explain how they have continued

to work in the context for several years and remained resilient to different shocks and stresses. Hence, it is crucial for their sustained livelihoods.

### **7.2.3 Sense of Independence and Desire for Autonomy**

As sole business owners, artisans can work independently and make a living. They say they highly value their independence and are proud to be self-employed, which motivates them to persist in operating businesses. Furthermore, independence allows artisans to make autonomous decisions and control how they manage and sustain their livelihoods, which they say would not be the case if they were employed.

*“I am motivated knowing that it is my own work. I can make things using my hands. I make things from scratch. It gives me pleasure and motivates me”- Aisha*

*“I like the independence. Once I make my money, there is no one to bother me”- Sofia*

*“This is my business; I am my own boss, which is nice.”- Rehemaa*

The above highlights the independence and self-efficacy of artisans. They believe that they can sufficiently perform tasks. Beattie (2016) and Karabulut (2016) describe this independence and self-efficacy as personality traits of entrepreneurs, thus confirming the artisans’ entrepreneurial nature. This finding also showcases the artisan’s agency, which Webb, Schirato and Danaher (2001) explain is the ability of someone to understand and take their actions. In this case, the artisans are motivated to act independently by owning a business, making handicrafts, and deciding to remain self-employed. Likewise, the findings show that artisans get a sense of satisfaction from independently owning a business rather than being employed. Thus, suggesting that such satisfaction may be a source of resilience that enables artisans to cope and adapt to challenges.

Additionally, the sense of independence may be a source of intrinsic motivation for artisans. Amabile (1997) examines that people are intrinsically motivated when they seek satisfaction and self-interest. Relatedly, Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that autonomy enhances intrinsic motivation. This may be the same for artisans whose autonomy and personal satisfaction motivate them to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism despite the challenges they face.

#### **7.2.4 Preservation of Culture and Heritage**

The findings highlight that some artisans are motivated to persist in working in the industry because their handicrafts preserve the country's culture and heritage.

*“I love being an artisan because it maintains our traditions and heritage. It gives me pride to do so. Therefore, I have to keep working in tourism to do so” – Twiga*

It shows that the artisans are remarkably aware of their significant role in the tourism industry, including their role in promoting Kenya's heritage and culture. They take pride in this contribution, which they say encourages them to keep making handicrafts despite the challenges that they experience. This confirms Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019) discussion that artisans are cultural entrepreneurs who value how they promote the cultural heritage of a place. It also showcases how the artisans look beyond their interests and are keen on the country's interests. Notably, it displays the irony of the artisans' interest in promoting Kenya's tourism industry but being neglected by institutions in the industry.

#### **7.2.5 Passion Fuelled by Creative Fulfilment**

Artisans seem motivated and driven by a passion for their work. They light up when they speak about what they enjoy in their work. They love making handicrafts, which appears to give them a great sense of personal fulfilment. The artisans further express that even though they experience many challenges and lack consistent income, their passion for making handicrafts drives them to keep going.

*“I do this from the bottom of my heart. I enjoy doing it even when I am not earning... Whether I have an order or not, I still make handicrafts because it is my passion. I am not sure when I will sell them, but I am still carving”- Bata*

Elfving, Brännback and Carsrud (2017) explain that passion among entrepreneurs fosters persistence and fuels motivation. This is similarly the case for artisans who are passionate about persistently making handicrafts for their livelihoods regardless of challenges. Thus, passion, which brings personal enjoyment, is not only a source of intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1997) but is also a source of resilience for artisans.

Notably, the findings suggest that the artisans' passion is associated with and fuelled by their creative fulfilment.

*“I do my business out of passion; I cannot imagine doing anything else. It is all I have done... I love my work so much because it is the work of my hands. I make everything with my hands, which I enjoy and get pleasure from. I am happy that I can make whatever a customer wants. I like that I can make things from scratch, straight from my mind using my own hands.*

*I love that it is my job” - Rehema*

Creativity is a form of innovation and the ability to create something unimaginable new (Suleiman, 2021). It is not surprising that this emerged as artisans are also perceived as creative entrepreneurs (Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Similarly, artisans are distinguished by their creativity in the tourism industry (Bakas, Duxbury and Vinagre de Castro, 2019), which the findings suggest fuels their passion for persistently making handicrafts.

Moreover, the findings imply that handicrafts are more than just a hobby or a way of making a living but a sentimental creative fulfilment. Thus, unlike other informal entrepreneurs who work in the informal sector for survival and out of the necessity to make money and sustain their livelihood (Adom, 2014; Welter, Smallbone and Pobol, 2015; Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018), the finding suggests that artisans work in the informal sector for creative fulfilment, which they prioritise.

### **7.2.6 Optimism, Hope, and Perseverance**

When asked why they kept working in the informal sector in tourism despite challenges, the artisans said they were always optimistic and hopeful that the circumstances would improve. For example, they believe the low tourism seasons will always be followed by high seasons, which promise more tourists. They also display optimism by continuously making handicrafts during challenging and uncertain periods in the tourism industry. Case in point, the artisans say that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen a sharp decline in tourists, they continue to make handicrafts with the hope that tourism will resume to the pre-pandemic condition.

*“Even when I do not make any sales, I am usually hopeful that I will be able to make a sale the next day. At the moment, I am hopeful that COVID will go away and that tourists will come again.” - Twiga*

*“The need for money is frustrating and can make you lose hope, but because I have the drive, I cannot lose hope, and I am optimistic that at the end of the day, I will make a sale” - Bata*

The artisans’ hope and optimism are also witnessed in how they positively perceive some of their challenges.

*“Challenges are always there. You have to get challenges for your business to continue. There is no work that does not have challenges. Challenges come and go. It is part of the business. There are ups and downs, just the way the earth has mountains and valleys” - Ndovu*

*“I know that the low season is just a part of life, just like there is a time for soaring and harvesting, there is a time for high and low season.” - Sofia*

Thus, it shows how the artisans optimistically perceive their challenges and vulnerability.

In addition to hope and optimism, the artisans say perseverance has gotten them through the most challenging times. They further attest that perseverance has enabled them to cope with their livelihood challenges.

*“We have a great level of perseverance. You have to persevere without greed. If you want to have money all the time, you will not survive in this business.” - Hawa*

Additionally, the artisans attribute their lengthy existence in the tourism industry to perseverance, which has helped them remain determined and persistent while working in the context. Therefore, suggesting how their perseverance is a source of resilience.

The artisans’ hope and optimism can be associated with their resilience. Panter-Brick (2015) explains that resilience among marginalised people can be conveyed through sustained hope, which is the case for artisans, who reiterate that they hardly lose hope. Instead, they express optimism and positivity. Hope, optimism, and perseverance can also be related to culture and resilience. For instance, Eggerman and Panter-Brick (2010) describe hope as the

belief that adversity would end, thus a source of resilience. They further elaborate that hope is related to cultural values such as faith, religious beliefs, family units, and morals. Hence, this suggests that culture may generate hope in the face of suffering and challenges. Furthermore, as highlighted above, the artisans display optimism in how they perceive the challenges that they experience. These beliefs and perceptions may form part of the artisans' culture, confirming the discussions of Kolawole (2014), who examined that culture can influence how people perceive and handle the challenges they experience. It is also consistent with the views of Cahn (2006), who pointed out that culture influences how people perceive vulnerability and risks and can be a source of resilience.

On the other hand, hope and optimism may also be associated with the entrepreneur's cognitive styles, such as persistence. For instance, Adomako *et al.*,(2016) elaborate that optimism builds persistence in entrepreneurship, which may explain why entrepreneurs are resilient to persist in engaging and working in their business ventures. Hmieleski and Baron (2009) also associate optimism with cognitive behaviours and reiterate its importance in helping entrepreneurs forge ahead despite obstacles. More generally, cognitive behavioural traits influence the resilience of entrepreneurs (Korber and McNaughton, 2018), and resilience can be a cognitive ability (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016).

Notably, Dijk (2011) observes that these cognitive behaviours are ignored in sustainable livelihood research. Therefore, the findings create the need for the SLA to recognise cognitive styles and behaviours in sustainable livelihoods. Chapter 8 discusses this in more detail.

### **7.2.7 The Necessity to Generate Income and Support Family Members**

The artisans are motivated by the income from handicrafts, which is crucial for their livelihoods. The income drives them to keep working in the informal sector in tourism.

*“I love my job because it has money. On the good days, I can make money. It makes good money sometimes, which I like”- Tembo*

The artisans narrate that money motivates them to keep working regardless of the shocks and stresses they experience. It also shows that the tourism industry can generate good income for artisans. Hence, they remain encouraged that there would be future opportunities to make money, such as the high tourism seasons and periods of stability in the industry. This underscores how financial capital plays a role in motivating and contributing to the resilience

of artisans. Likewise, it underpins Çakmak, Lie and McCabe (2018) argument that financial capital is the most significant asset for informal entrepreneurs.

Relatedly, artisans attest that the income from their work has allowed them to provide for their families and dependents; hence, they have witnessed how beneficial their work is and are motivated to keep doing the same thing to experience the benefits. In particular, the findings reveal that the artisans use their income to support their families.

*“This is the only kind of work that I do. It is what has sustained me so far. This is what I used to educate my children and cater for all the family needs.” - Simba*

This shows that artisans make handicrafts not only to sustain their livelihoods but also to support others. It also suggests that artisans work within a social context, where they work not only for themselves but also for their dependents and community.

Similarly, the findings reveal that family members, specifically spouses and children, may be a source of resilience for artisans. The pressure to support these family members by providing rent, school fees, food, and other household needs may drive the artisans to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism despite the challenges they experience.

*“This business provides for my livelihood. Through it, I can educate my children, pay rent and use it for the family that depends on me. There is no option. I have to work here to pay my bills and support my family.” - Sofia*

This shows that artisans may be forced to persistently work in the informal sector in tourism out of the necessity to provide for their dependents. In this case, it is consistent with the literature on the informal sector, which alluded that artisans gain motivation to work in the informal sector for survival and out of the necessity to sustain their livelihoods (Adom, 2014). It also shows that aside from individual traits and drivers, artisans have external sources of resilience, like their families. Moreover, it highlights how artisans value their families and dependents, hence why they continuously work in precarious conditions to provide.

### **7.2.8 Aspirations and Desired Livelihood Outcomes**

The findings show that the artisans' aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes motivate them to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism despite the challenges

they experience. As pointed out in appendix 1, these aspirations relate to meeting their family needs, i.e., supporting and educating their children, securing a better future for their families, building family homes, acquiring property, and meeting other basic needs of their dependents. In addition, these aspirations also relate to their entrepreneurial ambitions, as they aspire to grow the production of handicrafts, employ more people, get consistent income, and expand their businesses by acquiring permanent premises.

The findings further show that, unlike the SLA's assumptions, the artisan's desired livelihood outcomes go beyond their need for more income, reduced vulnerability, and more working days (DFID, 1999). Indeed, achieving such outcomes would benefit the artisans' livelihoods, but they want more. Beyond these, artisans desire and aspire to be heard. They want to have a voice, participate in policy creation and formulation, and be recognised for their positive contribution to the tourism industry and the economy.

The aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes are evidently sources of resilience for artisans. They are driven to persistently run their businesses to achieve these.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

This chapter explains the resilience of artisans in sustaining their livelihoods by expounding on how they handle the challenges they experience through coping and adaptation. More specifically, it explains how artisans cope with seasonality, crises and other challenges. In this regard, it expounds how artisans deal with unexpected crises and challenges in the tourism industry through the temporary closure of business while persisting in making handicrafts, the intensified use of handicrafts to target other kinds of customers and the use of social capital. Alongside this, it shows how some artisans have embraced technology in numerous ways. For instance, they use social media and mobile phones to reach and retain customers and to conduct market research on trends and competitors. Likewise, some artisans in the younger demographic use financial technology to access credit on their mobile phones. Thus, showing how technology can help artisans handle challenges.

This said, the chapter went a step further to expound on the sources of resilience and the factors that motivated artisans to persist in making handicrafts while facing challenges. These include their interaction with international tourists, which they cannot attain anywhere else, and their ingrained skills and talents of making handicrafts, which make them inflexible

towards other economic activities. It also includes their desire for independence and entrepreneurial autonomy, which motivates them to persist in running their businesses. Besides this, the artisans also sense the need to preserve culture and heritage, which drives them to persist in making handicrafts that embody the culture and heritage of the destination.

Furthermore, artisans are driven by passion and the need for creative fulfilment, which they gain when making handicrafts. Like many entrepreneurs, artisans also have individual and entrepreneurial aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes that push them to keep making handicrafts. Likewise, they also experience the pressure to provide for their families and dependents, who push them to persist in the sector. Notably, artisans maintain individual and collective attitudes of hope, optimism, and perseverance, which are attributes that enable them to persist in making handicrafts.

Therefore, by highlighting and discussing these, this chapter enables the study to achieve the research objective of understanding how informal artisan entrepreneurs handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry. More broadly, this chapter plays a part in understanding how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

Notably, the chapter enables a more in-depth understanding of resilience and draws theoretical implications for the concept. It points out that resilience is more complex than how it is denoted in the existing entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihood literature and theories. Chapter 8 discusses this theoretical implication in more detail and expounds on ways the study contributes to the understanding of resilience in the sustainable livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism.

## **8. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS**

This study sought to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Having discussed the key findings, this chapter will discuss theoretical implications. It will start by discussing how artisans sustain their livelihoods and elaborate on how their agency and socio-cultural structures enable them to do so. Collectively, these discussions will highlight the concepts that link to explain the phenomenon and address the research aim. This will also form a foundation for discussing other critical theoretical implications. In this regard, the chapter will also discuss the theoretical implications for resilience in sustainable livelihoods, specifically on the conceptualisation of resilience and the paradoxes of resilience and vulnerability. This will be followed by a discussion of the theoretical implications for the SLA Framework and the presentation of a more comprehensive conceptual framework.

Therefore, this chapter is integral in addressing the research aim and elaborating on the contributions to knowledge.

### **8.1 Sustainable Livelihoods: Key Enablers and Theoretical Implications**

As elaborated earlier and expounded in appendix 1, artisans use handicrafts as their primary livelihood strategy, meaning they rely on them to make a living. The handicrafts are manually hand-made, which portrays the artisans' skills. As discussed in chapter 4, the skills are primarily learnt through generational training and emerge as essential in initiating artisans into their entrepreneurial venture in the informal sector in tourism.

Artisans primarily sell handicrafts to domestic and international tourists to make a living. Hence, the tourism industry is core to their livelihoods. In some instances, they engage other customer segments, such as locals and intermediaries. However, while diversifying customers, artisans maintain handicrafts as their livelihood strategy. Thus, their livelihood strategy is limited to handicrafts, which may heighten their vulnerability.

As mentioned, artisans experience several challenges in the tourism industry and the informal sector. These challenges appear to be ongoing, implying that artisans are in constant adversity. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that despite the constant challenges, artisans have

persistently relied on handicrafts for their livelihoods and have continuously engaged in the informal sector in tourism. They have done so for several years and generations and display inflexibility towards other livelihood strategies within and outside the tourism industry. This finding implies that artisans have devised ways to cope and adapt to challenges to sustain their livelihoods. It also means that they have attributes and behaviours that enable them to sustain their livelihoods amidst the constant challenges.

Given the understanding of how artisans make a living through handicrafts, the following section will discuss other key factors that enable them to sustain their livelihoods, particularly their agency and socio-cultural structures. It will start by discussing the artisan's socio-cultural structures. More specifically, it will discuss how cultural values and norms influence the artisans' access to livelihood resources and their perceptions of vulnerability. It will also highlight how the artisans' social capital and some consequences of colonial history enable them to persist in engaging in the tourism industry. Additionally, the chapter will discuss the artisans' agency, displayed by their entrepreneurial traits. It will also discuss how artisans are unique from other entrepreneurs in the informal sector. This will show that they are actual entrepreneurs and that their entrepreneurial traits and unique attributes enable them to sustain their livelihoods.

Collectively, these will point to the attributes and circumstances that address how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Doing so will also draw theoretical implications for understanding the informal artisan entrepreneurs and the phenomenon.

### **8.1.1 Socio-cultural Structures that Enable Artisans to Sustain their Livelihoods**

#### **i. Culture Shapes the Artisans' Livelihood Resources and the Perceptions of Vulnerability**

As pointed out, culture is the sum total of people's systems of beliefs, behaviours, norms, values, attitudes, skills, customs and tangible and intangible knowledge that are preserved and passed from one generation to the other (Daskon, 2010; Andreatta and Ferraro, 2012; Irandu and Shah, 2016). It is a social structure (Hays, 1994) and comprises the ways of life that are interpreted and adapted by society (Gunnestad, 2006). Culture has emerged as integral in sustainable livelihoods by enabling access to livelihood resources and influencing the perception of vulnerability. These are discussed below.

### **a. Culture and Access to Livelihood Resources**

The SLA framework dictates five livelihood assets, popularly referred to as capitals. These include human capital, financial/economic capital, social capital, physical capital, and natural capital (Scoones, 1998). According to sustainable livelihood theories, these livelihood assets are resources people use to sustain their livelihoods. Thus, they form a basis for understanding how vulnerable people sustain their livelihoods (Morse and McNamara, 2013).

As noted in section 4.6, culture influences the artisans' livelihood resources in several ways. Regarding human capital, the artisan's skills and knowledge are heavily influenced by their norms, behaviours, and values, to mention a few. They are primarily passed from one generation to another, thus, suggesting that the skills are part of the inherited tacit knowledge and the artisans' culture. More specifically, the tacit knowledge of making handicrafts is a form of cultural capital (Cakmak, Lie and Selwyn, 2018; Artayani *et al.*, 2020) that exists in the embodied form of long-ingrained dispositions. These dispositions are ingrained through socialisation and interactions with family members and other social networks, which enable the artisans to pick up skills through apprenticeship, passive training, and observations. Thus, displaying how culture and cultural practices can be learned and acquired through interactions with others (Andreatta and Ferraro, 2012). Relatedly, through the cultural practices in the family units, artisans get support from family members who provide free labour, which is necessary for sustaining their businesses.

Furthermore, through these skills and knowledge that form their human capital, artisans make handicrafts, which symbolise the culture and heritage of the destination. Therefore, suggesting how the ingrained skills are intertwined with the livelihood strategy of handicrafts. The repeated cultural practices across generations may explain why artisans have made handicrafts and persistently worked in the tourism industry for many years with limited engagement in other economic activities. Thus, implying how cultural practices can determine people's livelihood strategies and influence livelihood decisions.

Additionally, there is evidence that community and social values have developed the artisans' social capital. This is shown in the relationship between artisans and their friends, colleagues, families, and *chama*. The social capital has accumulated over time and is based on mutual values of trust, community, friendships, and social interactions, which the findings suggest are essential in artisans' livelihoods. Notably, the findings reveal that artisans customarily seek financial resources from their social capital during financial distress, which

they otherwise cannot easily access from other financial institutions. This displays how cultural norms and practices within the social context can enable access to financial resources. Relatedly, artisans value a savings culture, which creates a financial cushion to sustain their livelihoods during shocks and stresses in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Saving money appears as a common practice amongst artisans, pointing to their agency and entrepreneurial nature.

Furthermore, there are cultural elements in how the artisans organise their physical capital. For example, they work in clusters within their business premises. The clusters comprise artisans with similarities like tribe, gender, and product ranges, thus displaying their cultural practices. Importantly, these practices have allowed artisans to reduce their vulnerability. For example, due to the lack of permanent business premises, artisans support each other by offering premises and storage facilities for handicrafts. Therefore, owing to the ingrained norms and practices, it is possible that social capital can reduce financial vulnerability and ease challenges with physical capital. This aligns with the discussions of Webb (2018), who points out that culture may help people overcome vulnerability.

#### **b. Culture and the Perceptions of Vulnerability**

Aside from shaping how artisans access livelihood resources to sustain their livelihoods, the findings suggest that culture shapes how artisans view and perceive challenges. As alluded to, artisans have individual and collective beliefs that stir up hope, optimism and perseverance, which influence how they perceive their experiences of vulnerability. These stem from their social capital, such as family, friends and colleagues, who provide moral support and encouragement. It also stems from communal beliefs based on religion, which instil hope, optimism and perseverance. Cumulatively, these contribute towards artisans viewing challenges as manageable and perceiving themselves as capable of overcoming the challenges they experience. Consequently, this likely contributes to their persistence in the tourism industry and the informal sector.

To conclude, the above discussions on artisans and culture are consistent with the views of Ratten, Costa and Bogers (2019), who describe artisans as cultural entrepreneurs. While this notion has mainly focused on the artisans' cultural handicrafts, the findings imply that it can be extended to encompass other aspects of their sustainable livelihoods, such as access to livelihood resources and the perceptions of vulnerability.

It is vital to acknowledge culture as an essential component of sustainable livelihoods. This is because culture has received insufficient consideration in the study of sustainable livelihoods. To illustrate, as pointed out in chapter 2, while there have been studies focused on livelihoods in the tourism industry, there has not been an explicit discussion on culture and livelihoods in tourism. This is except Ma *et al.*, (2020), who studied the influence of culture on sustainable livelihoods of households in rural tourism destinations of Wuhan. It also excludes Tao (2006) and Tao and Wall (2009), who studied tourism as a livelihood strategy amongst indigenous communities in Taiwan and recognised that livelihoods are sensitive to culture. Nonetheless, while these examples spotlight culture in sustainable livelihoods, they have focussed on rural households and communities as their units of analysis. Likewise, the studied rural households and communities have diverse non-tourism-related livelihood strategies such as cash-crop farming, fishing, hunting and wage employment. This is unlike this study, which focuses on informal artisan entrepreneurs who primarily rely on one livelihood strategy in a context where they experience continuous challenges. Consequently, this study provides new insight into the phenomena of sustainable livelihoods in tourism industry.

## **ii. Influence of Colonial History on Livelihood Decisions in the Tourism Industry**

As alluded to, the findings suggest that artisans engage in the tourism industry because it offers opportunities to engage with international tourists, popularly known as *wazungu*. These are opportunities they otherwise cannot get in other industries within and outside the informal sector. The artisans feel empowered, dignified, and superior when interacting with international tourists. They also associate *wazungu* with power, honour, and admiration. This may be attributed to the country's colonial history, which held that these Western people were superior to Africans. In this regard, it is consistent with the postcolonialism perspective of Bhabha (2012), which brings to light the stereotypical power that Western colonies have based on their race or skin colour. This is similarly aligned with the sentiments of Wijesinghe (2020), who observes that due to colonial history, the identity of people is likely embedded in neo-colonial ideologies, where there is cultural hierarchy and superiority.

As interactions with *wazungu* excite the artisans' engagement and persistence in the tourism industry, colonial history may play a role in their livelihood decisions. This is unique to the Kenyan context and could be the case for other informal artisan entrepreneurs working in countries with past colonial history within the SSA or the Global South.

Nonetheless, as pointed out in section 5.4, this area needs cautious interpretation, as there is suggestive evidence to show that colonial history also creates a vulnerable environment that threatens livelihoods. This is shown by the presence of neo-colonialism in the development of the tourism industry, which promotes the dominance of foreign players and hinders PPT approaches. It is also displayed in Kenyan urban planning and policies that view the informal sector as less desirable than its formal counterparts. This interpretation is consistent with the views of Jaakson (2004), who attributes such inequalities to colonial legacies rooted in institutions. He explains that tourism benefits are unequally distributed regionally and socially in countries with colonial histories. Likewise, Wijesinghe, Mura and Bouchon (2019) explain that the voices of the poor and marginalised people are rarely heard in the tourism agenda due to neo-colonialism and colonial history.

Furthermore, colonial history generated unequal power dynamics, where the colonialists were viewed as superior and socially powerful (Bhabha, 2012). The findings suggest that this may have had negative implications on how artisans relate with *wazungu* and foreign-based intermediaries. For example, as discussed in chapter 7, the findings showed how an artisan was left stranded after processing an order for a foreign-based intermediary in America. This reinforces that the negative implications of colonial history linger.

While recognising these negative implications, it is still plausible that the artisans' existence in a context with a past colonial history has influenced their perception of international tourists and, consequently, their persistent engagement in the tourism industry despite the challenges they experience. In this regard, colonial history can be considered an enabler of sustainable livelihoods.

### **8.1.2 Artisans' Agency and Attributes that Enable Sustainable Livelihoods**

Alongside socio-cultural structures, artisans have agency that enables them to sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Agency is the ability to understand and control individual actions (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2001). It is also the autonomy to maintain familiar practices despite the changes that happen (Papacharissi and Easton, 2013).

The finding suggests that artisans display agency due to their entrepreneurial drive manifested through their attributes and actions. Besides this, they also have distinctive attributes, such as their desire for creative fulfilment, passion, and ingrained skills and talents.

Likewise, aside from having joint beliefs that stem from the culture in their communities, they also have individual beliefs of hope, optimism and perseverance, which display and contribute to their agency. Collectively, these attributes make them inflexible towards other livelihood strategies and enable them to sustain their livelihoods.

The following section will discuss this in detail. It will start by discussing the artisans' entrepreneurial traits and how they enable them to sustain their livelihoods. This will be followed by a discussion of attributes distinguishing artisans from other informal entrepreneurs in how they sustain their livelihoods. The section will also offer a brief overview of the artisans' gender and age groups and how they may inform their livelihoods.

#### **i. Entrepreneurial Nature of Artisans: An Enabler of Sustainable Livelihoods**

As pointed out, artisans make a living through the entrepreneurial activity of making and selling handicrafts; thus, entrepreneurship appears crucial in sustaining their livelihoods while facing challenges. Entrepreneurship is the act of identifying and pursuing business opportunities to generate income (George and Zahra, 2002). In this regard, it not only helps artisans make a living but also allows them to create employment opportunities and sustain many other livelihoods. Appendix 1 expounds on this and shows how artisans employ people. Thus, they contribute to the net benefit of other livelihoods, which, as shown in figure 2.1, is a crucial component of sustainable livelihoods (Chambers and Conway, 1992).

In countries with colonial histories, entrepreneurship in the informal sector is often perceived as inferior and unworthy of attention (Sambajee and Weston, 2015); thus, entrepreneurs in the informal sector may not be considered actual entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, the findings contradict this analogy and suggest that artisans are entrepreneurs despite their marginalisation and informality. They display entrepreneurial attributes that have been instrumental in making a living. Thus, it is essential to recognise these attributes as they are entwined with their livelihood strategies and sustenance.

Entrepreneurs have attributes such as the desire for independence, the need for achievement, the capacity to take risks and the ability to seek opportunities to develop or grow their businesses (Lordkipanidze, Brezet and Backman, 2005). The findings highlight that these traits are present among the artisans. For example, as pointed out, they enjoy the independence of running their businesses and relish the ability to make livelihood decisions independently. This may highlight some driving factors that make artisans operate businesses in the informal sector. In particular, the sector provides a platform for artisans to independently run business

ventures without facing formalisation compliances or employment obligations. Thus, this finding is consistent with the notion that aside from engaging in the informal sector for economic reasons, informal entrepreneurs also work in the informal sector out of their free will and for personal reasons such as the social appreciation for business ownership, self-employment and independence (King, 2001; Adom, 2014). These encourage artisans to set up businesses. Hence, they may be a reason for their continued engagement in the informal sector despite the challenges they experience.

The findings further underscore how artisans are constantly looking for customers. For instance, during the telephone interviews, some artisans promoted their handicrafts and were keen to make sales. They were also eager to seek partnership opportunities and secure retail and wholesale customers abroad. The drive to seek business opportunities and growth displays the artisans' entrepreneurial nature, as entrepreneurs naturally seek venture growth and achievement (Beattie, 2016). It also reiterates the competitive nature of the informal sector that forces artisans to seek business opportunities proactively. On the other hand, it shows the dire circumstances that the artisans experience, which pushes them to take every opportunity to sell their handicrafts for a living.

Throughout the interviews and as elaborated in appendix 1, the artisans shared their aspirations to enlarge their businesses, grow their income, expand to other regions, and employ more people. Alongside these narratives, the artisans also shared how they initially identified business opportunities in the tourism industry and described how they saved money for business growth and expansion. This ability to raise and save capital to start a business venture is another sign of the artisan's entrepreneurial nature, as suggested by Leutner *et al.*, (2014) and Karabulut (2016), who examine that entrepreneurs intentionally create ventures and identify and exploit opportunities.

Additionally, entrepreneurs aim to increase their economic capital (Cakmak, Lie and Selwyn, 2018), which is also the case for artisans. As mentioned, artisans save and re-invest money into the business despite the minimal income. They also re-invest by buying more raw materials and pumping money and resources back into their businesses. Likewise, they also manage financial resources, allowing them to save and plan for the low and high seasons in tourism. This, therefore, suggests that artisans make strategic decisions to manage finances in their businesses. The ability to be strategic displays the artisans' entrepreneurial spirit. Besides this, it highlights the artisans' agency as they have the autonomy to act independently, consciously make their own decisions, shape how they adapt to financial challenges and manage their financial resources (Carr, 2008; Cargile, 2011).

All the above findings reveal that the artisans are actual entrepreneurs despite being informal and lacking formal business training. Their entrepreneurial traits of desiring independence and autonomy, continuously seeking customers and business opportunities and their ability to manage financial resources enable them to maintain their livelihood strategy of making and selling handicrafts. Additionally, it is possible that their individual and business aspirations, alongside their desire for independence and autonomy, enable them to persist in working in the informal sector in tourism despite their challenges.

## **ii. Distinguishing Factors in Artisans' Livelihoods**

### **a. Artisans are Unique from other Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector**

As discussed above, artisans display several entrepreneurial traits that enable them to sustain their livelihoods. However, while they do so, the findings suggest that artisans portray unique attributes that distinguish them from other entrepreneurs in the informal sector. These are essential to acknowledge as they enrich the understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihoods and persist in working in the informal sector and the tourism industry despite facing challenges.

First, the artisans are distinguished by their skills. Unlike other informal entrepreneurs in tourism, such as traders or brokers, street vendors or hawkers, tour guides, and informal hotel and café owners (Minishi-Majanja *et al.*, 2012a; Damayanti, Scott and Ruhanen, 2018; Truong, 2018), artisans manually make handicrafts sold to tourists. Thus, they have ingrained skills, unlike other informal entrepreneurs who are likely to have low skills (Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). As pointed out, these skills are mainly passed across generations, meaning that artisans pick up the skills from a young age. Owing to such early exposure, they also get predisposed to business skills like customer service and business operations, which distinguishes them.

Second, there is a notion that many informal entrepreneurs will close their businesses when better business or employment opportunities come up (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014). Similarly, there is a high likelihood that informal entrepreneurs are aggressive in seeking other business opportunities, especially during adverse conditions (Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012). However, this is not the case for artisans, who have maintained the same profession. They operate in a challenging environment yet have retained the same livelihood strategy of making and selling handicrafts for several years and generations. As alluded to, the informal sector

gives artisans opportunities and flexibility to engage in other economic activities outside of handicrafts due to the limited skills and capital requirements (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004;Gërkhani, 2004;Koens, 2012). However, the findings show that artisans are inflexible in exploring other opportunities. Hence, it is unlikely that they would take up other employment or business opportunities.

Third, the artisans are distinguished by their creativity, which is critical in designing and creating handicrafts. Their creativity also fuels their passion for making handicrafts, which may explain their persistence through challenges. Thus, aside from working to generate income, artisans also work in the informal sector for creative fulfilment. This is unlike other informal entrepreneurs who may work in the informal sector primarily for survival and due to necessity (Adom, 2014;Welter, Smallbone and Pobol, 2015;Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). For this reason, the artisans' passion and creative fulfilment might be prioritised over the financial gain they would get by diversifying their livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts. This creativity may be attributed to the cultural practices that expose them to handicraft-making skills from an early age. It may also be attributed to their social context, as they live and work with other creative artisans and family members who influence their creativity.

Fourth, artisans are distinguished by their culture. As mentioned, culture is embodied in various aspects of the artisans' livelihoods. Case in point, cultural norms and practices have allowed them to enhance and access livelihood resources. For example, they work in clusters and live within social units that enhance their social capital. Through this social capital, they gain skills vital to their human capital and get support from family members who provide free labour. They also access financial capital within the social network, which they would otherwise not get from traditional financial institutions. Moreover, social networks enable them to get physical capital, particularly business premises, which they rarely have in the informal sector. Besides this, they have cultural norms and practices that allow them to seek moral support and navigate day-to-day challenges. Therefore, it is plausible that these cultural influences on livelihoods distinguish artisans from other informal entrepreneurs.

Fifth, there is a perception that informal entrepreneurs are not keen on growing and expanding their businesses and are content with the current state of their businesses (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014;Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). Nevertheless, as discussed earlier and as elaborated in appendix 1, artisans, like many entrepreneurs in the formal sector, display the ambitions to grow and expand their businesses. Despite using manual techniques, artisans aspire to increase handicraft production, attract new customers, expand to other tourist regions,

and increase the number of employees. Consequently, this suggests that they are different from other informal entrepreneurs.

Based on a comparison between the empirical findings and literature on informal entrepreneurs, table 8.1 below summarises the differences between artisans and other entrepreneurs in the informal sector.

<b>Differences between Artisans and other Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector</b>	
<b>Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector (Based on Literature)</b>	<b>Artisan Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector (Based on Findings)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible and mobile</li> <li>• Ease of entry – have low capital and skill demands (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004;Gërkhani, 2004)</li> <li>• They are likely to close their businesses when better business or employment opportunities come up (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014)</li> <li>• Have a high likelihood of aggressively seeking business opportunities outside of tourism, especially during adverse conditions (Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflexible towards other economic activities</li> <li>• Retain the same livelihood strategies for several years and generations, including during challenging periods and adversity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterised by low skills (Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguished by ingrained skills passed across generations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are necessity entrepreneurs and are driven by economic incentives (Adom, 2014;Welter, Smallbone and Pobol, 2015;Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). Thus, livelihoods strategies are pegged on the necessity to make money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livelihood strategy is pegged on individual agency and several socio-cultural factors. These factors include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Culture - culture is embodied in their livelihood resources and strategies</li> <li>○ Creativity - creative fulfilment is highly prioritised in livelihood decisions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are not keen on growing and expanding their businesses and are content with the current state of their businesses (La Porta and Shleifer, 2014;Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the ambitions to grow and expand their businesses. They aspire to attract new customers, expand to other tourist regions, and increase the number of employees</li> </ul>

*Table 8.1: Differences between Artisans and other Entrepreneurs in the Informal Sector*

These unique attributes give a more elaborate understanding of informal artisan entrepreneurs and contribute to the understanding of how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. They also enable the understanding of their persistence in the tourism industry.

While acknowledging the artisans' entrepreneurial and unique attributes, it is also prudent to point out other characteristics based on their age groups and gender, which give more insight into how they sustain their livelihoods. It is important to point these out, as excluding them may generate further debate. Therefore, the following section discusses observations based on the artisans' gender and age groups.

## **b. Artisans' Demography and Sustainable Livelihoods**

### **❖ Artisans' Gender and Ways they Inform Livelihoods**

The informal sector attracts both men and women (ILO, 2018). Hence, the study focused on all genders. The findings showed no fundamental differences between the male and female artisans. However, it is worth acknowledging that female artisans displayed more access to financial resources through their social capital. As alluded to in section 4.6.2, most female artisans were part of a *chama*, an avenue for social networking and a place to seek financial capital. Thus, despite the few instances where men were involved, female artisans dominated the *chama*. This is not surprising as numerous studies have found that female entrepreneurs tend to have more social groups and networks that assist them in business ventures and help them to overcome challenges (Dzisi, 2008;De Vita, Mari and Poggesi, 2014;Iodice and Yourougou, 2016).

Other than this, the findings found no other outstanding differences in how the male and female artisans sustained their livelihoods. In particular, there were no fundamental differences in how the two genders gained their skills, organised their livelihood strategies, used other livelihood resources, chose livelihood outcomes, experienced or handled challenges, and persisted in making handicrafts. Needless to say, there are diverse literature and reports that have highlighted the differences between male and females workers and entrepreneurs in the informal sector and the tourism industry (Minishi-Majanja *et al.*, 2012b;Kimbu and Ngoasong, 2016;Mkhize and Cele, 2017;Tajeddini, Walle and Denisa, 2017;GEM, 2018/2019;Figuroa-Domecq *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, this is not to say that these differences do not exist but to point out that the disparities did not strongly emerge in the findings.

### ❖ **Analysis of the Artisans' Ages and how they Shape Livelihood Strategies**

There is a high likelihood that younger people work in the informal sector due to high unemployment rates. In Kenya specifically, younger people between the ages of 15 and 35 make up the largest proportion of workers and business owners in the informal sector (Adams, da Silva and Razmara, 2013). This is similar to the case in other SSA countries, such as Nigeria, where younger people are more likely to engage and dominate artisan entrepreneurship (Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019). However, the findings suggest that fewer younger people may work as artisans or be interested in artisanry.

The study sampled artisans from different age groups. However, as shown in table 3.1, most artisans belong to the older demography of 40 years and above. They narrated that, in recent years, the number of new and young artisans has decreased. The institutions that participated in the study also acknowledged this and pointed out that fewer younger people are interested in being artisans. This implies that older demography dominates the artisanry profession.

This is due to various reasons. First, as expounded in appendix 1, unlike the older artisans who are determined to persist in working in the context despite the challenges they face, the findings suggest that the younger demography of artisans may not be interested in persistently working for many years. Instead, they may leave the tourism industry if better opportunities arise. Most of them have formal education, including higher education, which allows them to seek employment in the formal sector. This means that the indigenous skills of artisans might be at risk and that, in the coming years, there might be fewer artisans. If this happens, the artisans' authentic contribution to promoting and developing the tourism industry might be drastically reduced. This is not to say that the artisan profession will diminish but to acknowledge that the younger generations may not be interested in this profession.

Second, the number of younger artisans might be reduced due to gaps in generational training. As alluded to, the findings show that the artisan skills are generational, with most artisans saying that they are grooming and training their children to be artisans. Generational training is a deep-rooted practice that artisans retain and pass along. Nonetheless, as discussed in chapter 4, the findings also reveal that the customs and practices of generational training might not be sustainable in the future. Some artisans expressed that despite learning the skills from the earlier generations, they will not pass the skills to the next generation, mainly because of the hardships they experience. Instead, they prefer their children to get educated with the

hope of finding less strenuous white-collar jobs. This reiterates the artisans' challenges. It also reveals the livelihood outcomes that artisans envision for themselves and the next generations.

Nevertheless, the findings underscore that some artisans gained their skills indirectly through observations and passive practice. Hence, despite the narrative that artisans would not pass these skills through apprenticeship, it is likely that the generations that follow might still passively learn these skills. Therefore, it is also likely that these skills may persist and continue to form a crucial part of the artisans' livelihoods.

The above discussions give insight into how different age groups of artisans make livelihood decisions. Nonetheless, these conclusions are based on the sampled artisans, dominated by older demography. Therefore, there is a need to interpret this analysis with caution. Notwithstanding, elaborating on the artisans' demography gives more insight into their livelihoods and persistence in artisanry.

### **8.1.3 Theoretical Implications for Understanding the Artisan Entrepreneur**

The above section extends the body of knowledge on informal artisan entrepreneurship in the tourism industry. It contributes to a further understanding of informal artisan entrepreneurs by explaining how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. While explaining this phenomenon, the study has pointed out key factors such as the artisans' livelihood strategies, agency and socio-cultural structures, and ways they relate to enable them to make a living and sustain their livelihoods.

To expound, the above section has shed light on artisans, specifically the traits that make them actual entrepreneurs. It has also discussed the traits and behaviours that distinguish artisans from other entrepreneurs in the informal sector. Likewise, the section has discussed ways that culture enables artisans to sustain their livelihoods by influencing livelihood strategies, enhancing access to livelihood resources and influencing their perceptions of vulnerability. Collectively, these factors relate to explain the phenomenon of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges.

The elaborate discussion on artisans is essential for various reasons. As mentioned, the study of artisan entrepreneurship within the tourism industry and the informal sector is still underdeveloped and has been recommended for study by other scholars (Bakas, Duxbury and Vinagre de Castro, 2019; Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Furthermore, the focus on artisan

entrepreneurship within the African context is also very scarce (Pret and Cogan, 2018; Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019), which creates the need to focus on this region.

Therefore, by focusing on artisans, this study extends the body of knowledge on artisan entrepreneurship, specifically the typology of artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and tourism industry within the SSA context. Likewise, by explaining how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, the study advances the understanding of this phenomenon, which, according to Corley and Gioia (2011) and Ladik and Stewart (2008), is a theoretical contribution. Alongside contributing to knowledge and the existing body of literature, the study also gives the often-marginalised artisans a voice by sharing their experiences.

Having addressed the research aim and explained how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, the following section delves deeper into explaining other critical theoretical implications. These entail the theoretical implication for resilience in sustainable livelihoods, the SLA Framework and sustainable livelihood theories.

## **8.2 Theoretical Implications for Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods**

It has emerged that there are theoretical implications for understanding resilience in the sustainable livelihoods of artisans. The following section discusses this in detail. It starts by discussing how resilience has been conceptualised within the boundaries of sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship and suggests ways it ought to be conceptualised. This is followed by an elaborate discussion of the paradoxical relationship between resilience and vulnerability in sustainable livelihoods. Cumulatively, the following section enriches understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges and highlights ways the study contributes to knowledge.

### **8.2.1 The Conceptualisation of Resilience of Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism**

To this end, the study has discussed how artisans experience continuous challenges that create constant adversity and threaten their livelihoods. However, they have persisted in making handicrafts for several years and generations and have devised ways of handling the challenges they experience. This suggests that artisans are resilient. To elaborate, as discussed

in chapter 7, artisans cope and adapt to the challenges they experience, which the SLA prescribes as resilience (Chambers and Conway, 1992;DFID, 1999;Morse and McNamara, 2013). They also have individual traits such as optimism, hope, self-efficacy, motivation, and perseverance, which the entrepreneurial theory of resilience describes as dimensions of resilience (De Vries and Shields, 2006;Ayala and Manzano, 2014;Korber and McNaughton, 2018). Additionally, they continue to work and operate business ventures in the face of adversity, which indicates their resilience (De Bruijne, Boin and van Eeten, 2010;Berthung *et al.*, 2021). Nonetheless, while recognising and understanding the artisans' resilience, the findings point to the problematic conceptualisation of resilience in sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship.

To recap, the SLA incorporates resilience thinking by indicating that people cope and adapt to the vulnerability context to sustain their livelihoods. However, as discussed in chapter 2, the approach lacks definite theories to explain how people show resilience while they sustain their livelihoods. Hence, this study incorporated resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience to understand the artisans' resilience.

Resilience theory prescribes that resilience is achieved when there are better-than-expected outcomes (Van Breda, 2018). Thus, the theory emphasises resilience as a positive outcome after adversity. This is similarly the case within the SLA, where people are assumed to be resilient when achieving better than expected livelihood outcomes such as more working days, increased income and reduced vulnerability (Chambers and Conway, 1992;DFID, 1999). Likewise, within entrepreneurship, resilience is viewed as a positive outcome, where resilient entrepreneurs are considered as those who do better after facing adversity (Huggins and Thompson, 2015;Bernard and Barbosa, 2016). Consequently, there are underlying assumptions that resilience and vulnerability are flipsides and opposites (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003;Berkes, 2007;De Bruijne, Boin and van Eeten, 2010), meaning that more resilience leads to less vulnerability and vice-versa.

However, the findings suggest that resilience amongst artisans does not necessarily result in better-than-expected outcomes. Additionally, their resilience does not mean that they stop experiencing vulnerability. This is because artisans constantly experience shocks and stresses beyond their control. Owing to this, they are in a state of constant challenges and adversity. Moreover, as highlighted, the findings reveal that artisans are often oppressed, marginalised, and harassed by structures and institutions, compromising their desired

livelihood outcomes. Hence, their resilience is not necessarily manifested in positive or better-than-expected outcomes, such as more working days, additional income, or reduced vulnerability, as pointed out in the SLA framework and resilience theory.

Additionally, resilience tends to focus on individual traits and behaviours. Case in point, resilience theory explains that resilience is based on individual behaviours such as hardiness, ability to thrive, self-efficacy, stamina and locus of control, to mention a few (Van Breda, 2001;Greene, Galambos and Lee, 2004). This is similarly the case in the entrepreneurial theory of resilience, where there is an overemphasis on individual traits such as perseverance, optimism, self-efficacy, and the ones mentioned above (De Vries and Shields, 2006;Bullough and Renko, 2013;Ayala and Manzano, 2014;Korber and McNaughton, 2018). While these behaviours and traits are essential resilience indicators, they risk being individualistic. More specifically, they insinuate that people are responsible for their resilience and minimise institutional and social contexts that are a part of people's resilience (Van Breda, 2018). For the case of artisans, this narrow conceptualisation ignores the responsibility of the government and other institutions in supporting them to be resilient. Equally, it ignores the social context, which the findings suggest is significant in promoting resilience. This is not to say that artisans lack agency to determine their resilience but to point out that resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience minimise the social and institutional context that affects the artisans' sustainable livelihoods.

Furthermore, there is a notion that the individualistic perception of resilience often stems from Western contexts and is driven by Western ideologies of individualism (Ungar, 2010;Hopkins and Becken, 2014). Hence, it is not entirely applicable to marginalised artisans in SSA or the Global South. To illustrate, the findings show that a combination of individual traits, agency and socio-cultural structures drive the artisans' resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Thus, the findings initiate the need for a more inclusive conceptualisation of resilience, encompassing both the individual and socio-cultural drivers of resilience.

As alluded to, the SLA generally conceptualised the resilience of people as their ability to cope and adapt to stresses and shocks and their ability to bounce back and achieve better-than-expected outcomes (Chambers and Conway, 1992;DFID, 1999;Morse and McNamara, 2013). While this gives a basis for understanding livelihoods, it risks being a narrow perspective of describing people's resilience but not explaining their underlying reasons and sources. For instance, there is no elaborate explanation of why people cope and adapt to stresses

and shocks, persist in relying on their livelihood strategy or desire specific livelihood outcomes. The SLA is silent on this; thus, adopting this constricted conceptualisation of resilience would mean failing to encompass artisans' sources of resilience and their reasons for persistence in making handicrafts to sustain their livelihoods.

Having raised the above issues, the following section proposes the way forward and key considerations.

### ❖ **The Way Forward: Key Considerations**

There is suggestive evidence to show that the artisans' resilience is not straightforward but complex. This is because many underlying factors influence their resilience in the informal sector and the tourism industry, which ought to be considered when conceptualising resilience. As this section will elaborate, these factors include individual agency and behaviours that stem from the artisans. It also consists of the socio-cultural structures, such as the cultural values, norms and practices passed from generation to generation and the social context that drives the artisans' social capital. It also encompasses some influence of the colonial history and legacy, which continue to linger in how artisans perceive and relate with international tourists. These are the sources of resilience for artisans and help to explain how they handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the context to sustain their livelihoods.

Hence, in addition to the resilience theory, which makes it possible to analyse the factors that cause vulnerability and the positive outcomes of adversity (Van Breda, 2018), and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience, which makes it possible to understand resilience amongst entrepreneurs (De Vries and Shields, 2006; Bullough and Renko, 2013; Ayala and Manzano, 2014; Korber and McNaughton, 2018); there is a need to include other concepts and theories to explain the resilience of artisans as it relates to their sustainable livelihoods.

Firstly, the concept of resilience amongst entrepreneurs can benefit from going beyond the individual focus. This can possibly be achieved by using the SLA. The approach encompasses other relevant aspects, like vulnerability context, institutions, and livelihood resources. Collectively, these give a more holistic view and understanding of how people demonstrate resilience and persist in working in the informal sector in tourism.

Secondly, the SLA assumes diversifying livelihood strategies may translate to resilience (Morse and McNamara, 2013). However, the findings suggest that artisans are inflexible towards other livelihood strategies and have not diversified their livelihood strategies

outside handicrafts. The inflexibility has translated to artisans pursuing the same livelihood strategy for several years and generations. This implies that the conceptualisation of artisans' resilience ought to consider the drivers and motivators for the persistence of livelihood strategies. Notably, the artisans' reliance on handicrafts while working in the tourism industry is not solely tied to survival, as depicted in informal sector motivational theories (Adom, 2014). Likewise, it appears that artisans do not work in the informal sector in tourism merely out of necessity to make a living or accumulate resources, as widely discussed in informal entrepreneurship literature (Welter, Smallbone and Pobol, 2015;Çakmak, Lie and McCabe, 2018). Instead, they are driven by other underlying factors stemming from their agency and socio-cultural structures.

Thirdly and related to the above is culture, which has emerged as critical in conceptualising the artisans' resilience. As discussed in previous sections, cultural values, norms, and practices enable access to livelihood resources and influence the artisans' perception of their vulnerability, which may build resilience. Relatedly, culture can also be linked to the artisans' creative fulfilment, which they appear to prioritise. Hence, culture has enabled artisans to build resilience to sustain their livelihoods despite challenges.

Fourthly and closely related to culture is habitus, which may help explain how artisans demonstrate resilience. The findings show that structural factors like family influence resilience. It also indicates that agency, such as those stemming from entrepreneurial traits, influences resilience. Habitus reconciles agency and structure; thus, it may be valuable when incorporated to explain the artisans' resilience amid continuous challenges. Alongside this, habitus, which is internalised behaviours, perceptions and beliefs that people have (Costa and Murphy, 2015), may also explain the artisans' views, perceptions and beliefs about the challenges they experience. These include their beliefs of hope and optimism, their views on the tourism industry, and their perceptions of other sources of resilience.

Fifthly, some aspects of postcolonial theories that elaborate on the relationship between the colonised and the coloniser may explain the artisans' continued persistence and resilience in the tourism industry. As alluded to, resilience is influenced by colonial history and legacy, which continue to linger in past colonies like Kenya, yet have not been considered while theorising resilience. Case in point, as shown in earlier discussions, colonial history influences how artisans positively perceive their interactions with international tourists, i.e., *wazungu*, who are stereotyped as superior and socially powerful (Bhabha, 2012); thus, building their

resilience and persistence in the tourism industry. This means that the effects of the colonial legacy ought to be considered when conceptualising the resilience of artisans. Nevertheless, as alluded to in section 5.4, it is prudent to also acknowledge that while the consequences of colonial history motivate artisans to work in tourism, they also risk heightening the artisans' vulnerability. This paradox is discussed in more detail in section 8.2.2 of this chapter.

To this end, and as discussed in the previous section, artisans have various attributes that demonstrate their resilience. However, how they demonstrate their resilience varies from how resilience is portrayed in literature. To demonstrate, Table 8.2 below gives an overview of how resilience is conceptualised within the boundaries of sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship. Based on the empirical evidence from the findings, the table displays the inconsistencies with the resilience of informal artisan entrepreneurs and aids in explaining how it ought to be conceptualised. By pointing out these inconsistencies, it is possible to recognise the need to extend the theoretical understanding of resilience among informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism to account for the empirical observations. This is particularly important to recognise because artisans showcase resilience while experiencing ongoing challenges. Thus, their resilience is a way of life which necessitates a more elaborate conceptualisation.

<b>The Conceptualisation of Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods</b>	<b>The Conceptualisation of Resilience in Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>The Conceptualisation of Resilience in the Sustainable Livelihoods of Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience is achieved by gaining better-than-expected livelihood outcomes (Chambers and Conway, 1992; DFID, 1999)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilient entrepreneurs achieve and do better after facing adversity (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016; Huggins and Thompson, 2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artisans are resilient, but their resilience does not necessarily lead to better-than-expected outcomes because of marginalisation and constant challenges</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Livelihood resilience encompasses how people reduce and recover from shocks and stresses that cause vulnerability (DFID, 1999)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience is the ability to bounce back after entrepreneurial failures or adversity (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016; Huggins and Thompson, 2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artisans have resilience in a context of continuous vulnerability and adversity. Therefore, their resilience does not manifest in occasions of bouncing back</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The emphasis is on the outcome of shocks and stresses (Chambers and Conway, 1992; DFID, 1999)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The emphasis is on the outcome of adversity (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016; Huggins and Thompson, 2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owing to a constant state of vulnerability and adversity, the artisan's resilience is a continuous process that may not translate to an outcome</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience is enhanced by the flexibility to diversify livelihood strategies (Morse and McNamara, 2013)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilient entrepreneurs and businesses are flexible. They adjust operations and regenerate while facing shocks or uncertainty (Dahles and Susilowati, 2015; Huggins and Thompson, 2015)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artisans are resilient while being inflexible towards other livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts. Thus, their resilience is not necessarily about diversifying livelihood strategies; instead, about the persistence of the same livelihood strategies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience is a state and is informed by an ecology approach (Obrist, Pfeiffer and Henley, 2010)</li> <li>Resilience is focused on adaptive capacity (Morse and McNamara, 2013)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience is informed by psychology (Bernard and Barbosa, 2016)</li> <li>Resilience is individualistic: portrayed by individual traits/behaviours like optimism/hope, self-efficacy, motivation, and perseverance (De Vries and Shields, 2006)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artisans' resilience is not individualistic. It is a combination of different factors stemming from agency and socio-cultural structures</li> </ul>

*Table 8.2: Conceptualisation of Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods, Entrepreneurship and amongst Artisans*

The above suggests how the resilience of artisans ought to be conceptualised. Alongside this, the following section discusses more theoretical implications for resilience and vulnerability.

### **8.2.2 The Paradox of Resilience and Vulnerability**

To this point, the study has proposed ways that resilience should be conceptualised to understand how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. Alongside this theoretical implication, the study reveals the paradox between vulnerability and resilience, which ought to be acknowledged. A paradox is “contradictory yet interrelated elements (dualities) that exist simultaneously and persist over time; such elements seem logical when considered in isolation, but irrational, inconsistent, and absurd when juxtaposed” (Smith and Lewis, 2011 p. 387). Given this understanding, the following section discusses the paradoxes of resilience and vulnerability in the artisans’ livelihoods.

As alluded to, artisans experience continuous challenges that make them vulnerable and threaten their livelihoods. However, they have persistently worked in the informal sector in tourism for several years and generations and primarily rely on one livelihood strategy, i.e., making and selling handicrafts. They also display hope and optimism while experiencing challenges and remain inflexible towards other livelihood strategies.

While handicrafts have several uses, which allow artisans to diversify their customers outside of tourism, the primary reliance on one livelihood strategy is paradoxical for several reasons. First, artisans display entrepreneurial traits such as the ability to plan, strategise, and exploit business opportunities. Thus, they are also likely to have the ability and capacity to exploit other livelihood strategies outside handicrafts. Second, they operate in the informal sector, which has an ease of entry due to the minimal skills and capital requirements (Bigsten, Kimuyu and Lundvall, 2004; Koens, 2012). Hence, artisans have room to take up other livelihood strategies within the informal sector. Third, although they are often marginalised and poor, the findings suggest they may have the ability and opportunity to pursue other livelihood strategies in the informal sector. This is elaborated in appendix 1, which displays that some artisans have done so before.

Relatedly, a paradox can be observed in the artisan’s engagement in the tourism industry, specifically how the industry offers an avenue for resilience and vulnerability. Case in point, the artisans perceive the tourism industry as a positive place to sustain their

livelihoods. They enjoy the interactions with tourists, are passionate about the tourism industry and take pride in promoting culture and heritage to support the industry. Collectively, these enhance their resilience and persistence in the tourism industry. However, at the same time, artisans complain that the industry is prone to challenges because of the shocks and stresses it experiences, which heighten their vulnerability. These are contradicting yet related perspectives, which Lewis (2000) denotes are characteristics of a paradox.

The findings also reveal how the country's colonial history paradoxically enhances resilience and vulnerability. On one end, the artisans' resilience is increased by the interactions with *wazungu*, who are perceived as superior. The artisans narrate that despite the shocks and stresses in tourism, they persistently work in the industry because they feel empowered, dignified, and famous when interacting with these international tourists. This may be attributed to Kenya's colonial history, which might have instilled perceptions of white people as superior (Bhabha, 2012). However, on the other hand, and as elaborated earlier, the findings also show how the colonial legacy promotes neo-colonialism, which has seen an emphasis on foreign-owned investments in the tourism industry and deterred PPT approaches. Similarly, colonial history impacts how institutions in Kenya perceive the informal sector as inferior and influences urban planning that does not favour informal markets and business premises. This paradox ought to be acknowledged.

Moreover, the findings reveal a paradoxical relationship between the artisans and the government institutions. On one end, the government praises the informal sector. Case in point, the government takes pride in *jua kali* and its contribution to the economy. *Jua kali* is recognised in Kenya's Vision 2030, aiming to transform Kenya into a middle-income country by 2030. The strategic plan, commissioned by the government, expressly acknowledges the importance of *jua kali* in creating employment opportunities, promoting economic growth, and reducing poverty in the country. Furthermore, it recognises *jua kali* as a pillar in promoting the entrepreneurship culture in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2008). Nonetheless, the findings depict that *jua kali* is harassed and neglected by the same government that ought to support them.

In addition, the interactions between artisans and intermediaries are paradoxical. On the one hand, intermediaries enhance the artisans' resilience and livelihoods by expanding the customer segments and income. Thus, they are reliable, especially during a decline in the tourism industry, such as during low seasons and the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, the artisans are keen to maintain relationships with intermediaries to sustain their livelihoods.

In contrast, as elaborated in section 6.4, intermediaries heighten the artisans’ vulnerability by limiting their access to tourists and exploiting them through unfair pricing, defaulting on credit and creating more competition that threatens their livelihoods. Therefore, despite co-existing, the paradoxical interactions between the artisans and intermediaries ought to be recognised.

Table 8.3 below provides a summary of these paradoxes.

<b>Summary of Paradoxes in the Sustainable Livelihoods of Artisans</b>	
<i>Source of Vulnerability</i>	<i>Source of Resilience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tourism industry offers a challenging environment for livelihoods               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Experiences shocks and stresses that threaten livelihoods</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artisans perceive the tourism industry as a positive place to sustain their livelihoods               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enjoy the interactions with tourists</li> <li>○ Passionate about the tourism industry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Take pride in promoting culture and heritage to support tourism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary reliance on one livelihood strategy (handicrafts) is a threat to livelihood sustenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artisans have devised ways to use handicrafts to diversify customers outside of tourism</li> <li>• Handicrafts have several uses and can attract intermediaries and local customers that buy them as decorative pieces, accessories, knick-knacks, and gifts, to mention a few</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artisans do not exploit other livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts</li> <li>• Are inflexible towards other economic/entrepreneurial activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artisans display entrepreneurial traits such as the ability to plan, strategise, and exploit business opportunities. These have been instrumental in sustaining their businesses</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colonial legacy promotes neo-colonialism that favours foreign investors in the tourism industry and deters pro-poor tourism approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colonial legacy and the consequential perception of white people as superior (Bhabha, 2012) drive artisans to persist in working in the tourism industry</li> <li>• Artisans feel empowered, dignified, and superior when interacting with international tourists</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government harasses and neglects the <i>jua kali</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government takes pride in <i>jua kali</i>. It recognises its contribution to the economy and entrepreneurship culture in Kenya</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermediaries limit the artisans’ direct access to tourists</li> <li>• They also exploit artisans by generating unfair prices, defaulting on credit, and creating more competition that threatens livelihoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermediaries expand the artisans’ customer segments outside of tourism</li> <li>• They help artisans to generate more income during low seasons and crises in the tourism industry</li> </ul>

*Table 8.3: Paradoxes in the Sustainable Livelihoods of Artisans*

### **i. What the Paradoxes Reveal and Affirm**

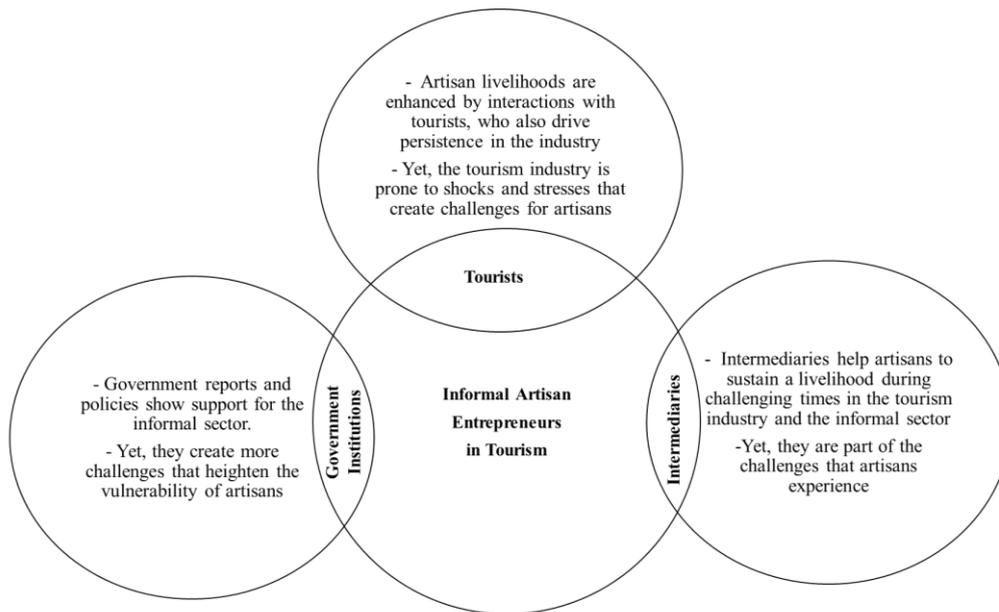
The above section has discussed the paradoxes between resilience and vulnerability. To further expound on this, the following section discusses several things these paradoxes reveal and affirm, which are valuable in understanding artisans and their livelihood sustenance.

#### **a. Resilience and Vulnerability are not Antonyms**

It is evident that resilience and vulnerability go hand-in-hand and help understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods in the informal sector in tourism. They can be viewed as two sides of the same coin because several elements are contradictory but interrelated (Lewis, 2000). Nonetheless, the findings reiterate that resilience and vulnerability are not direct opposites. As depicted, resilience amongst artisans does not necessarily translate to reduced vulnerability. Case in point, despite displaying resilience through copying, adapting, and persistently working in a context, they still continuously experience shocks and stresses, which threaten their livelihoods. Hence, they are resilient, but that does not mean they are not vulnerable, nor does their resilience eradicate their vulnerability. The findings, therefore, contradict the views of scholars such as Martin-Breen and Anderies (2011), Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton (2003) and Berkes (2007), who recognise vulnerability and resilience as antonyms. In this regard, the discussion shows that resilience and vulnerability are interrelated but contradictory tensions, hence a paradox.

#### **b. Relationship Between Artisans and Tourists, Government, and Intermediaries**

The discussion on paradoxes reveals more about artisans, tourists, intermediaries, and the government. It also affirms the findings in the data. Based on the discussions above, tourists, government institutions and intermediaries have emerged as critical in influencing the artisans' livelihoods. Collectively, their relationship can be summarised as shown in figure 8.1.



*Figure 8.1: Relationship Between Artisans and Tourists, Government Institutions, and Intermediaries*

*Source: Author's Figure Based on Findings*

Alongside the above, the discussions on paradoxes reveal and affirm that the artisans' livelihoods are not individualistic. Case in point, while they experience challenges that threaten their livelihoods in the tourism industry, they persist in working in the industry and take pride in promoting the tourists' experiences and the culture and heritage of the country. Thus, displaying how their livelihood strategies are not individualistic but considerate of the country's tourism industry, culture, and heritage. Moreover, as discussed in section 8.1.2, the paradoxes reveal and affirm that artisans are unique from other informal entrepreneurs. For example, owing to various factors discussed earlier, the artisans are inflexible towards other economic activities and primarily rely on one livelihood strategy of making and selling handicrafts. This is despite working in the informal sector and displaying different entrepreneurial traits, which give them the flexibility to engage in other entrepreneurial activities.

Second, the paradoxes reveal the complexities of livelihoods in the tourism industry by revealing how livelihoods are not entirely based on making a living from selling handicrafts but also on interactions with tourists, specifically international tourists. While the study was carried out over telephone interviews and did not have immersive interactions with the artisans to assess their behaviours when engaging with tourists, it is evident that artisans work in the

tourism industry to gain a sense of fulfilment from these interactions. This is an experience they otherwise cannot get in other industries across the informal sector. As alluded to, this is likely due to the colonial history, which resulted in the perceived superiority of international tourists, who, to date, influence the artisan's persistent engagement in the tourism industry despite challenges. Thus, suggesting that post-colonial nuances ought to be incorporated to understand the artisans' livelihoods.

Third, these paradoxes reveal that government bodies and relevant institutions may not be entirely genuine. As alluded to, the examination of various government reports, such as Kenya's strategic plan and Vision 2030 (Republic of Kenya, 2008), and the interviews from some of the institutions portray the government as a supportive institution that holistically cares about the informal sector. Yet, this is not entirely the case based on the actual experiences of artisans, which reveal they are neglected, marginalised, and harassed by the same institutions meant to protect them. This suggests that the government's position and policies may be performative to portray a positive image. Consequently, these paradoxes reveal more about how government institutions affect livelihoods.

Lastly, while this study did not incorporate intermediaries in the data collection, the paradoxes reveal how intermediaries are critical stakeholders in artisans' livelihoods. Thus, they should be included in the analysis of livelihoods. Though intermediaries heighten the vulnerability of artisans, it is sensible to acknowledge their role in sustaining the artisans' livelihoods. For example, intermediaries such as middlemen expand the artisans' customer segment by buying handicrafts in large quantities and facilitating market access. This is valuable, especially during challenging periods in the tourism industry. For this reason, necessary interventions should be made to ensure that intermediaries do not exploit, harass, or manipulate artisans but are an avenue for cooperation and collaboration. If this is done, it is likely to resolve intermediaries as sources of vulnerability.

### **8.2.3 Summary of the Theoretical Contribution to Resilience in Sustainable Livelihoods**

In summary, this study contributes to understanding resilience in the sustainable livelihoods of the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism. The study does this in two ways:

Firstly, the study discusses how resilience is conceptualised within the boundaries of sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship and displays the inconsistencies between these and the resilience of artisans. In doing so, the study proposes ways that the resilience of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism should be conceptualised to understand how they sustain their livelihoods. More specifically, the study emphasises that resilience does not necessarily lead to better-than-expected outcomes because artisans continuously experience challenges, which generate a constant state of adversity. It also denotes that resilience in sustainable livelihood is not only about coping and adaptation to shocks and stress or bouncing back after facing adversity but also about the sources of resilience that drive artisans to persist in making handicrafts. As alluded to and as indicated in figure 8.2 of this chapter, these sources of resilience include the artisans' agency, specifically their entrepreneurial drive, creative fulfilment, skills and talents and the attitudes of hope, optimism, and perseverance. It also includes several socio-cultural structures such as culture, social capital and perceptions of international tourists stemming from colonial history. Consequently, resilience is not individualistic or a result of personality traits as conceptualised in resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience (De Vries and Shields, 2006). Instead, it is complex and a combination of various aspects discussed in this section.

Secondly, the study has explained the paradoxes between resilience and vulnerability in sustainable livelihoods and has expounded on what the paradoxical relationship reveals and affirms about the two concepts. More specifically, the study shows that resilience and vulnerability are not antonyms, as purported in literature. Additionally, the study expounds on what the paradoxes reveal and affirm about the artisans and their relationships with tourists, intermediaries, and governments. These are essential to acknowledge because artisans do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they relate with other players who influence how they sustain their livelihoods and persistently work in the informal sector in tourism.

Consequently, by enabling a more profound understanding of the resilience in the sustainable livelihoods of artisans, the study progressively advances the understanding of this phenomenon and contributes to knowledge (Corley and Gioia, 2011). Likewise, the study creates new knowledge of the resilience of artisans, which is pertinent to understanding how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. Wilkins, Neri and Lean (2019) elaborate that such improvement in theory to explain a phenomenon creates new knowledge. Therefore, affirming that this study contributes to knowledge.

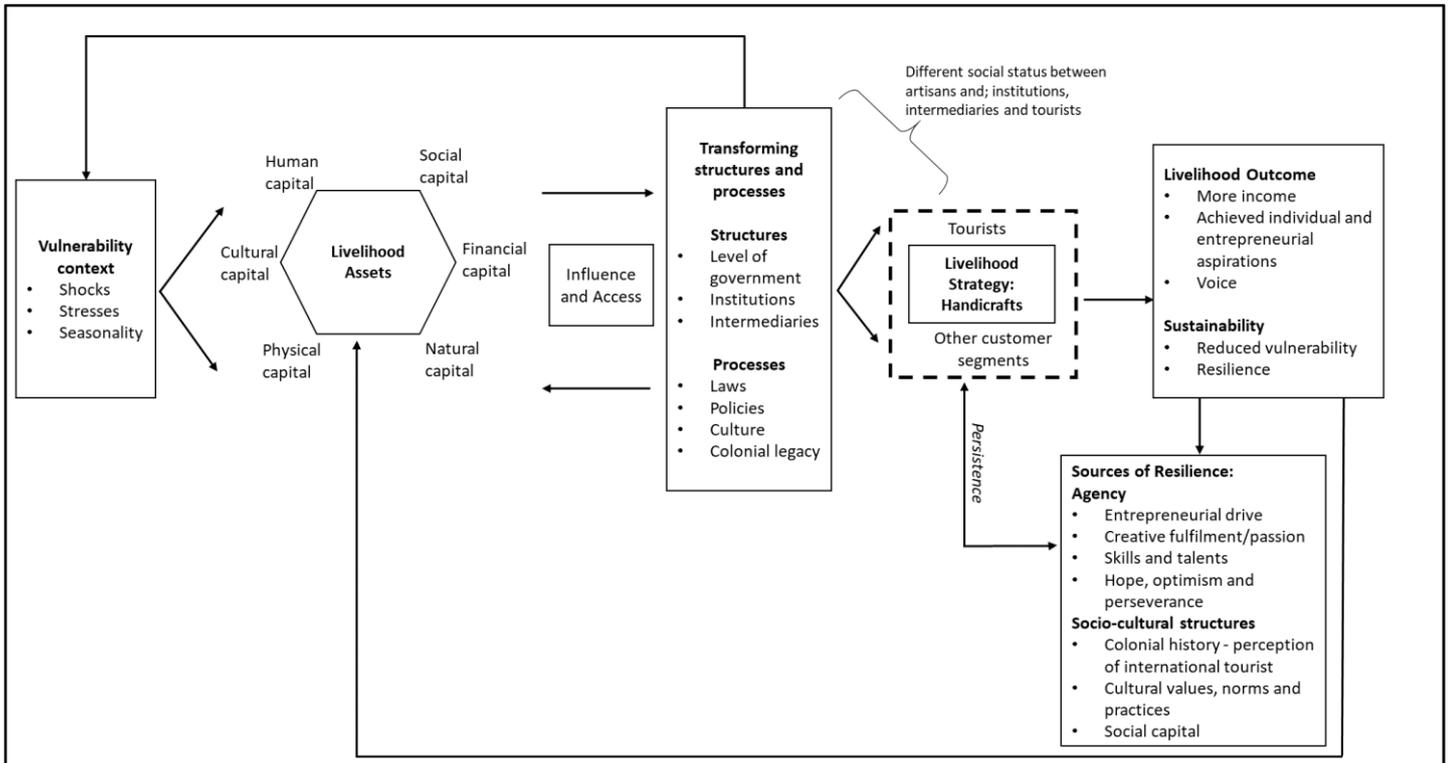
### **8.3 Theoretical Implications for the SLA Framework**

The study used the SLA framework as a conceptual lens to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. As discussed in section 2.2, the SLA denotes a way of thinking about the livelihoods of people who are disadvantaged or experiencing poverty, whereas the SLF is a tool for livelihood analysis that is required to implement the SLA (Ashley and Carney, 1999). In literature, the two terms are frequently used interchangeably (McLean, 2015) and are often collectively referred to as the SLA Framework (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Likewise, it is also often viewed as a theory because of its theoretical underpinning (Solesbury, 2003; Bhuyan, 2016; Wang and Yue, 2018).

More generally, the SLA framework enfolds income and non-income aspects related to livelihoods. It depicts the ability of a unit, i.e. individuals, households, villages, regions or nations, to enhance its assets and capabilities during shocks and stresses (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Thus, the SLA framework provides a way of thinking about the challenges and opportunities that marginalised and poor people face to sustain their livelihoods (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003).

To recap, the SLA framework considers the vulnerability context, which represents the challenges artisans experience through shocks and stresses. It also encompasses the livelihood assets, i.e., human, social, physical, financial, and natural capital, that people use as resources to sustain their livelihoods. Additionally, it incorporates transforming structures and processes, encompassing relevant government and non-governmental institutions and policies. Besides this, it also entails livelihood strategies that display how people make a living. Finally, it considers livelihood outcomes, which may assess the results of sustainable livelihoods (DFID, 1999; Carney, 2003).

While the SLA framework provides a good framework for understanding the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people like artisans, the findings suggest that the framework needs to be adapted to enable a more holistic depiction and analysis of how artisans sustain their livelihoods. Thus, figure 8.2 below presents a modified framework as implied by the findings.



*Figure 8.2: Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism*

*Adapted from DFID (1999) based on the findings*

To reiterate, figure 8.2 above is informed by key findings that enable an understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. It is based on the foundations of the SLA Framework by DFID (1999), shown in figure 2.2, which guided this study. It is a common practice to develop a more constructive framework after data analysis in qualitative research (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). Thus, the above SLF for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism is necessary as it offers a more comprehensive framework based on empirical evidence from the study.

While these modifications adapt the SLA Framework to the phenomenon, they also make it possible to analyse the sustainable livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs in tourism within the SSA or a similar context in the Global South. Thus, the modifications also offer an analytical tool for researchers and practitioners to understand other kinds of livelihoods. This is discussed in more detail in section 8.3.1 of this chapter.

The following section highlights these necessary modifications, as implied by the findings.

### **i. Theoretical Implication for the SLA: Incorporating Culture**

Theoretically, the SLA should incorporate culture throughout the framework. As pointed out, the findings suggest that culture is embedded in how people utilise, manage, and decide on their livelihood resources. Hence, it ought to be considered while analysing livelihoods. Expressly, culture is a resource and should be incorporated as one of the livelihood assets alongside the recognised social capital, financial capital, human capital, physical capital, and natural capital. This is because artisans use cultural capital as a resource to sustain a livelihood. Case in point, and as alluded to, the artisans' cultural capital exists in the embodied state of long-lasting dispositions and the objectified state of cultural handicrafts (Bourdieu, 1986) sustained through knowledge and skills. As such, figure 8.2 is a modified version of the SLA framework that incorporates cultural capital and goes beyond the initial pentagon of livelihood assets shown in figure 2.2.

Alongside enabling access to livelihood resources, culture also appears to build the artisans' resilience as it enables a positive perception of vulnerability. Additionally, artisans creatively make handicrafts that symbolise a destination's culture and heritage (Ona and Solis, 2017; Scott, 2014). Hence, they contribute towards preserving and elongating a community's culture. For this reason, culture is entwined in various aspects of the artisans' livelihoods.

As mentioned in section 2.6, while some studies have included culture and cultural capital within the SLA, namely; Cahn (2006) in the study of sustainable rural livelihoods and micro-enterprises in Samoa, and Daskon and McGregor (2012), Daskon and Binns (2010) and Daskon (2010) in studies on sustainable rural livelihoods in Sri Lanka; the findings in this study advocate the inclusion of culture and cultural capital to livelihood studies in tourism and the informal sector. Doing this will enrich the understanding of the livelihoods of people within these contexts.

### **ii. Incorporating Bourdieu into Sustainable Livelihoods**

Besides considering culture in the SLA, Bourdieu's ideologies, specifically Bourdieu's theory of capital and habitus, can help understand the artisans' livelihoods. The following section elaborates on this and offers a possible lens for understanding some aspects of sustainable livelihoods.

### **a. Bourdieu's Theory of Capital**

Bourdieu's theory of capital recognises human capital, social capital and economic capital, parallel to the recognised and defined livelihood assets within the SLA (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Nonetheless, Bourdieu's theory of capital encompasses cultural capital and symbolic capital that are not recognised within the SLA. It elaborates that cultural capital exists in three states. Namely, embodied state, which is the long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; objectified state, which is a form of cultural goods and includes knowledge and traditions stored in material forms; and institutionalised state, which is a form of objectification and social entitlements like education qualifications. Bourdieu also recognises symbolic capital, including honour, recognition, and prestige. These are power-related resources that influence the ways that people access capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The key to note is that Bourdieu does not recognise physical and natural capital, which are part of the five livelihood assets within the SLA. This is because Bourdieu amounts capital to power, which may not automatically be the case for all livelihood assets (Thieme, 2008).

Bourdieu's theories have a couple of strengths that can complement some weaknesses within SLA. For instance, by recognising that capital is a source of power that operates in social fields (Bourdieu, 1986), Bourdieu makes it possible to consider power relations underplayed in sustainable livelihood theories. In this case, it is possible to recognise the different social statuses between the artisans, tourists, and intermediaries and how artisans relate to them to enhance their livelihood assets. Furthermore, as Bourdieu's theories were developed on the assumption of social inequality (Obrist, Pfeiffer and Henley, 2010), it makes it possible to recognise the inequalities in livelihood resources.

In Bourdieu, all forms of capital can be transformed into another, albeit not automatically (Thieme, 2008). Thus, while considering this, Bourdieu makes it possible to understand and explain how people transform capital or livelihood assets. For example, Bourdieu denotes that economic capital cannot be independent of social capital; thus, social capital can be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). This is displayed in how artisans capitalise on their social capital during periods of financial distress. Case in point, how they utilise the social networks with their family members, friends, colleagues and *chama* to access financial resources. The findings also display how social capital can be transformed into human capital. For instance, how family members influence skills and provide free labour, enabling artisans to make a living. The same ideology can also explain how social capital is

transformed into physical capital, as displayed by how artisans use their social networks to tap into business premises and infrastructure, which reduces vulnerability.

Therefore, given these strengths, Bourdieu's theory of capital can make it possible to complement the weaknesses within SLA.

#### **b. Bourdieu's Concept of Habitus in Sustainable Livelihoods**

Relatedly, Bourdieu's concept of habitus is also helpful in explaining several aspects of the artisans' sustainable livelihoods. Habitus is an ingrained disposition that reconciles structure and individual agency (Cargile, 2011; Papacharissi and Easton, 2013). It is internalised behaviours, perceptions, and beliefs that determine people's everyday practices (Costa and Murphy, 2015). Additionally, habitus is the predisposed way of thinking that happens over time; thus, they are a product of history and a result of accumulated experience (Cargile, 2011; Murphy and Costa, 2015).

Therefore, habitus can make it possible to explain the artisans' ingrained dispositions, practices, perceptions, and beliefs that determine how they manage their livelihood resources and sustain their livelihoods. For example, through habitus, it is possible to explain how artisan skills are unconsciously passed across generations and retained through continuous historical and social practices. Furthermore, the ingrained dispositions and practices may help to understand why artisans have persistently worked in the tourism industry for many years and generations, relying on handicrafts with limited engagement in other economic activities. Relatedly, habitus reconciles artisans' agency, displayed by how they make individual and strategic decisions to maintain the same practices despite facing challenges.

#### **iii. Theoretical Implications of Livelihood Strategies in the SLA**

The SLA is pegged on development studies and poverty alleviation; therefore, there are underlying theoretical assumptions that people pursue livelihood strategies because they are poor. This underpinning assumes that people are survivalists and engage in livelihood strategies due to the economic motives to sustain their livelihoods. For this reason, the SLA suggests that people have multiple livelihood strategies and diverse ways to generate income (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Farrington *et al.*, 1999), which enables them to make a living and spread risks when vulnerable (Wright *et al.*, 2016).

This is primarily the case for the tourism industry and the informal sector, where people on the margins of society engage in multiple livelihood strategies to generate income from different sources to sustain their livelihoods (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008; Tao and Wall, 2009; Biggs, Hall and Stoeckl, 2012). However, the findings show that this may not be the case for artisans, who display inflexibility to diversify their livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts despite being entrepreneurial and operating in the informal sector.

Moreover, the SLA's underlying assumptions that poor people pursue livelihood strategies to overcome shocks and stresses and achieve their desired livelihood outcomes create a constricted perspective of why people persist in pursuing livelihood strategies. In this case, the framework risks being rigid. It does not give room to acknowledge and explain the several underlying reasons people pursue livelihood strategies outside their need for economic incentives.

As mentioned, artisans are agents that work in a social and cultural context. Thus, despite being marginalised, their decisions to pursue and persist in their livelihood strategy of handicrafts are driven by their agency, displayed by their entrepreneurial drive, desire for creative fulfilment, skills and talents, and attributes like hope and optimism. Likewise, they are also pegged on several socio-cultural structures, such as their social capital, cultural values and norms, and perceptions of international tourists as superior. Collectively, the artisans' agency and the mentioned socio-cultural structures are also their sources of resilience, which enable them to handle challenges and persist in working in the informal sector in tourism.

Therefore, the framework in figure 8.2 has been adapted to encompass how artisans persist in pursuing handicrafts as a livelihood strategy despite the shocks and stresses. Doing so enables a more holistic understanding of how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges.

#### **iv. Adapting SLA to include other Players: Intermediaries, Tourists, and other Customer Segments**

It is apparent that other essential players ought to be incorporated to understand the artisans' livelihoods. The SLF for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism, shown in figure 8.2 highlights these players, specifically tourists and other customer segments. These groups of people are essential to how artisans make a living. They also influence the artisans' decisions

on livelihood strategies and persistence in the informal sector in tourism. Thus, they ought to be recognised in the framework.

Additionally, the findings suggest that intermediaries should be included as part of the institutions in the transforming structures and processes. They include middlemen, tour guides and brokers, who co-exist with artisans in the informal sector in tourism. As mentioned earlier, their relationship is paradoxical. On the one hand, intermediaries enhance the artisans' livelihoods by expanding the customer segments and income. On the other hand, they also heighten vulnerability by limiting access to tourists, exploiting artisans through unfair pricing, defaulting on credit, and creating more competition that threatens the artisans' livelihoods. For this reason, they impact sustainable livelihoods and should be acknowledged.

Relatedly, the findings suggest that colonial legacy should be included as part of the transforming structures and processes that affect artisans' livelihoods. As discussed in section 5.4, it is likely that colonial history has influenced institutions by limiting PPT approaches, promoting neo-colonialism, and influencing urban planning and development. Additionally, it is also likely that colonial history has influenced the perception of international tourists, who have emerged as critical in enhancing the artisans' resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Hence, it ought to be acknowledged.

#### **v. Theoretical Implications for Livelihood Outcomes**

SLA stipulates that people have desired livelihood outcomes, such as the need for more income, reduced vulnerability, and more working days (DFID, 1999). Indeed, achieving such outcomes is beneficial to livelihoods. However, the findings indicate that the artisans' desired livelihood outcomes go beyond the SLA's assumptions. Case in point, artisans have explicit entrepreneurial aspirations, including expanding their businesses by acquiring permanent premises, growing the production of handicrafts, employing more people and getting a consistent income. These entrepreneurial aspirations co-exist with aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes linked to their family units and social capital. Specifically, the aspiration to support and educate their children, secure a better future for their families, build family homes, buy property, and meet the basic needs of their dependents. Additionally, beyond the aforementioned, artisans desire and aspire to be heard. They want to have a voice, participate in policy creation and formulation, and be recognised for their positive contribution to the tourism industry and the economy.

Appendix 1 gives more insight into these desired livelihood outcomes and aspirations. Notably, they are both long-term and short-term. Thus, showing how artisans are compelled by short-term needs like money and are also keen on attaining long-term goals. In this case, it contradicts literature that portrays individuals living in adversity as short-sighted and only eager to fulfil immediate needs (Molotsky and Handa, 2021). Therefore, the findings show the need to modify the expected outcomes within the SLA framework to include artisans' desired aspirations. Doing so is crucial because the desired aspirations motivate artisans to work in the tourism industry and the informal sector; hence are also a source of persistence and resilience that ought to be acknowledged.

### **8.3.1 Summary of Theoretical Contributions to the SLA Framework**

The above section has elaborately discussed how the study adapted the SLA framework in figure 2.2 to arrive at figure 8.2. The dense explanation of the adaptations enhances credibility and makes the framework transferable to other studies (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Creswell and Miller, 2000; Noble and Smith, 2015). In summary, the SLA framework is adapted by incorporating and recognising relevant components. These include incorporating cultural capital as one of the livelihood assets. It also involves including intermediaries as part of the structures and colonial legacy as part of the processes. Hence, making it possible to recognise how they influence access to livelihood resources and affect livelihood strategies. Alongside this, the adaptations include being explicit about the livelihood strategy of handicrafts, which artisans sell to tourists and other customer segments. It also involves extending the livelihood outcomes to consider the artisans' individual and entrepreneurial aspirations. Similarly, the adaptations involve expounding on the sources of resilience to display how they influence the persistence of livelihood strategies. Including these empirical observations enables the explanation of how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while experiencing challenges.

Consequently, the SLF for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism, shown in figure 8.2 above, creates an analytical tool to analyse or understand the sustainable livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs in tourism. This is significant as it creates new knowledge and develops the understanding of a phenomenon. According to Corley and Gioia (2011) and Ladik and Stewart (2008), such improvements or advances in the research practice can be deemed as a contribution to knowledge. Wilkins, Neri and Lean (2019) also discuss that such adaptation of

an existing theory or framework to a new context can be viewed as a contribution to knowledge. In this respect, the study contributes to the SLA Framework and its theoretical underpinnings to enable an understanding of how informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

More broadly, the framework in figure 8.2 can be used as a tool of analysis to research other types of livelihoods. In particular, other researchers can apply the framework to understand and analyse livelihoods in contexts similar to Kenya, specifically within SSA and the Global South. These contexts have similar historical backgrounds, such as colonial histories that shaped transforming structures and processes such as the level of government, private sector, institutions, laws, policies and culture (Jaakson, 2004). Thus, they are likely to have similar experiences of how tourism was developed and how the informal sector is perceived (Akama, Maingi and Camargo, 2011). Likewise, people in the context are likely to have similar perceptions of Western tourists, which makes it possible to understand how the relationships and interactions with such tourists shape livelihood decisions.

As mentioned, the framework in figure 8.2 is embedded in the informal sector in tourism. Therefore, it provides a tool for analysing and understanding the sustainable livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs who directly interface with and rely on tourists for their livelihoods. These include but are not limited to informal café owners, tour guides, pedicabs or taxi drivers and street vendors (Minishi-Majanja *et al.*, 2012; Truong, 2018). These informal entrepreneurs experience similar peculiarities of the tourism industry, such as fluctuations in sources of income due to seasonality and crises that affect the industry. Thus, they are likely to operate in a similar vulnerability context, where they experience parallel shocks and stresses.

Nonetheless, as the study used informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism as the unit of analysis, it is prudent to exercise caution when adapting the framework to other kinds of informal entrepreneurs in tourism. Primarily, artisans have proven to be unique from other informal entrepreneurs. They possess attributes such as inflexibility to other livelihood strategies outside of handicrafts. Therefore, as it stands, the framework may not be directly applied to other informal entrepreneurs in tourism who possess several livelihood strategies or flexibly operate within and outside of tourism. Artisans also have unique characteristics like their creativity and the influence of culture on their livelihoods, which may not be the case for other informal entrepreneurs in tourism.

This said, the framework in figure 8.2 is adapted from the SLA framework. Thus, it adheres to all the principles that govern the SLA framework (DFID, 1999;Morse and McNamara, 2013). This means it is dynamic and flexible to changes in livelihood strategies and outcomes. Additionally, the framework in figure 8.2 showcases six livelihood assets, i.e., human, financial, social, natural, physical and cultural capital, that artisans access to sustain their livelihoods. Nonetheless, just like the SLA framework, its dynamic nature can allow researchers to incorporate other livelihood assets if necessary. Like the SLA framework, the framework in figure 8.2 also offers methodological flexibility (Morse and McNamara, 2013). Hence, researchers who apply it can embrace different methodological approaches depending on the nature of their study.

Furthermore, while the SLA is rooted in rural development practice (DFID, 1999), the adapted framework in figure 8.2 goes beyond the borders of rural development and applies to urban contexts. Hence, while maintaining the boundaries of the informal sector in tourism, other researchers can use the framework to analyse livelihoods that are not primarily dependent on income from traditional rural activities such as fishery, crop farming and forestry (Shen, Hughey and Simmons, 2008).

In summary, the discussions above show the replicability and wider applicability of the SLF for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism shown in figure 8.2. Thus, it reinforces how the framework contributes to knowledge by offering an analytical tool that can be used widely to study other types of livelihoods outside this study's context.

## **8.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the theoretical implications for sustainable livelihoods. It has discussed how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. In doing so, the chapter has discussed the theoretical implications for understanding the phenomenon and the artisan entrepreneur.

The chapter has also discussed the theoretical implication for resilience in the sustainable livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism. It has enabled a more profound understanding of resilience and proposed ways it should be conceptualised to understand how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. It has also elaborated

on the paradoxical relationship between resilience and vulnerability in sustainable livelihoods and revealed that the two concepts are not antonyms. Instead, they are interrelated but contradictory tensions, hence a paradox. By expounding on the paradoxes, the chapter has also elaborated on the relationship between artisans and tourists, intermediaries, and government.

Finally, the chapter has discussed the study's theoretical implications for the SLA Framework. In this regard, the chapter has discussed the necessary adaptation to DFID's SLA framework (DFID, 1999) and presented a modified framework that depicts how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. The framework also creates an analytical tool that other researchers and practitioners can use. Likewise, it is a common practice to develop a more constructive framework after data analysis in qualitative research (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). Thus, the SLF for Informal Artisan Entrepreneurs in Tourism serves this purpose, too.

Collectively, the above progressively advances the understanding of this phenomenon, creates new knowledge and makes significant and original theoretical contributions.

## 9. CONCLUSION

The following chapter concludes this thesis by recapping what the study set out to do in its research aim and objectives. It also summarises the study and highlights key findings that address the aim and objectives. Notably, the chapter encapsulates the implications of the research findings on theory and practice and outlines the study's contribution to knowledge. Additionally, it discusses the study's limitations and makes recommendations for future research agendas and the government. Finally, the chapter shares the researcher's reflections on the PhD journey.

### 9.1 The Purpose and Summary of the Research

This study sought to understand how the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. To achieve this aim, the study set out four objectives. First, to explore the challenges that informal artisan entrepreneurs experience in the informal sector and tourism industry. Second, to examine how informal artisan entrepreneurs handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the tourism industry. Third, to analyse the resources accessed by informal artisan entrepreneurs to support their livelihoods. Lastly, to investigate how institutional resources influence the livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the tourism industry.

To achieve these, the study used the conceptual lens of the SLA framework, whose theoretical underpinnings made it a valuable approach and analytical tool for understanding livelihoods. First, the framework enabled the exploration of the artisans' challenges by examining their vulnerability context, precisely how shocks and stresses created livelihood challenges. In this regard, the study also incorporated the concept of vulnerability to understand the various challenges that threatened livelihoods. Second, the SLA framework enabled the analysis of the artisans' resources by analysing the different livelihood assets they combine to sustain their livelihoods. Doing so enabled the consideration of the artisans' resources, such as their human, social, financial, physical, and natural capital. Third, the SLA framework allowed the understanding of how artisans make a living by exploring their livelihood strategies of handicrafts. Relatedly, it allowed the study to consider how handicrafts enabled artisans to

achieve their desired livelihood outcomes. Lastly, the frameworks' structures and processes aided the investigation of how institutional resources influenced the livelihoods of artisans.

While the SLA framework provided theoretical guidance and was valuable in understanding the sustainable livelihoods of artisans, it was enhanced by integrating other concepts and theories. In this respect, the study incorporated the concept of resilience to understand how artisans handled challenges and persisted in working in the informal sector in tourism. Consequently, the study utilised resilience theory and the entrepreneurial theory of resilience, which provided theoretical guidance. Additionally, as the SLA is not holistically people-centred (Kaag, 2004; Morse and McNamara, 2013), the study incorporated the concept of culture at a micro and mezzo level. This was valuable in recognising the collective beliefs, norms, behaviours, and attitudes that inform and influence how artisans sustain their livelihoods.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the study initially planned to use immersive qualitative methods. However, due to restricted travel and limited face-to-face engagements, the study explored various remote data collection methods and assessed their suitability for the participants. Eventually, the study settled for semi-structured telephone interviews as a suitable method to collect data remotely. These were complemented by document analysis, field notes and the researcher's diaries. Therefore, whilst there was limited access to the field, the study effectively collected data from 51 qualitative telephone interviews with 32 artisans and 5 institutions, carried out over two phases. All the participants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling.

The telephone interviews were suitable for the participants' busy schedules, entrepreneurial nature, and adverse circumstances such as the lack of a permanent business premise. For example, they were ideal for artisans who had the opportunity to select a time and place for their interviews. Likewise, they were ideal for making some socio-economic differences between the researcher and the participants invisible. In this regard, it minimised bias and preconceived notions about differences in age and physical appearance. Nevertheless, due to the shortcomings of telephone interviews, such as the lack of visual cues, limited durations and the possible difficulties in establishing trust, rapport and depth (Novick, 2008; Irvine, 2011; Drabble *et al.*, 2016), the study employed different strategies to overcome these concerns. For example, the study carried out follow-up interviews, which were ideal for building rapport, establishing trust, probing and clarifying the findings. Similarly, the

researcher navigated different insider and outsider positions to establish trust and rapport and enhance participant collaboration. All while maintaining ethical and cultural considerations within the context. Moreover, the researcher paid significant attention to non-visual cues such as pauses, voice tones and intonations and allowed the participants to dominate the conversations. By implementing all the above, the study contributes to the methodological practice of using qualitative semi-structured telephone interviews to collect rich data and engage with marginalised participants.

Data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), which enabled the emergence of key themes. Based on the findings, the study has explained the challenges artisans experience while pursuing a livelihood in the informal sector and the tourism industry. More specifically, it has expounded on challenges in the tourism industry caused by shocks and stresses such as seasonality and crises like terrorism, political instability, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Alongside these, the study has revealed the challenges within the informal sector, such as the lack of basic infrastructures like business premises, limited access to financial resources, scarcity of natural resources such as wood, intense competition, harassment from intermediaries and the lack of institutional support from government and relevant institutions. Collectively, these challenges threaten livelihoods and intensify the vulnerability of artisans.

Whilst the artisans experience these challenges, they have persistently worked in the informal sector in tourism for several years and generations, indicating their resilience. The artisans' cultural practices have emerged as a vital resource for resilience and sustained livelihoods. For example, through their cultural practices, artisans gain ingrained skills passed across generations. The skills are pivotal in forming their livelihood strategy of making and selling handicrafts. Furthermore, their cultural practices promote the artisans' social capital, enabling them to access livelihood resources such as financial, human, natural, and physical capital from friends, family and colleagues. Moreover, the artisans' cultural norms and practices have fostered individual and collective attitudes of hope, optimism, and perseverance, which have shown to be sources of resilience and drivers of persistence in relying on handicrafts in the informal sector in tourism.

Furthermore, the findings have expounded on how artisans handle challenges. For instance, they save money to sustain themselves through challenging times, diversify customers outside of tourism to include locals and intermediaries, re-invest in the businesses,

and temporarily close them in dire circumstances. Additionally, despite having minimal access to technology, some artisans have adapted technology by embracing social media as a platform to sell handicrafts and using financial technology to seek credit from mobile phone applications. These strategies have allowed them to cope with the turbulences and uncertainties they experience. Notably, these coping and adaptation strategies reveal their agency and entrepreneurial nature.

Additionally, it emerged that tourists, intermediaries and government institutions are part of structures that influence how artisans sustain their livelihoods. Tourists have emerged as critical to the livelihoods of artisans. International tourists, in particular, are drivers of the artisans' resilience and persistence in the tourism industry. They are often perceived as superior, making artisans relish their interactions. More specifically, artisans feel superior, empowered, and fulfilled when interacting with international tourists, which they cannot attain in other industries across the informal sector. This shows the complexities of livelihoods in the tourism industry and affirms that livelihoods are not only about making and selling handicrafts but also about interactions with tourists. Consequently, it suggests that postcolonial nuances ought to be considered when understanding the livelihoods of artisans.

Alongside the tourists, this study also reveals how intermediaries cannot be neglected when understanding the livelihoods of artisans. While, on the one hand, intermediaries heighten vulnerability by intensifying competition, harassing, and exploiting artisans, the findings also reveal that they are essential stakeholders. They play an important part in sustaining livelihoods during challenging periods and crises in tourism, such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, intermediaries help artisans expand their customer segments outside tourism. In this way, artisans can maintain an income stream when tourists are few. Additionally, through collaborative relationships, the intermediaries such as tour guides and brokers enable artisans to access more tourists in the competitive environment. Ultimately revealing how artisans use intermediaries to sustain their income and deal with challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. Besides tourists and intermediaries, government institutions also influence the artisans' livelihoods. Their reports, policies and outlooks support the informal sector and recognise their contribution to Kenya's economy and entrepreneurial culture. However, its authorities are part of the challenges artisans experience. They harass artisans, evict them from business premises and marginalise them in the development agenda.

In conclusion, the above section has outlined what the study sought to do by revisiting its research aim and objectives. It also summarised how the aim and objectives were achieved by recounting the conceptual and theoretical lenses and outlining the research methodology and methods, followed by an overview of the study's findings. Having done so, the chapter continues below by revisiting the implications of the findings on theory and practice and recounting the study's contribution to the body of knowledge.

## **9.2 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge**

To this end, this chapter has encapsulated the research findings, which have implications for theory and practice. More specifically, these implications touch on; a) understanding of informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism, alongside how they sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, b) resilience in sustainable livelihoods and c) the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and framework for informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism. Chapter 8 has extensively discussed these theoretical implications and how the study contributes to knowledge. Thus, the following section offers a summary.

Principally, the study extends the body of knowledge on artisan entrepreneurship, specifically the typology of artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and the tourism industry within the context of SSA. As extensively discussed earlier, the study of artisan entrepreneurs within the tourism industry and the informal sector is still underdeveloped and has been recommended for study by other scholars (Bakas, Duxbury and Vinagre de Castro, 2019; Ratten, Costa and Bogers, 2019). Furthermore, the focus on artisan entrepreneurship within the African context, in particular, is also very scarce (Pret and Cogan, 2018; Igwe, Madichie and Newbery, 2019). Thus, this study fills these existing gaps. While doing so, the study elaborates on the typology of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. This is done by expounding on how they gain skills, formulate livelihood strategies, access livelihood resources, handle the challenges they experience and persist in working in the informal sector in tourism.

Alongside this, the study explains how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. It reveals how they make a living using handicrafts sold to tourists and other customer segments. The study also points out how socio-cultural structures enable artisans to sustain their livelihoods. In particular, how their

cultural norms, values and practices enable access to livelihood resources and influence their perceptions of vulnerability. It also reveals how the country's colonial history continues to linger in how artisans perceive and interact with international tourists. Consequently, influencing their resilience and persistence in the informal sector and the tourism industry.

Furthermore, the study discusses the artisans' agency and attributes that enable them to sustain their livelihoods. These include their entrepreneurial traits, such as their desire for autonomy and independence, their ability to pursue business opportunities, and their entrepreneurial aspirations. Despite operating in the informal sector, these entrepreneurial attributes make them actual entrepreneurs (Lordkipanidze, Brezet and Backman, 2005; Leutner *et al.*, 2014; Beattie, 2016; Karabulut, 2016). Notably, the study highlights characteristics that distinguish artisans from other entrepreneurs in the informal sector (table 8.1). These include their inflexibility towards other economic or entrepreneurial activities outside handicrafts. This is unlike their informal counterparts, who are flexible, mobile, and likely to take up several livelihood strategies. The artisans' unique attributes also include ingrained skills, which distinguish them from the low-skilled informal entrepreneurs. In addition, the artisans' culture strongly determines their livelihood strategies, which may not be the case for other informal sector entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the artisan's desire for creative fulfilment seems to take precedence over income, unlike other informal entrepreneurs who are necessity-driven. Consequently, the study reframes the issue of informal artisan entrepreneurs being necessity-driven.

As mentioned, while artisans have faced numerous challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, they have persistently worked in the context for several years and generations, showing their resilience through shocks and stresses. As discussed in section 2.7.2, the concept of resilience is used in various fields and disciplines and thus is conceptualised differently. Therefore, while maintaining the boundaries of sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship, this study challenges how resilience has been conceptualised in these areas. As shown in table 8.2, resilience in sustainable livelihood theories is informed by an ecology approach that focuses on adaptive capacity. It is conceptualised as the ability to cope, adapt, reduce, and recover from vulnerability to gain better-than-expected livelihood outcomes (Chambers and Conway, 1992; DFID, 1999; Obrist, Pfeiffer and Henley, 2010; Morse and McNamara, 2013). In entrepreneurship, resilience is informed by psychology. In this regard, resilience is conceptualised as a personality trait that emphasises individual behaviours, which

enable people to bounce back to achieve and do better after adversity (De Vries and Shields, 2006;Huggins and Thompson, 2015;Bernard and Barbosa, 2016).

While these conceptualisations were relevant in understanding the artisans' resilience, this study proposes a more holistic conceptualisation of resilience. Within this context, resilience does not necessarily lead to better-than-expected outcomes because artisans experience continuous challenges that create constant adversity. This means that there are no opportunities for bouncing back. For this reason, resilience emerges as a continuous process that may not translate to an outcome, as portrayed in sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship. This reinforces that resilience is not about bouncing back from adversity but about persistence through adversity. Additionally, resilience is not individualistic as portrayed in entrepreneurship but is a combination of agency and socio-cultural structures. Implying that while artisans portray behavioural traits that build their resilience, various cultural practices and social structures also influence their resilience, which ought to be acknowledged. Pointing these out makes it possible to recognise the need to extend the theoretical understanding of resilience among informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism. This is particularly important to recognise because artisans experience ongoing challenges. Consequently, resilience appears as a way of life which necessitates a more elaborate conceptualisation.

Relatedly, this study extends the knowledge of the relationship between vulnerability and resilience in sustainable livelihoods by drawing the paradoxes between the two. In particular, it reveals how resilience and vulnerability are interrelated terms but not direct opposites. Thus, the findings contradict the assumption that resilience and vulnerability are antonyms (Glavovic, Scheyvens and Overton, 2003;Martin-Breen and Anderies, 2011). This is because the existence of vulnerability does not directly translate to a lack of resilience, and vice-versa. This is significant for the SLA, which risks presenting vulnerability and resilience as direct opposites, in that reduced vulnerability directly translates to better livelihood outcomes. While this may be the case occasionally, the relationship between resilience and vulnerability is not this simplistic but a paradox. Furthermore, the study expounds on what the paradoxes reveal and affirm about artisans, tourists, intermediaries and government institutions, which deepens the understanding of the artisans' livelihood sustenance.

Overall, the study also contributes to practice by adapting the SLA framework (Figure 8.2) and making it more holistic to represent the sustainable livelihoods of informal artisan entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. This is done by first including cultural capital as one of

the livelihood assets. This means embracing Bourdieu's theory of capital, which recognises cultural capital. In this case, the artisans' cultural capital exists in the embodied states of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body and the objectified state in the form of cultural goods, knowledge and tradition (Bourdieu, 1986). Relatedly, the SLA is made more people-centred by stressing how culture is a resource that shapes other livelihood assets, influences livelihood strategies and is a source of resilience. Second, the framework is modified by including intermediaries as part of the structures that determine and influence access to livelihood assets. Third, colonial legacy is incorporated as part of the processes that influence the development of the tourism industry, the persistence of artisans in the tourism industry and the perception of the informal sector. Fourth, the framework makes explicit the artisans' livelihood strategy of handicrafts and points out that tourists and other customer segments are relevant to forming this livelihood strategy. Fifth, the different social statuses between artisans and; institutions, intermediaries and tourists are revealed. This makes it possible to recognise how the marginalised artisans relate with the other players. Sixth, the artisans' desired livelihood outcomes are expanded to include their voice and entrepreneurial and individual aspirations. Finally, the framework is modified by linking the artisans' sources of resilience to the persistence of their livelihood strategies. These sources are categorised according to the artisans' agency and social structures. Thus, by adapting the SLA framework, as explained above and shown in figure 8.2, this study contributes to practice by creating a tool for analysing the sustainable livelihoods of the often-marginalised informal artisan entrepreneurs in tourism.

Consequently, as expounded in chapter 8, the study contributes to knowledge in three main ways. By focusing on artisans, this study extends the body of knowledge on artisan entrepreneurship, specifically the typology of artisan entrepreneurs in the informal sector and tourism industry. Likewise, by explaining how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry, the study advances the understanding of this phenomenon, which, according to Corley and Gioia (2011) and Ladik and Stewart (2008), is a theoretical contribution.

Additionally, by enabling a more profound understanding of resilience, the study creates new knowledge and progressively advances the understanding of how artisans sustain their livelihoods while facing challenges. Wilkins, Neri and Lean (2019) elaborate that such improvement in theory to explain a phenomenon creates new knowledge. Therefore, affirming that this study contributes to knowledge. The study also modifies the SLA framework and contributes to its theoretical underpinnings, which can improve and advance the research

practice in sustainable livelihoods. As pointed out earlier, Corley and Gioia (2011) and Ladik and Stewart (2008) explain that such improvements or advances in the research practice contribute to knowledge. Wilkins, Neri and Lean (2019) also discuss that such adaptation of an existing framework or theory to a new context is a contribution to knowledge.

### **9.3 Limitations of the Study**

The study was carried out in two phases. The first phase was conducted between November 2020 and January 2021, whereas the second phase was conducted 6 to 9 months after the first phase, between June and August 2021. This was during the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted physical access to the field. Therefore, while the study used telephone interviews and incorporated various methodological strategies to attain rich data, which extensively addressed the research aim and objectives, the study would also have benefited from one-on-one and direct interaction and engagement with the participants. These immersive methods enable an in-depth understanding of culture and ease the establishment of trust and rapport with participants who may be marginalised and poor (Holden, Sonne and Novelli, 2011; Spenceley and Meyer, 2012). Nevertheless, as this was beyond the researcher's control, and given the limited resources and defined timelines of a PhD research, the researcher overcame these limitations by implementing various methodological strategies to enhance the semi-structured telephone interviews.

### **9.4 Recommendations**

#### **9.4.1 Recommendations for Future Studies**

The study makes several recommendations. First, as the study was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted access to the field, future studies can extend this body of work by implementing immersive methods that allow for engagement and interaction with participants. As pointed out, this would enable a more in-depth understanding of culture and the entrepreneurial phenomenon in the informal sector and enhance the interactions between the researcher and the participants (Holden, Sonne and Novelli, 2011; Spenceley and Meyer, 2012; Sambajee and Weston, 2015). Additionally, it will enable observations that were impossible to capture using telephone interviews, which may give further insight into the artisans' sustainable livelihoods. For example, the findings in this study show that artisans

interact with each other, tourists, and intermediaries. Thus, immersive methods would enable observations of the artisans' behaviours and attitudes during these interactions. More specifically, doing so would enable the observation of behaviours such as, but not limited to, the artisans' tactics, their performance and performativity when interacting with tourists and their collaboration and competition with intermediaries. It would also enable closer observations of both the positive and negative implications of colonial history on the relationships and power dynamics between artisans and *wazungu*. Likewise, it would allow the assessment of possible disruptions to sustainable livelihoods within and outside the informal markets. Moreover, as the government and relevant institutions influence how artisans sustain their livelihoods, immersive methods would also make it possible to assess the extent to which these institutions affect livelihoods.

As portrayed in the findings and appendix 1, it appears the artisan profession is dominated by older demography. Due to the challenging environment and the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings also highlighted how some younger artisans are undetermined to persist in working in the same profession. Similarly, the findings showed that not all artisans were keen on passing the skills to their children. This suggests that the future of authentic artisan entrepreneurship in tourism might be at risk or change significantly. Therefore, this study recommends that a follow-up study be conducted in a few years to assess the viability of people engaging in artisanry for their livelihoods. This is not to say that artisans will not exist in the future, but to point out that their practices may change depending on the future of work and the tourism industry.

Furthermore, the findings revealed how artisans struggle to access wood as a natural raw material for their handicrafts. As mentioned earlier, the Kenyan government has placed strict guidelines on cutting trees and has restricted access to indigenous wood to preserve forestry, conserve the environment and mitigate climate change (KFS, 2021). This has implications for the livelihood strategies of artisans, who rely on wood to make handicrafts. It also means that the limited wood supply may intensify the challenges they experience in making a living. Besides this, the advancement of technology and international trade has seen a rise in mass-produced handicrafts, which compete with locally-made handicrafts (Grobar, 2019). This means that the artisans' authentic handicrafts and, consequently, their livelihoods are threatened. Therefore, given these macro changes and market dynamics, further research could be conducted to investigate how artisans would innovate or change their handicrafts

while maintaining the authenticity of their livelihood strategy. Likewise, these changes raise the question of how the artisans' creativity will be impacted as they face the inevitable.

#### **9.4.2 Recommendations for the Government of Kenya**

Based on the findings, the government and relevant institutions have a critical role to play in alleviating the challenges that artisans experience. Within the informal sector, the government should set regulations for financial institutions to promote ease of credit, favourable interest rates, and conducive terms and conditions. This would ease the burden for artisans whenever they need financial resources for their business or personal lives. Alongside these, national and county governments should endeavour to implement urban plans that favour the construction of permanent business structures with basic infrastructure such as water, electricity, and lavatories. This would ensure that artisans in the informal sector have access to decent working conditions, where they can work throughout regardless of the weather conditions. The government can enhance these business premises further by promoting and marketing them to tourists. Thus, facilitating direct interactions between artisans and tourists.

Besides this, whilst artisans run unregistered and unregulated businesses, it is prudent that the government, through its security agencies, create a safe environment for artisans to operate without intimidation, harassment, and exploitation by intermediaries such as brokers and tour guides. This would create a better business environment that enables artisans to fend for their livelihoods without unfair treatment. Alongside these, the government should work with relevant ministries and parastatals to ensure that the benefits of the tourism industry trickle down to the informal sector. This would remove any bottlenecks and hindrances to pro-poor tourism approaches.

Furthermore, the government should bridge the existing disconnection between them and the artisans by ensuring that their reports and policies are implemented to give a voice to the entrepreneurs in the sector, heed their grievances, and deliver supporting structures. Relatedly, policymakers should ensure the implementation of their supportive policies. Unfortunately, these policies are often formulated but not implemented.

Nevertheless, it is also prudent to acknowledge that there is hope for the informal sector in Kenya. The newly elected government that came into power in September 2022 campaigned on a manifesto driven by a bottom-up economic model, which emphasises the relevance of small, medium, and micro-size enterprises, including the informal sector. The government has

since set up the Ministry for Cooperatives and MSME, whose mandate is to create supportive initiatives and a conducive business environment for Micro-enterprises and SME development (Office of the President, 2022a). Furthermore, in November 2022, the Kenyan government rolled out the “Hustler Fund”, a low-interest credit facility to support low-income individuals and promote savings, investments and social security (Office of the President, 2022b). Therefore, future research can investigate whether these initiatives by the new government would enrich the livelihoods of vulnerable entrepreneurs in the informal sector and whether the challenges highlighted in this study would be eliminated.

### **9.5 The PhD Journey and Final Words**

I have had the privilege of working with formal and informal entrepreneurs in different job capacities. My work experience spans coordinating training and mentoring programs for entrepreneurs, offering business consultancy services for start-ups and SMEs, and working as an investment manager in a venture capital firm. Alongside my work experience, I have always been interested in the entrepreneurial phenomenon and how people run and execute successful businesses. This said, my interest in informal entrepreneurs, popularly known as *jua kali* in Kenya, intensified when I got this PhD opportunity, focused on the *jua kali* artisans in tourism.

Taking up the opportunity was an easy decision to make. It aligned with my interests, matched my previous work experiences, and was within the familiar informal sector of Kenya. Although I had not extensively engaged with tourism studies, I was comfortable diving into the field. I had been a tourist before, having travelled within and outside Kenya. In particular, some of my favourite memories were visiting various beaches, wildlife parks, and reserves away from home. These travel opportunities were accompanied by interactions with local communities and artisans. For this reason, I was optimistic that focusing on the tourism industry was feasible.

My PhD journey started in October 2019. Hence, at the program’s onset, I extensively studied artisan entrepreneurs, the informal sector, and the tourism industry. This exercise affirmed a close link between the tourism industry and the informal sector. But, more importantly, it made me realise how the tourism industry played a significant role in sustaining the livelihoods of informal entrepreneurs. Yet, it also offered a challenging environment for them to sustain their livelihoods.

Fast track to March 2020, and the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic (WHO, 2020). This was followed by governments declaring lockdowns and travel restrictions, which adversely affected the tourism industry and the livelihoods of people who depend on it (Nepal, 2020).

Though my study was not focused on COVID-19, the pandemic made me realise that the study was more relevant than ever. Before the pandemic, artisans in Kenya were familiar with crises such as political instability and terrorism (Buigut and Amendah, 2016; Buigut and Masinde, 2021). They also experienced challenges working in the precarious informal sector (Hope, 2014). Hence, COVID-19 was an addition to the crises and challenges they experienced, albeit more catastrophic. More than ever, it became pertinent to understand how artisans sustained their livelihoods while facing challenges in the informal sector and the tourism industry. At that point, I found more meaning in my study and was further convinced it was relevant.

Nevertheless, while my study found more meaning, I was in a “methods crisis.” As mentioned, at the start of the PhD, I had planned to conduct the study using immersive methods that allowed for direct interaction and engagement with the participants. However, the pandemic created travel restrictions and health and safety risks. Hence, I could not access the field. This was the most challenging period of the PhD. On the one hand, I felt reassured because the pandemic affected other qualitative researchers, too. However, on the other hand, I recognised that my research context was unique from the West. It was characterised by marginalisation, relatively low literacy levels and limited access to technology. This meant I had to carefully consider methods that would enable methodological rigour to address the research aim and objectives.

After much consideration, I transitioned from a “methods crisis” to using telephone interviews and a phased approach to data collection. This said, and as discussed in chapter 3, using telephone interviews went better than I expected. I gained access to the participants and obtained rich data. Thus, the data collection processes challenged the status quo, which perceives qualitative telephone interviews as inferior. Additionally, while recognising different limitations, the process also led to the critical discussion of methodological strategies for conducting remote qualitative telephone interviews while interacting with marginalised participants. Overall, I immensely enjoyed the data collection process and treasured my interactions with participants. It was, by no doubt, one of the most enjoyable experiences of the PhD.

While I collected the data, I explored different ways I could make sense of it to ensure the data analysis was rigorous and prioritised the participants' experiences (Dey, 1993; Rubin and Rubin, 2004; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Flick, 2013; Saldaña, 2014; Saunders, 2019). This meant that making sense of the data was not a straightforward process but one with several iterative steps. As I lived and breathed this study, sometimes I made sense of data while sitting behind a computer at my desk and other times while going about mundane activities, such as running errands, doing chores, exercising, and sleeping. This process also demanded my patience and flexibility. For example, patience and flexibility in learning new concepts and theories and in writing and re-writing chapters. This took several months and numerous drafts, but immersing myself wholly into the iterative process shaped this thesis and its significant contributions to knowledge.

Notably, the findings led to a shift in perspectives. As shared in the reflexive account in section 3.9, I had a shift of perspective about artisans and handicrafts. For example, I appreciate handicrafts more than before. I recognise their value as sources of livelihood and acknowledge the creativity and effort that goes into making them. Additionally, now, more than ever, I appreciate artisans as actual and legitimate entrepreneurs who are not inferior to their formal counterparts. They work so hard to provide for their dependents and create employment opportunities. They are not individualistic, and their livelihoods also centre around enriching the tourists' experiences and maintaining the culture and heritage of Kenya.

Thus, the study of artisans' livelihoods is a critical step towards ensuring they have a voice in the development and promotion of tourism, entrepreneurship and the general economy. I hope this is the start of more academic literature focusing on this typology of artisan entrepreneurs within the SSA and the Global South.

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## 11. APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: Extensive Overview of the Sampled Artisans**

	Participants (Pseudonym)	Gender	Location	Description of the business premise	Age Group (Years)	Business Existence Period (Years)	Types of handicrafts they make	Number of employees	Livelihood strategy	Motivations and reasons for persistence in livelihood strategy	Attitude towards persistence in the tourism industry	Key aspirations and desired livelihood outcomes
1	Aisha*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	30-40	15	Assorted beaded ornaments	2 temporary employees – Had reduced to 1 employee during the follow-up interview	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative fulfilment</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Independence/self-employment</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Skills and talent</li> <li>• Hope and optimism</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts	To expand the business while maintaining the making of handicrafts in tourism
2	Bata	Male	Narok	Previously rented a semi-permanent structure in Narok. However, he moved to work from home during the pandemic	40-50	23	Animal carvings	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Skills and talent</li> <li>• Creative fulfilment</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Hope and optimism</li> </ul>	He might consider leaving the tourism industry. Feels that the tourism industry is not promising because it faces many challenges	Desires to easily access wood for handicrafts  Aspires to get a permanent premise for the business  Aspires to get tools and machinery
3	Chui*	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure and home	20-30	6	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employees	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>• Money – to generate fees for further studies</li> <li>• Lack of employment</li> </ul>	Likely to leave the tourism industry after graduating from university	To get more income for further studies
4	Dalila	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	15	Animal carving and fibre crafts	No employees – Had temporary employees before the pandemic	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Money – to cater for children and family needs</li> </ul>	Determined to continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of tourism	Expand business and start making handicrafts for exportation
5	Duma*	Male	Nakuru	Semi-permanent structure on the roadside	50-60	35	Animal carvings and beaded ornaments	No employees – Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – Also has a subsistence farm for family use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>• Loyal local customers</li> <li>• Creative fulfilment</li> <li>• Money - business profitability</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Hope and optimism</li> </ul>	In the first phase, he contemplated starting a new business but lacked capital. In the second phase (7 months later), he was still operating the same business and was keen to remain in the tourism industry	To educate his children so that they get formal jobs  Eventually desires to get a bigger business premise and sell more handicrafts

6	Farasi*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok but relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	30-40	14	Animal carvings	No employees – Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomy and entrepreneurial drive</li> <li>• Ingrained skills</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Money- to provide for the family</li> </ul>	In the first phase, he had just temporarily closed the business. In the second phase (8 months later), he was contemplating going back to tourism	Provide for his family  To own a curio shop where he can sell directly to tourists without engaging with intermediaries
7	Habiba	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	15	Handcrafted bags	No employees – Had 2 employees before the pandemic. Also relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>• Money – from customer orders</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the tourism industry and continue making handicrafts	Aspires for international tourists to be back in the country  Aspires to get more interactions with tourists
8	Hawa*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market and at home.  Started an online shop on Instagram during the pandemic	30-40	12	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employees – Had 2 employees before the pandemic	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills and talent</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial autonomy and independence</li> <li>• Money – income to support family</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the tourism industry and continue making handicrafts. However, she says the pandemic might make her reconsider this in future	Aspires to educate her children so that they get good jobs afterwards
9	Heroe*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok. He temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	40-50	15	Animal carvings	No employees – Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – He temporarily left the industry during the pandemic. Has a subsistence farm for family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills and talent</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Hope</li> </ul>	Determined to return to the industry once tourists are back in the country. Persisted in making crafts at home despite temporarily closing his tourism business.	Aspires to own a curio shop
10	Imani	Female	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure in an informal market	50-60	27	Animal carvings and assorted beaded ornaments	No employees – Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative fulfilment</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Money – pressure to support family</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Fear of failure/Suffering</li> </ul>	Determined to continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry. However, she may relocate from Nairobi to the rural areas	Aspires to expand/grow her business

11	Johari*	Male	Nairobi	Informal structure and open-air market	50-60	34	Animal carvings	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises. Also relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood –Has a subsistence farm for family use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kenya’s culture and heritage</li> <li>Hope and optimism</li> <li>Entrepreneurial autonomy</li> <li>Money- pressure to support family</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry	Aspires to keep providing for his family and for his children to be happy
12	Kifaru	Male	Nairobi	Open-air markets and temporary stands in malls	50-60	30	Assorted wooden carvings	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Money – to support family</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry. However, he mentioned that if he had capital, he would start another business to increase income during the pandemic	Aspires to get a permanent structure for his business and to get money to provide for his family
13	Kongoni	Male	Nairobi	Open-air and informal markets in the city	50-60	25	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employees - Relies on family members who offer free labour. He had 5 employees before the pandemic.	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – Has a subsistence farm for family use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative fulfilment</li> <li>Money – to provide for family and sustenance</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry. Is very keen on growing/expanding the business	<p>Aspires to advance production by getting tools and machinery to move away from manual production</p> <p>Aspires to get a permanent stall as a business premise</p> <p>Aspires to mentor youth and young people at some point Also wants to go abroad for fairs and exhibitions</p>
14	Lulu	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	30-40	7	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employees – Had 1 employee before the pandemic	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passion</li> <li>Money - to support family</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts. However, she is uncertain how the	Aspires to get many orders, expand, and start selling outside the country.

											<p>pandemic will affect the industry and force her to another kind of work</p> <p>Aspires to get a permanent premise</p> <p>Aspires to train and empower others</p>	
15	Makena*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air markets, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	30-40	16	Assorted beaded ornaments and handcrafted shoes	No employees	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>Passion</li> <li>Sense of fulfilment</li> </ul>	<p>In the first phase, she was uncertain about remaining in the tourism industry.</p> <p>In the second phase (6 months later), she was determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.</p>	Aspires to educate and give her children a better life
16	Mamba*	Male	Narok	Semi-permanent structure in Narok. He temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	40-50	26	Animal carving (wooden)	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises. He also relies on his brother, who is also an artisan	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills and talent</li> <li>Passion</li> <li>Money – income from business</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to own a showroom for his sculptures and carvings
17	Marini	Female	Nairobi	Open-air market and the roadsides of Nairobi	40-50	12	Assorted beaded ornaments	1 temporary employee – Had several temporary employees before the pandemic	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood - Started doing people's laundry during the pandemic. This move was driven by an illness whose treatment used all her money and savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>Creative fulfilment</li> <li>Passion</li> <li>Money – business income</li> </ul>	The pandemic made her think about going into another economic activity. She is considering taking up other jobs to sustain her livelihood	Aspires to mentor the youth and uplift the boychild
18	Mbwea	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	40-50	20	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perseverance</li> <li>Familiarity</li> <li>Money – business income</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to live a good life, make money, and educate his children so they have a better life
19	Nala	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and at home	50-60	31	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employee	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interaction with international tourists</li> <li>Passion</li> <li>Independence</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no	Aspires to get a permanent structure for her business

										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurial autonomy and independence</li> </ul>	matter the performance of the tourism industry	Aspires to expand and grow to the point of making handicrafts for exportation
20	Ndovu*	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure in Eldoret - Temporarily relocated to his rural home during the pandemic	50-60	36	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	No employees - Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are a primary source of livelihood - He temporarily left the tourism business during the pandemic. Relies on subsistence farming. Hopes to get back to the industry once normalcy resumes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international and local tourists</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Money – business income</li> </ul>	Determined to return to the tourism industry once the pandemic eases and tourism resumes	Aspires to educate his children
21	Ngiri	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and at home	40-50	20	Weaved items	No employees	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Money – business income</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry but acknowledges he is likely to leave and seek other opportunities if the pandemic worsens the tourism industry further	Aspires to get a permanent premise for his business.  Aspires to interact with more tourists
22	Nyati*	Male	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure and a temporary store inside a hotel.  Temporarily moved to the rural areas during the pandemic	40-50	22	Animal carving and assorted beaded ornaments	No employees	Handicrafts are a primary source of livelihood - Has a subsistence farm for family use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Skills</li> <li>• Money – business income</li> <li>• Age- says his age is limiting his mobility to other kinds of work/employment</li> </ul>	Determined to return to the tourism industry once the pandemic eases and tourism actively resumes. But might also explore farming on a bigger scale	Aspires to educate his children so they do well in life
23	Pendo	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets, the roadsides and at home	40-50	15	Assorted carvings and beaded ornaments	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises. Also relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood – She also does bean farming to supplement her income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international and local tourists</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Income</li> <li>• Pressure to support family</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to be self-reliant, to wholly depend on and support herself

24	Rehema*	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal market and semi-permanent structure in an informal market	40-50	17	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employees - Relies on family members who offer free labour	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international and local tourists</li> <li>• Persevere</li> <li>• Passion</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial autonomy</li> <li>• Hope and optimism</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Desires to keep providing for her children  Aspires for tourism to resume after the pandemic
25	Simba*	Male	Nairobi	Open-air market and semi-permanent structure in an informal market	40-50	12	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises.	Handicrafts are the primary source of livelihood - Has a subsistence farm for family use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international and local tourists</li> <li>• Money – business income</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Age- says his age is limiting his mobility to other kinds of work/employment</li> </ul>	In the first phase, he was determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the situation in tourism. In the second phase (7 months later), he said he was considering going into another business to support his livelihood	Aspires to get a permanent structure for his business.  Aspires for his children to get educated and employed  Aspires to get money to invest in a rental property with his wife
26	Sofia*	Female	Narok	A friend's semi-permanent structure. Temporarily moved to the rural areas during the pandemic	40-50	16	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises.	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international tourists</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial autonomy</li> <li>• Social fame</li> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Passion</li> </ul>	Determined to go back to the tourism industry once the pandemic eases and tourism actively resumes	Aspires for tourism to resume after the pandemic
27	Sokwe	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal market	60-70	50	Assorted wooden and stone carvings	No employees	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Skills</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	<i>Did not extensively discuss this</i>
28	Swala	Male	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets, the roadsides of Nairobi and at home	40-50	17	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises.	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money – business income and pressure to take care of family</li> </ul>	The pandemic has made him think about going into another economic activity. He is considering doing another business to sustain his livelihood.	Aspires to progress and grow his business

29	Tausi	Male	Eldoret	Semi-permanent structure	20-30	4	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises.	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood – He started selling clothes and shoes during the pandemic to supplement income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative fulfilment</li> <li>• Passion</li> </ul>	The pandemic made him think about going into another economic activity. He is considering quitting tourism and doing another business to sustain his livelihood.	Aspires to get a permanent business premise
30	Tembo	Male	Narok	A friend's semi-permanent structure. Started an online shop on Facebook during the pandemic	20-30	5	Assorted beaded ornaments	No employee - occasionally contracts people when the need arises.	Handicrafts are the primary livelihood – Started a photography business during the pandemic to supplement his income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money – business income</li> <li>• Interactions with international tourists</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to grow the business and expand further into social media
31	Zawadi	Female	Nairobi	Open-air informal markets and the roadsides of Nairobi	40-50	20	Assorted carvings and beaded ornaments	One employee	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarity</li> <li>• Interactions with international tourists</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to get a permanent structure for the business
32	Zora	Female	Nairobi	Semi-permanent structure premise in an informal market	40-50	15	Handcrafted bags and assorted beaded ornaments	One employee	Handicrafts are the sole livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions with international tourists</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> </ul>	Determined to stay in the industry and continue making handicrafts no matter the performance of the tourism industry.	Aspires to buy land and build a home for her children  Aspires to educate her children  Aspires to do vacations with her children

*Appendix 1: Extensive Overview of the Sampled Artisans*

*Key: \* Participants that had follow-up interviews - phases 1 and 2*

## Appendix 2: Triangulation in Research

Type of Triangulation Applied	Application in the Study	Examples from the Study
<p>Methodological triangulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of more than one research method to study the same phenomenon or subject of interest (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Oppermann, 2000; Denzin, 2007)</li> <li>• It also applies to the use of at least two data collection methods from the same research design (Thurmond, 2001)</li> </ul>	<p>The study used multiple qualitative methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone interviews</li> <li>• Document analysis</li> <li>• Field notes</li> <li>• Researcher diaries</li> </ul>	<p>The multiple methods increased confidence in the findings by cross-checking the information gathered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The methodological triangulation supported what the artisans said in telephone interviews.</li> </ul> <p>For example, the artisans shared that they had not received any monetary assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the government had focused on the formal sector, bigger chains of hotels and wildlife conservation.</p> <p><i>“The first challenge is that the government does not recognise us. They support other SMEs, but they have neglected us in their aid. We are nowhere on their radar. For example, some markets got water and tanks for sanitation during the pandemic, but the artisans in jua kali did not get any of that.” – Marini</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The document analysis of government reports confirmed that the informal sector in tourism had been neglected during the pandemic, as the government only extended support to hotels, hospitality training and wildlife conservation measures (Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2020).</li> <li>• This was similarly the case in the researcher’s diaries. The researcher visited informal markets in Kenya during the pandemic. Her diary included reflections on how the sector had been neglected during the period.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thus, the above triangulation gave confidence to the information gathered from artisans.</li> <li>• Contrastingly, the above findings countered claims from telephone interviews with one of the government institutions that portrayed support for the informal sector during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul> <p><i>“...during this pandemic, we have supported over 1 million people in the informal sector through MasterCard and given them funds for their businesses...” Institution 4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thus, the triangulation enabled cross-checking of information and removed exceptions from the findings.</li> </ul>
<p>Data triangulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of multiple data sources or data sets to verify or falsify findings from one data set (Lincoln and Guba, 1985;Oppermann, 2000;Denzin, 2007)</li> </ul>	<p>The study used the following data sources/data sets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with artisans</li> <li>• Interviews with relevant institutions in the informal sector and the tourism industry of Kenya</li> <li>• Secondary sources of data – government reports, policies and industry reports</li> <li>• Researcher – reflective diaries</li> </ul>	<p>Data triangulation was valuable in providing multiple perspectives on various aspects of the artisans’ livelihoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, telephone interviews with artisans showed that Kenya’s tourism industry had consistently declined before the pandemic.</li> </ul> <p><i>“Tourism started to decline a long time ago. Even before the pandemic, tourists were not coming in large numbers compared to the past. I have done this for about 15 years and feel the difference. It is not the way it used to be long ago.” – Aisha</i></p> <p><i>“For the last 4 or 5 years, the tourism industry has not been doing well. I do not know exactly why this has been happening, but obviously, this year has been the worst cause of COVID-19. There are no tourists.” – Kifaru</i></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interviews with institutions showed that the tourism industry had declined for many years and was unreliable for local communities.</li> </ul> <p><i>“The tourism industry has been declining for many years now...The local artisans cannot depend on tourism 100%. They need to look for diverse ways to make a living” – Institution 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contrastingly, the above findings countered claims from the secondary sources of data. For instance, key industry reports showed that tourism in Kenya had performed well over the years, except during crises (Euromonitor International, 2019;CEIC, 2020;Statista, 2020;WTTC, 2020).</li> <li>• Therefore, the multiple data sets enabled the study to attain multiple perspectives.</li> </ul>
<p>Theory triangulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of multiple theoretical perspectives in the same study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985;Thurmond, 2001;Denzin, 2007)</li> </ul>	<p>The study engaged with multiple theoretical perspectives to understand different phenomena. For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilience theory</li> <li>- Entrepreneurial theory of resilience</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understanding livelihood resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SLA Framework (social capital, human capital, natural capital,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Theory triangulation enhanced rigour in the data analysis. It enabled elaborate or alternative explanations of phenomena.</p> <p>For example, comparing the theoretical perspective of SLA’s livelihood assets and Bourdieu’s theory of capital enhanced the rigour in understanding how artisans accessed livelihood assets (resources), i.e., Bourdieu’s theoretical underpinning enabled the consideration of power and social status when understanding how artisans accessed livelihood resources/assets.</p>

	<p>financial capital and physical capital)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bourdieu's theory of capital (economic capital, social capital and cultural capital)</li> <li>• Understanding the artisans' culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Habitus</li> <li>- Cultural lens in the SLA framework</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Additionally, integrating the concept of habitus alongside culture enabled alternative explanations of internalised behaviours, perceptions and beliefs in the artisans' livelihoods.</p>
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*Appendix 2: Triangulation in Research*