

**CULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER CHOICE FOR
HOLIDAY DESTINATION AMONG LOCAL TOURISTS IN KENYA**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN MARKETING, SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

2015

DECLARATION

I declare that this project is my original work and has never been submitted for a degree in any university or college for examination or for any academic purpose.

Signature -----

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family. I cherish your love, encouragement, support, and guidance through the years we have shared. Above all, thank you so much for understanding the need for me to undertake this journey.

ABSTRACT

The study sought to address the influence of cultural factors influencing choice for a holiday destination for local tourists in Kenya. The cultural dimensions guiding the study were collectivism- individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity. Cultural differences cannot be avoided but rather understanding what and how the desire and willingness of the tourists as well as their behavior is an important factor to the success of domestic tourism. Tourism is one of the key drivers to Kenya's socioeconomic development. The country places more emphasis on tourism identifying it together with manufacturing and trade as the main drivers of the economy. It generates approximately an average of 10% of the country's GDP and 9% of total formal employment. However, the sector has declined in the recent past due to the effects of terrorism. There is need to encourage domestic tourism as a way of cushioning the tourism sector against occasional fluctuations. A study in culture would therefore identify Kenyans' perceptions towards local tourism. The research objective of the study was to establish the influence of culture on consumer purchase decision of a holiday destination in the tourism industry in Kenya. The study was approached by descriptive design whereby the target population was shoppers at the Village Market and Junction Mall as they walked in and out of various shop units. The sample size of the study was 384 while data collection tool used was questionnaire. Data analysis was both descriptive and inferential. Results of the study indicate that most holiday makers have collectivist traits by valuing in-group goals but negatively correlated, and not significant to decision making of a holiday package. The second outcome was that uncertainty avoidance had a negative and significant effect on the choice of holiday destination. The results lead to the conclusion that safety concerns, cost; both direct and indirect and extreme weather affect the choice of holiday destinations for individuals in Kenya. In order to minimise uncertainty, holiday makers will search for the information extensively through internet and relevant travel websites. The third outcome of the study was that power distance had a positive but non significant effect on the choice of holiday destination. The study recommends that that marketer should take note of the fact that uncertainty avoidance is a significant determinant of the choice of holiday destinations in Kenya. In this case, the government through the concerned ministry should ensure good security in all parts of the country necessary to bring about confidence in movement to any region in the country. Further, disclosure of all costs both direct and indirect will enable confidence in making the travel decision. The study further recommends that marketers should embrace technology and therefore offer more information on the websites, because more consumers will focus on this platform for information.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost, I give thanks to God for his faithfulness. Secondly, my appreciation goes to University of Nairobi for giving me this opportunity to pursue my Msc programme. My deepest appreciation goes to my Supervisor Dr. Joseph Owino for his unwavering support during the project. Thank you for your encouragement, insight, counsel, time and effort. I really thank my fellow Msc Marketing students for the academic and moral support.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Village Market mall, for offering me a platform to carry out my research work. And last but not least, I relay my eternal indebtedness to my entire family for the invaluable support.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The role of culture in the consumer purchase decisions is prominent and has been increasing over time. Culture today is understood to be exerting external influence on purchase and consumption of products which are meant not only for the direct consumption but also on those which are generally high on involvement as purchased by the family (Shavit *et al.* 2008). Rani (2014) states that an individual and a consumer is led by his culture, subculture, social class, membership groups, family, personality and psychological factors which are influenced by cultural trends as well as social and societal environment.

The impact of culture on consumer decision making process is not well understood and therefore its influence on consumer behavior should not be ignored. Hofstede (1980) identified four cultural dimensions; individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity and power distance. According to Hofstede (2001) every national population shares a national culture. National culture is the dominant culture within a nation, culturally distinguishing the population of one nation from the population of another nation.

The study sought to address the cultural dimensions, which are collectivism-individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity. According to Ahmed Ullah, and Allam (2014), the idea of individualism is based on the philosophy that one is the owner of his or her life and he or she has an absolute right to live it according to his wishes and desires. Further, he has the choice to pursue the values he or she considers best for himself or herself. On the other hand, the idea of the collectivism is

based on the concept that the life of an individual does not belong to him or her but belong to the group or society of which he is a part of. Uncertainty avoidance can be explained by the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations (Hofstede, 2001). Masculinity dimension depicts the degree to which masculine traits like authority, assertiveness, performance and success are preferred to female characteristics like personal relationships, quality of life, service and welfare while power distance has to do with the degree to which unequal distribution of power and wealth is tolerated.

The tourism sector in Kenya is a source of economic growth and therefore identified as a cornerstone of Kenya's Vision 2030, which is the country's development plan to transform it to a middle income country by the year 2030 (World Bank 2010). It is the third largest contributor to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the country. The international tourism trip continues to increase as predicted by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 2007, which is expected to reach 1.6 billion by 2020 (Reisinger, 2009).

1.1.1 The Concept of Culture

Culture is defined as the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct the consumer behavior of the members of the society (Shiffman, Kanuk & Hansen, 2008). Therefore, culture is associated with what a society's member considers to be a necessity and what they view as a luxury. As a psychological construct, culture can be studied in multiple ways-across nations, ethnic, individuals and across situations focusing on cultural orientation (Shavit, Lee & Torelli, 2008). Culture is a powerful force in regulating human behavior and its impact on consumption need not to be ignored. Often,

it is only when we are exposed to people with different cultural values or customs that we become aware of how culture has moulded our own behavior. Precisely because it shapes behavior, the understanding of culture is crucial when it comes to consumer marketing (Kau & Jung 2004). Shiffman, *et al*, (2008) state that consumers both view themselves in the context of their cultures and react to the environment based upon the cultural framework. The influence of culture on consumption was first emphasized by Max Weber at the beginning of the twentieth century. He argued that protestantism encouraged a culture that emphasized individualism, achievement, motivation, legitimating of entrepreneurial vocations, rationality, and self-reliance (Lagat, 2015).

The concept of culture which has its roots in Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology, has gained importance in consumer behavior (Ogden & Schau, 2004). Anthropologists explain the specificities of cultural groups such as beliefs, norms and other customs and habits. They explain distinctions between ideal and real culture (Hernandez, 1989), whereby ideal culture refers to what individuals believe on behaviour, while real culture refers to how individuals actually behave in specific situations. However, Hofstede ignored specificities of cultural groups such as beliefs, norms and other customs and habits by narrowing culture to values. On the other hand, Sociologists, explain that the way people view culture is intricately related to their location in society with regard to their race, ethnicity, class, sex, and age (Rokeach, 1973). Thus, culture can be an enormously stabilizing force for a society by providing a sense of continuity (Doda, 2000). However, it can also be a force that generates discord, conflict, and even violence (Thompson, 1990).

When it comes to culture change and stability, there are opposing views of the changing values within cultures. One view is that culture is very stable within a society (Barkema & Vermeulen, 1997) while the opposing view is that of Cultural Convergence Theory. This theory argues that when different cultures experience frequent interactions, the cultures will become more similar over time (Axelrod, 1997). In addition, Yi Wu (2006) argues that societal changes such as economic growth, education, and democracy could affect cultural dimensions.

1.1.2 Consumer Purchase Decision

Shiffman and Kanuk (2012) define decision as the art of selecting one option from alternatives while consumer decision making refers to the behavior patterns of consumers that precede, determine and follow on the decision process for acquisition of need satisfying products, ideas or services. Purchase decision is the fourth stage in the decision making process where the consumer makes the actual decision on what product to acquire (Neal, Quester & Hawkins, 2000). The product attributes guide the consumer on which package to be selected over the other. However, consumers may not just choose particular products over the others because of their expected functional benefits, but also because products can also be used to express their cultural values.

In the context of making a high involvement purchase, consumers are aware of all the consequences of each choice in terms of brand, quality, price and innovation (Mittal, 1995). Consumers attempt to forecast the outcome of each option in order to determine which is the best for that particular situation, so that they may make a reasoned decision.

1.1.3 Destination Marketing

Destination marketing aims at increasing the competitiveness of a destination. It entails a holistic development that influences the entire place. Destination marketing makes tourists aware of the location and connects desirable associations to it (Rainisto, 2003). It is possible to discover for each place a unique attraction factor that makes a destination different from others. Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) is responsible for destination marketing, creating and marketing Kenya's image in tourism markets. This body works in partnership with Kenya Wildlife Service which is in charge of the parks while the Kenya Tourist Development Corporation (KTDC) provides financial and advisory services to the tourist investors. The Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), the Kenya Association of Hoteliers and Caterers (KAHC), and the Eco-tourism Society of Kenya (ESOK) provide support services in destination marketing.

The above bodies have the overall responsibility for the coordination and integration of the destination mix elements, and for destination marketing. The destination mix elements include physical products, people, packages and the programmes being offered. Destination marketers need to have a clear understanding of how tourists choose destinations and their travel decision making process. This is significant in helping destination marketers decide upon which marketing strategies to implement in order to influence consumer behavior.

1.1.4 Holiday Destination Purchase Behavior

Purchase of a holiday package is a complex and very involving decision to make. Hudson (2007) explains that the decision to spend non-refundable money on travel versus purchasing tangible involves psychological determinants. The most important variables

are demographics and lifestyles that include prestige, escape, sexual opportunity, education, social interaction, family bonding, relaxation, and self-discovery. The buying behavior of a holiday package just like any other complex product, involves going through the stages of decision making process; first stage is the travel desire, then information collection and evaluation, travel decision, travel experience and satisfaction, and finally outcome and evaluation (Wan, 2013).

The major product lines for a holiday choice within Kenya are *safari* tourism, coastal tourism and the conference packages (World Bank, 2010). Safari is dependent on the natural and wildlife while the coast is offered by large resorts and rich cultural destinations like the Lamu Island. The cultural heritage activities cut across these product lines and therefore offering consumers rich destinations for choice. For the tourism industry to maintain or improve its current status it is dependent on tourists travel decisions which are reflected in travel behavior (Papatheodorou, 2006).

Cultural attractions are the most important attribute necessary for an individual to make the decision (Smith, 2003). Tourists enjoy trips at museums and other cultural sites. Those in holiday mood would like to enjoy their destinations' natural views and beautiful scenery. Moreover, common attribute for a destination choice as identified by Dwyer and Kim (2003) is price, which includes travelling costs to the destination and the ground costs. In addition, Martin (2005) states that both climate and weather can significantly influence tourists' activities and behavior, just as they affect people's routine lives as well. Although there are many attributes associated with a destination, safety is the major concern for tourists to make a decision on destination selection (Pizam & Mansfeld

1996). Quality service (Lai & Vinh, 2012) is another important attribute thus, provision of ancillary services for tourists improves the destination quality.

1.1.5 Tourism Sector in Kenya

Tourism is one of the key drivers to Kenya's socioeconomic development. The country places more emphasis on tourism identifying it together with manufacturing and trade as the main drivers of the economy. It generates approximately an average of 10% of the country's GDP and 9% of total formal employment (Ndivo, Waundo & Waswa, 2012). However, Kenya's tourism earnings fell by 2.1 per cent in 2014 because of security concerns (KTB, 2015). This eventually caused a setback in the economy because tourism is the backbone of the economy. As a key contributor to the Vision 2030, Kenya aims to be one of the top ten long haul tourist destinations in the world, offering high end diverse and distinctive visitor experience (World Bank, 2010).

1.2 Research Problem

Hofstede's work is the most widely cited in cultural studies. His observations and analysis provide scholars and practitioners with highly valuable insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural relationships. Some of the international studies on Hofstede include Kance and Lee (2002); Influence of culture on impulsive buying behavior whose focus was on impulse buying behavior in relation to collectivism culture. The study concluded that the impulse buying trait is strongly associated to the individualists than to the collectivists. Another study is by Waarts and Everndigen, (2003); Influence of national culture on adoption of innovations whereby the conclusion indicated that uncertainty avoidance highly influenced adoption of technologies. Kau and Jung (2004); Cultures consequences on consumer behavior, De Mooij, (2011); Cross cultural consumer behavior whereby he concluded that collectivists are loyal and less likely to voice post

purchase behavior complains but engage highly in the in-group negative word of mouth talks. Nayeem 2012; Culture influence on consumer behavior who concluded that individualist will search for information extensively on internet unlike the collectivists who will prefer word of mouth advise from friends and relatives . Local study on Hofstede is by Lagat (2015) who studied purchase behavior in the Kipsigis Community, whose study was focused on one ethnic group in a rural setting and therefore limiting the study in a small geographical area.

Tourism is a cornerstone for Vision 2030 in Kenya, yet has declined in the recent past due to the effects of terrorism. The impact has hit hardest at the coast, where as many as one million Kenyans depend on the industry to make a living (Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers, 2015). There is need to encourage domestic tourism as a way of cushioning the tourism sector against occasional fluctuations caused by security concerns. Moreover, hotels need to position themselves in a way to offer variety of packages necessary to accommodate the varied cultural differences of the locals thereby boosting domestic tourism. There is therefore need to seek a deeper understanding of cultural differences in purchase decisions.

Cultural differences cannot be avoided but rather understanding what and how the desire and willingness of the tourists as well as their behavior is an important factor to the success of domestic tourism. Therefore relating the cultural dimensions by Hofstede in the tourism context will bring out the clear understanding of the cultural differences in consumer behavior. Hence there is need to test Hofstede model in order to determine its relevance within Kenya, and further relate his work in consumer behavior locally. Lagat (2015) studied purchase behavior in the Kipsigis Community whereby the results indicate

that the community is highly risk averse, by preferring clear instructions on product use. They are also collectivists, by buying products based on family needs, consultation before purchase and considering welfare of others to be important. However his study was based on the rural setting, on one ethnic group therefore a homogeneous population. It would therefore be biased to generalize such findings across the 42 ethnic tribes in the country. Accordingly, such cultural influence on purchase behavior encourages more research to be done across ethnic groupings in Kenya. This may also be applied to the tourists as consumers behaviors in the tourism sector. Deep understanding of the influence of dominant cultural background of the tourists behaviors and the identification of differences and similarities among the local tourist market has become very crucial concern compared to the past. Cultural differences may cause differences in attitudes among the travelers, opinions, emotions, in making purchase decision to visit a destination (Reisinger, 2009).

The current study is influenced by the growing body of cross-cultural research and therefore builds on the question of how culture impacts consumer behavior. Glowa (2001) proposes a study to be done on cultural influence on high involvement decision. However much research has shown that culture may act as intention inhibitor in relation to high involvement products; there is very little information regarding influence of culture when buying high involvement products (Nayeem, 2012). Consumers' purchasing behavior for high involvement purchase situations is different from low involvement, and therefore studying its buying decision is rather complex (Luo & James, 2013). There is therefore need to study purchase behavior in high involvement products in order to understand cultural influences in this contexts. Purchase of a holiday destination is

complex and high involving; hence this study sought to answer the following question: What are the cultural factors that influence consumer purchase decision of a holiday destination in tourism sector in Kenya?

1.3 Research Objectives

The research objective of the study was to establish the influence of culture on consumer purchase decision of a holiday destination in the tourism industry in Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study will enable the academia to increase knowledge and understanding in culture as an influencer in purchase decisions. This will enable the researcher to give right advice to the tourism sector on segmentation in the tourism industry.

In practice the information will enable marketers in the industry to provide effective segmentation structure and therefore an effective strategy to different categories of consumers, based on their different cultural orientation. Marketers in addition to the demographic and economic characteristics of the target market should also consider cultural variables when determining their positioning strategies.

In addition, the study aims to make contribution in the tourism industry, by offering information necessary for policy regulations and guidelines. In addition, the regulators will be able to make necessary funding necessary for infrastructure and promotional programs in relation to the different cultural orientation.

Finally, the study aims to add to the growth of knowledge on segmentation by determining the different cultural domains for individuals in purchase behavior. Therefore in theory, the results of the study would build on the consumer behaviour knowledge. It

will further be valuable to researchers and scholars, as it would form a basis for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the literature review on the cultural influence to purchase decision of a holiday destination package. The chapter presents theoretical foundations, conceptual framework and the empirical review.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study

This study is explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action, Trait theory and Social Identity Theory as discussed below:

2.2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

According to Jackson, Islam, Quaddus and Stanton (2006), the theory of reasoned action (TRA) developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest that there are two major components influencing an individual's attitude toward an object, the belief structure and evaluative criteria. An individual's belief that a brand possesses given characteristics may be formed through direct personal experience with the brand, interpersonal communication with others who have tried or used the brand, and mass media sources. The impact of cultural norms and values on the belief structure may come from any one of these sources (Lee & Um, 1992). The second component which is the evaluative criteria is where culture exerts the greatest impact on consumer choice. These criteria can be either subjective or objective, such as price (Jamal & Goode, 2001).

Specific purpose of this theory is to predict and understand motivational influences on actual behavior that is not under the individual's volitional control. In addition, it helps

to identify how and where to target strategies for changing actual behavior. The basic assumption underlying this theory is that humans are quite rational and make use of all available information, both personal and social, before they act. Behavior is said to be approximately equal to behavioral intention, which can be derived from a combination of the consumer's attitude toward purchasing the product and the subjective norms about the behavior. Through the concept of subjective norm the theory acknowledges the power of other people in influencing behavior (Jackson, Quaddus, Islam & Stanton, 2006).

The theory accounts for the thoughts of others toward the certain behavior, and is moderated by the extent to which the consumer is motivated to comply with these views. However, the relative contributions of attitudes and subjective norms will not necessarily be equal in predicting behavior (Miller, 2005). Theory of reasoned action has been criticized for not taking into consideration situations where behavior is not under individual's control (Schultz, 2006).

2.2.2 Trait Theory

A trait is a predisposition to behave in a certain manner. According to the Trait theorists, an individual's personality make-up stems out of the traits that he possesses, that distinguishes one from another (Sarker, Bose, Palit & Haque, 2013). People possess specific psychological characteristics that are referred to as traits, and all those who possess a particular trait, are said to belong to a personality type. In order to identify traits within individuals and differentiate amongst them, the trait theorists rely on personality test scales and inventories (Sahney, 2013). Hence, they assume some kind of a quantitative orientation unlike other personality theories. Once they have identified the traits, they classify individuals into groups of people on the basis of the pattern of traits

that they possess. According to Onu, Emmanuel and Garvey (2014), trait researchers have found that it is generally more realistic to expect personality to be linked to how customers make their choices and to the purchase or consumption of a broad product category rather than a specific brand. In trait theory personality typically is described as having one or more such characteristics as compulsiveness, ambitiousness, gregariousness, dogmatism, authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, introversion, extroversion, aggressiveness and competitiveness.

Trait theory should not be used as a single predictor in consumer behavior (Kassarjian & Sheffet, 1991). In addition, it is difficult to generalize about the effectiveness of trait theory in relation to predicting consumer's behavior and decision making process, because researchers have used a variety of competing theories, definitions, methodologies, and instruments measuring different personality characteristics, in a wider range of appropriate and inappropriate marketing applications (Plummer, 2000). He further states that it is very difficult to provide a clear-cut assessment of whether personality as a single or general global construct is a good predictor of behavior without any other relevant information about the consumers, for example, demographic characteristics, attitudes, motives and values.

Unlike other personality theory, trait theory is more objective and realistic and therefore widely applied in consumer behavior. However, the limitation lies in the fact that sometimes traits tend to be indefinable, vague and indescribable. The major limitation of this theory is that it has failed to recognize specific effects of different environmental situations. It further does not appreciate that individuals do change (Kassarjian & Sheffet,

1991). The application of this theory in this study is argued by Hofstede and De Mooij (2011) who argue that personality traits are culture specific.

2.2.3 Social Identity Theory

Borrowed from Psychology, Social identity theory (SIT) has its origins in the work of Tajfel and Turner (1979). It is a theory of intergroup relations, group processes and the self. According to Stets and Burke, (2000), this theory stresses the sociality of the construct in at least three ways. First, social identity is a relational term, defining who an individual is as a function of similarities and differences with others. Second, social identity is shared with others and provides a basis for shared social action. Third, the meanings associated with any social identity are products of our collective history. Social identity is therefore something that links an individual to the society (Jenkins, 2004). It provides the pivot between the individual and society.

The basic assumption is that that social change occurs when people mobilize each other together on the basis of shared social identity rather than act separately on the basis of their various personal identities. The weakness of the theory is that the social comparison to make in-group superior does not change personal identity Korte, (2007).

2.3 Cultural Dimensions

Consistent with the interest in cultural differences, this study focuses on uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, masculinity and power distance dimensions. These two hold important insights about consumer behavior that can help gain a better and more complete understanding of the purchase behavior.

2.3.1 Collectivism and Purchase Decisions

The concept of collectivism is characterized by the spirit of togetherness, sharing and communal life in the society. This cultural dimension of collectivism is well explained by behavior of people in groups, their relationships with others and their perceptions of themselves in relation to others. Thus decision purchase for a collectivist is likely to be influenced by group goals while that of an individualist is likely to be driven by individual goals. Gregory and Munch, (1996) explain that individualist societies emphasize values such as achievement and recognition while collectivist societies emphasize values such as family, security, responsibility and conformity to societal norms.

Furthermore, USA culture is individualism based while that of Japan is collectively based (Hofstede, 2001). This dimension was met with the most positive reactions among psychologists, especially in the U.S.A which happened to be the highest scoring country on individualism. This was because the scores were strongly correlated with national wealth, which led some people to the conclusion that promoting individualism in other cultures, would contribute to their economic development (YiWu, 2006). Therefore the assumption is that collectivism may be associated with slow growth to development. The consumer behaviors in relation to collectivism are reference group influence, information sharing, family orientation, opinion leadership and ethnocentrism.

Kau and Jung (2004) state that collectivists are highly influenced by reference groups and therefore often motivated by norms and duties imposed by the in-group, give priority to the goals of the in-group, and try to emphasize their connectedness with the in-group. An important aspect of collectivist cultures is that individuals may feel normative pressure to

conform to the goals of a collective in group such as the family, tribe or religious group. In addition, they feel a greater need to conform to in group opinions (Doran, 2002). This is based on the assumption that individuals in collectivistic society have a set of norms, roles and values that are distinctively collectivistic in nature and that are either individually or collectively driven. In reference to reference groups and high involvement products, Venkatesan (1996) state that people tend to get under societal influence when they opt to make a purchase decision of a high value, high involvement product. In addition, Hudson (2007) explains that through reference groups, experienced travellers are influencing other consumers to view travel as a means for enhancing the quality of their own lives. However, people who identify themselves as extroverts are more likely to go on a vacation that involves interaction with other people while introverts may opt to sail on the sea for weeks (Wan, 2013).

Collectivists are also influenced by the concept of information sharing. Group socialization provides a necessary platform to share life experiences and opportunities necessary for decision making. Members are likely to discuss their past experiences in relation to costs and quality of service. This construct looks at the degree to which individuals share information or involve the people around them in their search for information on consumption and buying behavior (Kau & Jung, 2004). This concept is dependent upon social ties and social influence on information sharing by friends, family and other groups as sources of information (Nayeem, 2012) unlike individualists who may rely on information collected by themselves such as relying on the internet.

The aspect of family orientation entails acquiring some characteristics from ones parents, and therefore one is likely to follow in the footsteps of their parents in relation to

purchase behavior. If it was a family norm to plan for holiday trips every year, then one is likely to budget for the same at maturity. The effect of the parent in the socialization of offspring has been shown to affect many key consumer behaviors (Wood & Cotte, 2004). Thomson, Laing and McKee (2007) explain that children acquire knowledge on family purchases from their parents. From parents a people acquires an orientation towards religious, politics, and economics and a sense of personal ambitions, self-worth, and love (Hanzael & Lotfizadeh, 2011). Collectivists are characterized by a sense of belonging and maintenance of good relationships (Hofstede, 1980) and therefore will rank higher in the concept of family orientation. Kau and Jung (2004), state that Koreans tend to be more family oriented in their product evaluations than the Americans. This means that they select products according to their family's needs, rather than their own personal wants. Further, Hundal (2001) states that family members have a role and influence in the making of purchase decisions for complex products in India. In addition, Resa and Vleencha (2013) suggest that informational influence from family has the strongest impact on Chinese consumers; therefore collectivists have strong ties to family orientation.

Another element to collectivism is ethnocentrism. Shimp and Sharma (1987) explain that consumer ethnocentrism gives the individual a sense of identity, feelings of belonging, and, most importantly, an understanding of what purchase behavior is acceptable or unacceptable to the in-group. Moreover, Sharma, Shimp, and Shin (1995) maintain that it is positively correlated to patriotic and conservative attitudes. Therefore, ethnocentrism gives an individual a sense of identity and feelings of belongingness. Thus it can be suggested that a collectivist culture whose emphasis is on group identity will tend to

show a greater tendency of ethnocentrism. In purchasing a holiday package, decisions for choosing on local destinations will be preferred to that on foreign trips in a view to promote, improve and appreciate the local sceneries.

2.3.2 Uncertainty Avoidance and Purchase Decisions

When consumers make purchase decisions, they need to be right on a choice that will satisfy his or her goals. People tend to avoid decisions that are uncertain so as to avoid risks associated to bad choice. Thus individuals engage in choices are certain; choices that are believed will satisfy them and will offer value for what they have spent on. Hence uncertainty avoidance can be explained by the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations (Hofstede, 2001). People avoid participating in activities about which may not benefit them but get happy to get involved in activities which they are sure they will benefit from and they have no tolerance towards risk (Ahmed Ullah & Allam, 2014). However, according to Hofstede (2011), people in uncertainty avoiding cultures are more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy while the opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant to opinions different from what they are used to. People within these cultures are not expected by their environment to express emotions. Thus, the consumer behaviors associated with uncertainty avoidance as discussed below are perceived risk, brand loyalty, innovativeness and information search.

The concept of perceived risk has been defined as consumers' perceptions of the uncertainty and the adverse consequences of buying a product or service (Demooj, 2011). People from cultures high in uncertainty avoidance are more likely to experience higher levels of perceived risk in consumption than those from cultures low in uncertainty

avoidance. When consumers feel that these goals may or may not be attained in a purchase, one is faced by some level of uncertainty. In making purchase decisions, risk is involved because all consumers have buying goals associated with the purchase. Therefore, the greater the sense of uncertainty the consumer perceives in a purchase, the greater the consequences of buying the wrong product, and hence the greater the perceived risk experienced by consumers (Lagat, 2015).

The level of perceived risk varies from culture to culture, and this is dependent on the cultural values of tolerance for risk and uncertainty. People who are less capable of handling risk are more likely to view perceived risk to be higher for any particular product than those who take risk in their stride (Font & Gill, 2009). Individuals high in uncertainty avoidance have a lower tolerance for ambiguity, and experience higher anxiety and stress in their lives. In addition, they are also less willing to take risks in life. Therefore, when these people perceive a high risk associated with a product or service, they will not purchase this product or service. They will look for less risky alternatives (Jones, 2007). In this case, affordable package costs, safety concerns and favorable weather are attributes that are important in alleviating fears among travellers.

The frequency of repeat purchase minimizes the risk of a wrong decision making. Brand loyalty is the extent to which consumers form habitual purchases and remain with their favorite brands or stores (Sproles & Kendall, 1986). This is a risk reduction strategy because the consumer has a firsthand experience of the product, and therefore the specificities of product are well known before purchase. Thus consumers high in uncertainty avoidance such as Australians prefer to avoid uncertainty and are likely to use

the familiarity of brands to reduce ambiguity (Lowe & Corkindale, 1998). They make more habitual purchases than Chinese.

The attractiveness of new technologies to consumers varies, and therefore a concept that explained by the level of innovativeness. According to Hofstede (2001), cultures in uncertainty avoidance have a formalized management and constraint of innovations by rules and therefore will show characteristics such as resistance to innovations (Everdingen & Waarts 2003). Consequently, they will try to delay the adoption of new products as long as possible, show very little interest on products being advertised, be unable to accept information about new products, own very few objects directly or indirectly related to the new products, and, finally, are unwilling to adopt them (Daghfous ,1999). Hence, in uncertainty avoidance cultures, risk-averse attitudes imply that consumers will not take unnecessary risks and only adopt innovations if their value has already been proven in the market (Kau & Jung, 2011).

Information search is an important risk avoidance behavior. According to Kau and Jung (2004), people from cultures high in uncertainty avoidance will be more likely to engage in information search than those from cultures low in uncertainty avoidance. An individual who has less tolerance for ambiguity and fewer propensities for risk taking will also have a need to engage in a thorough information search before he purchases any new product. To reduce the risks associated with buying large ticket items whether for services like vacations, choice of physician, or financial advisor or for products like houses, cars, and household furnishings, or personal computers, many consumers engage in a more formal, complex decision-making process. They often search extensively for

information, collecting it from a variety of sources, to evaluate alternative products or brands before making the purchase (Glowa, 2001).

The information search can further be divided into the categories of internal and external, and both of these types of search are utilized by consumers in purchase of high involving products (Peterson & Merino, 2003). The internal information search is memory based and relies on the consumer's experience with the product, based on their previous information search. An external or active information search is concerned with obtaining new information to assist in the making of the purchase decision, because the consumer feels that he does not have enough existing information with which to make an informed choice (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996). For a travel destination, the sources of information search include travel agencies, professionals, trusted friends or relatives, published sources such as magazines, pamphlets, or books, advertisements, the Internet or the product package (Wan, 2013).

2.3.3 Power Distance and Purchase Decisions

The concept of human inequality is the basic issue involved in power distance (De Mooij, 2011). Such inequality can occur in areas such as prestige, wealth and power and these are given different emphasis in different societies. Consumer behaviors that are associated with power distance should be influenced by cultural differences associated with the degree of respect given to authoritative and powerful figures in societies. In view of this, opinion seeking is suggested as the one factor that can vary according to differences in power distance.

Opinion leadership is the process by which one person informally influences the actions or attitudes of others, who may be opinion seekers or merely opinion recipients (Kau & Jung, 2004). The distinction between opinion leaders and opinion seekers may become more salient in cultures that are high in power distance. For instance, in Indonesia, a country high in power distance, there is evidence to suggest that opinion leaders are wealthier than opinion seekers (Marshall & Gitosudarmo, 1995). This does not occur in many Western countries that are low in power distance. It was also found that in India, Indonesia and Korea, three countries high in power distance, opinion leaders tended to be older than opinion seekers. This suggests that Asians, who are generally higher in power distance than their Western counterparts, believe in certain figures of authority, and believe that power is distributed unequally. Hence, Asians feel that a person has to be of a certain age, and own certain amounts of wealth to qualify as an opinion leader. He has to possess power over them. This provides the basis to suggest that there are significant numbers of opinion seekers in these countries as they may look up to people in authority for their opinions on products. But in low power distance countries, the authority of opinion leaders is less recognized and there will be fewer people who are interested in their opinions (Kau and Jung 2004). Therefore people from cultures with a large power distance are more likely to be opinion seekers than those from cultures with a small power distance.

2.3.4 Masculinity and Purchase Decision

The masculinity-femininity dimension developed by Hofstede (1980) is derived from the sex roles characteristics. The main issue in this concept is whether biological differences between males and females have any implications on their societal roles. The

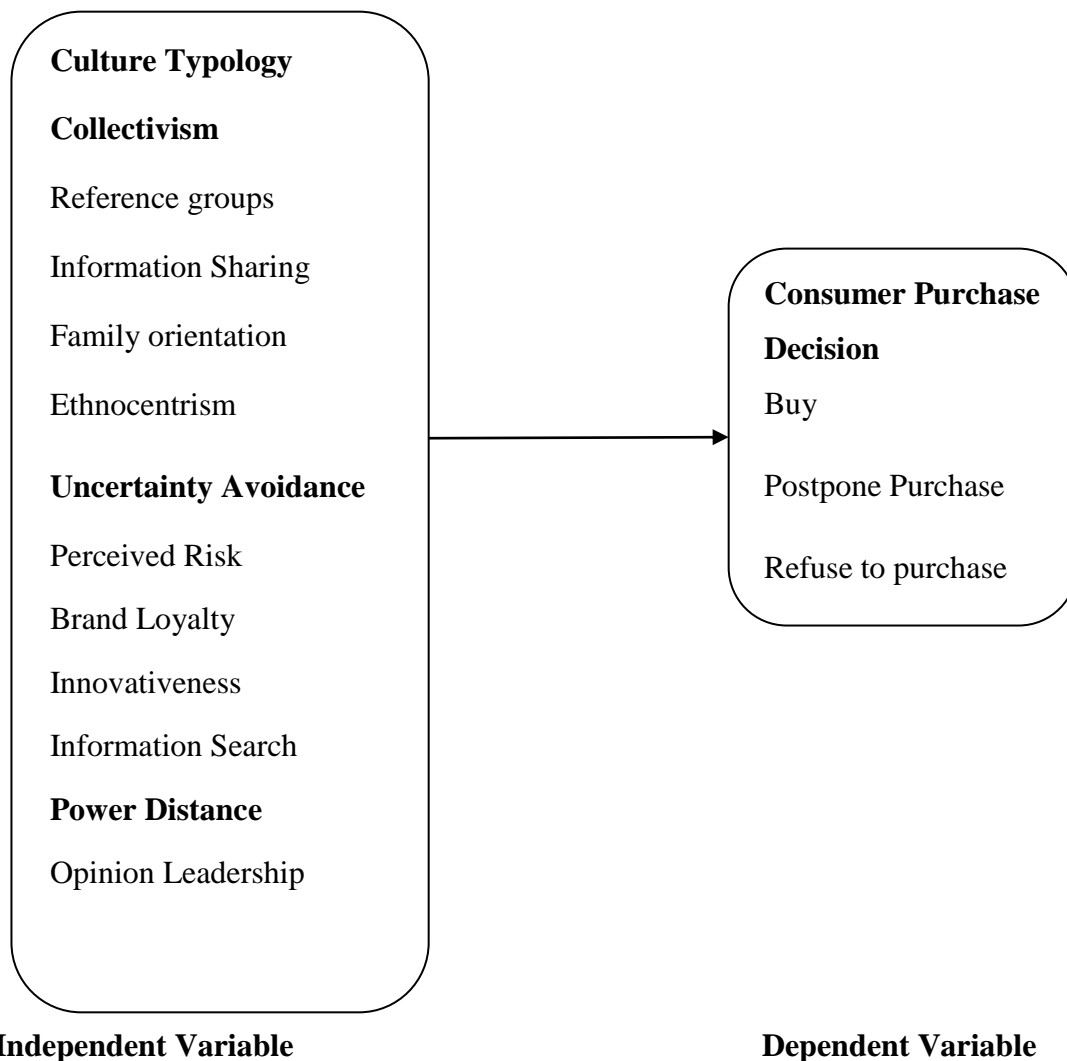
predominant pattern is for men to be assertive and for women to be nurturing. According to De Mooij (2011), the dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life. In addition, in masculine cultures male and female roles are differentiated, whereas in feminine cultures roles overlap. This pattern leads to men being more dominant within the household and therefore powerful figures in purchase decision roles. This idea is manifested when it comes to decision making in the family as explained below:

Family decision making is particularly of interest in the context of the cultural dimension of masculinity because sex role attitudes and perceptions are ascribed through cultural norms that influence the household decision role structure and responsibility. There are certain products where equal consideration is needed such as vehicles and houses by both the partners. Delener (1992) found that in the traditionally male dominated cultures, the Latin Americans, where the father is seen as the absolute head of the family and has full authority, the husbands were the major influencer in making purchase decisions while on the other hand, Cubans were characterized to have a modern family system and therefore were characterized by joint decision making. Moreover, Kim, Laroche and Zhou (1993) found that a more modern sex-role attitude of the husband resulted in a joint and equal decision making to task sharing by the couple while Webster (1994) found more couples conform to husband domination. Women empowerment in Kenya has influenced their decision making roles in the society. Thus, it can be concluded that decision making in the family differs across cultures and is dependent upon the extent to which the couple's values belong to the traditional patriarchal system where the husband dominates, or the more modern view of joint decision making.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The independent variable is a variable that is manipulated in order to determine its effect on another variable while the dependent variable is one that is affected by the independent variable. Dependent variable is a function of the independent variable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The independent variable for this study is the cultural variable, while the decision to be made is the dependent variable. The consumer purchase decision to buy, postpone or refuse to purchase is highly influenced by an individual's belief system. Thus the conceptual relationships between the variables of the study are depicted in Figure 1.0 below.

Figure 2.1: Cultural Influencers to Consumer Purchase Decision



Source: Researcher (2015)

Research Hypothesis:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between collectivism and consumer purchase decision.

H₂: Uncertainty avoidance significantly influences consumer purchase decision.

H₃: Power distance significantly influences consumer purchase decision.

H₄: Masculinity significantly influences consumer purchase decision.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the research design and methodology that was adopted for study. It entails the way the study was designed, the population, the data collection techniques and the data analysis procedure.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2004). The approach for the study was descriptive research design. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), a descriptive study is concerned with finding out the what, where and how of a phenomenon. The use of descriptive design in this study was an effective approach in describing possible behavior and the belief system on culture. This is a social research study whose aim is to associate variables and therefore a descriptive approach was ideal in predicting variables under the study.

3.3 Study Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) define target population as that population the researcher studies, and whose findings are used to generalize to the entire population. This study examined the cultural behavior of local tourists. The target population for this research was shoppers within two malls, Junction Mall and the Village Market. These malls attract both middle level and high end consumers given their location and the facilities being offered.

3.4 Sample Selection

A sample is a subset of the population that has been chosen to be studied while sample size is the number of cases or entities in the sample to be studied (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003), define sampling as the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study from the larger group referred to as the population. The sample size was arrived at using the formula $n = \frac{(Z^2 pq)}{d^2}$ with 95% confidence level and 0.05 level of significance. Where n is the desired sample size, z is the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level, p is the proportion in the target population estimated to have the characteristics being measured, q is (1-p) while d is the level of statistical significance test. Since there is no estimate available for the proportion in the target population assumed to have characteristics of interest, 50% is used as recommended by Fisher *et al* (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Therefore the sample size is as follows;

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.5)(0.5)}{(0.5)^2}$$

$$(0.5)^2$$

$$n = 384$$

The sampling technique was stratified random sampling. The strata groups in this study were two, the Junction Mall and the Village Market. The shoppers at the Junction Mall were selected randomly as they walked in and out of the selected shops. Simple random sampling was further used on the shops at the Village market whereby, the shoppers were approached as they walked in and out of selected shops. The sampling unit consisted of

adult shoppers of more than 18 years of either male and female entering or leaving selected shopping unit.

3.5 Data Collection

The questionnaire captured questions in relation to the beliefs and cultural variables in relation to purchase of a holiday destination. The questionnaire was divided in two sections. The first section captured the demographic characteristics of the respondents in order to understand the consumer well. The second part captured the cultural factors as they relate to consumers. The questions on cultural factors were grouped into the three cultural dimensions; collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance. These enabled in the understanding of the beliefs in relation to destination purchase. The qualifying question was whether one is a Kenyan and whether they had gone for a holiday the past two years within Kenyan destinations.

A pilot group of 5 individuals was selected from Msc class, group of 2013 in order to test the reliability of the research instrument. The pilot study allowed for pre-testing of the research instrument. The clarity of the instrument items to the respondents was necessary so as to enhance the instrument's validity and reliability. The aim was to correct inconsistencies arising from the instrument, which ensured that it measured what was intended. The pilot data was not be included in the actual study.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Data

Reliability and validity are measures of relevance and correctness of a data collection instrument (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Reliability is the measure of the degree to

which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials while validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on research results.

In order to assess reliability, the internal consistency technique was used. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was computed to determine how items correlate amongst themselves. A high coefficient implies that there is consistency among items in measuring the concept of interest and vice versa. The acceptable reliability coefficient is 0.7 and above (Gudderman & Zumbo, (2012).

In order to assess for validity, the questions were obtained from valid literature. In addition, the supervisor who is an expert in the field helped in checking for the instrument measures. Finally, pilot survey was done on five classmates prior to actual data collection whose findings helped in assessing the measures and to check for any ambiguity in questionnaire construction. This also helped in checking out on questions that were not well understood.

3.7 Data Analysis

Prior to processing the responses, the completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. The data was coded to enable the responses to be grouped into various categories. The statistical packages such as SPSS helped to describe the data. Data collected was quantitative and was analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistic in order to test and describe the relationships. Regression analysis was used to test the association between cultural dimensions and purchase behavior, and to determine the magnitude of the relationship. The analytical model used is in the form:

$$Y_1 = a + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + \text{error}$$

a = Constant

$Y_1, Y_2,$ and Y_3 = Purchase decision for equation 1,2, and 3 respectively.

X_1 = Collectivism

X_2 = Uncertainty Avoidance

X_3 = Power Distance

$B_1, B_2, B_3,$ = Beta coefficient for collectivism variable, uncertainty avoidance variable, and power distance variable.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. The chapter is organised as follows. First, the demographic analysis is presented. This is followed by an analysis of the cultural dimensions specifically the collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance. Lastly, the chapter provides the results on the influence of culture on purchase decisions.

4.2 Demographic Analysis

The demographics explained are gender, marital status, age, and number of children owned.

4.2.1 Gender

Table 4.1 shows the gender composition of the respondents in the survey.

Table 4.1: Gender distribution of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	114	36.9
Female	195	63.1
Total	309	100.0

The results show that 37% of the respondents were male and 63% were female. Therefore, there were more female respondents than male in the sample of those who participated in this survey.

4.2.2 Marital Status

Table 4.2 presents the results on the marital status of the respondents in the survey.

Table 4.2: Marital status of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
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Single	93	33.0
Married	189	67.0
Total	282	100.0

The study found that 33% of the respondents were single while 67% were married. Thus, most of those who took part in this survey were married.

4.2.3 Age

Table 4.3 shows the results for age distribution of the respondents that took part in this survey.

Table 4.3: Age distribution of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
18 - 27	60	19.6
28 - 37	111	36.3
38 - 47	69	22.5
48 -57	39	12.7
Above 58	27	8.8
Total	306	100.0

The results showed that 36% of the respondents were aged 28-37 years and 23% were aged 38-47 years. Most of the respondents (76%) were therefore in the productive age (47 years or below).

4.4.4 Number of Children

Table 4.4 presents the results for the number of children the respondents had.

Table 4.4: Number of children

	Frequency	Percent
None	81	26.5
One	57	18.6
Two	105	34.3
Three	39	12.7
Four and above	24	7.8
Total	306	100.0

The results showed that 27% of the respondents had no children, 19% had one child, 34% had two children and 13% had three children. Thus, the families had on average two children.

4.3 Cultural Dimensions

This section presents the results on cultural dimensions. The dimensions are collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and power distance. The results are presented using descriptive statistics.

4.3.1 Collectivism

The respondents were asked to state who accompanied them for the trip the last time they went for a holiday getaway.

Table 4.5: Company during the trips by gender

	Male	Female	Frequency	%
Alone	18	21	39	13%
Spouse	42	48	90	29%
Entire family, wife and children	30	69	99	32%
Friends/co workers	18	51	69	22%
Other	6	6	12	4%
Total	114	195	309	100%

The results shown in Table 4.5 reveal that 13% went alone, 29% with their spouses, 32% with their entire families and 22% with friends and co-workers. Through cross-tabulation by gender, it can be observed that most of those who went alone to the trips were female (54%) as opposed to male (46%). Thus, from the above results, most of the respondents are collectivists at a combined 87% and individualists at 13%. In addition, most of the respondents were accompanied by the entire family an indication that most respondents are family oriented and therefore driven by family values.

The study further sought to identify the persons that facilitated the travel process.

Table 4.6: Persons that facilitated the travel process financially.

	Frequency	Percent
Self	117	37.9
Husband/wife	87	28.2
Friends	18	5.8
Co-workers/club membership	48	15.5
Parents	12	3.9
Boyfriend/girlfriend	21	6.8
Others	6	1.9
Total	309	100.0

The results in Table 4.6 show that 38% of the trips were facilitated by the respondents themselves, 28% by their spouses and 15% by co-workers or club memberships. Therefore the above results indicate that however most of the respondents were economically independent in decision making at 38%, the in-group influence towards the purchase decision is high at 62% and therefore highly influenced by reference groups.

The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements regarding the behavior necessary for decision making for a holiday package.

Table 4.7: Collectivism

	Mean	SD
I feel proud associating with the best brands in the tourism industry. I choose the best	4.00	1.115
As a Kenyan citizen, I should purpose for domestic destination so as to boost domestic tourism and therefore economy.	4.00	1.044
The decision to travel is to emphasize the connectedness of the in group; family, friends or club interests. It improves quality of life and	3.87	1.065

a sign of acceptance.		
When evaluating purchase decision, domestic brands should be first and primary choice. Foreign brands against local hurts the economy.	3.74	1.206
I get more information on holiday trips (Costs, packages, quality, directions) from in-group and social platforms.	3.72	1.171
The decision to travel is made in confirmation to the goals of the in group (family, friends, and club initiative).	3.60	1.227
Group welfare and loyalty is more important than individual rewards; therefore individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.	3.38	1.270
Decision to make destination trip is personal and therefore likely to engage privately on internal sources of information like websites and magazines.	3.35	1.260
Individual interest should be encouraged. Group welfare brings about slow growth in development, therefore should be discouraged.	3.22	1.330
I don't discuss personal matters with in-groups therefore peoples experiences don't influence my intention to travel.	3.17	1.345
I acquired the norm to budget and plan for the holiday from my parents.	2.06	1.264

The results shown in Table 4.7 show that most of the respondents felt proud associating with the best brands in the tourism industry (mean = 4.00, SD = 1.12), and therefore highly driven by self-concept. This indicates that they want to be seen by their in-groups selecting the best brands, and that they can afford the best. The results also show that most of the respondents purposed for domestic destinations so as to boost domestic tourism (mean=4.00, SD = 1.04), therefore highly ethnocentric; they want to promote domestic development which belongs to them.

The respondents also agreed that the decision to travel emphasizes the connectedness of groups and therefore improves the quality of life (mean = 3.87, SD 1.06) an indication that they value in-group relationships. In addition, respondents got more holiday information from in-group platforms an indication of high level of information sharing

(Mean = 3.7, SD 1.17). Further, the decision to travel is made in confirmation to group goals (Mean = 3.6) and that group welfare is more important than individual rewards (3.4). This is an indication that an individual values group welfare and will make decision that will bring happiness to the group, either family, friends or coworkers. However, idea of holiday making was not acquired from their parents (mean = 2.06, SD = 1.26).

4.3.2 Uncertainty Avoidance

Table 4.8 shows the results on the attributes in decision making on purchase of a holiday package. The respondents had been asked to rank them in order of importance. Friedman’s test was applied to analyze the ranked scores. The most important attribute was given the highest value.

Table 4.8: Important attributes in decision making on purchase of holiday package ranked out of 6.

	Mean Rank
Safety	4.00
Cost	3.80
Cultural attraction/experience	3.71
Climate/Weather	3.62
Quality service	3.19
Entertainment	2.68

The results show that the most important attribute was safety followed by cost, cultural attraction, climate change, quality service and lastly entertainment. These findings indicate that majority of the respondents are highly risk averse by considering risky factors to be most important attributes; safety and cost. However, some respondents felt that privacy was also an important factor which was not featured in the list.

The respondents were asked to state how long it took them to make the travel decisions.

Table 4.9: Time taken to make travel decisions

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 4 months	186	70.5
Between 4-8 months	42	15.9
Between 8-12 months	12	4.5
One year or more	24	9.1
Total	264	100.0

The results shown in Table 4.9 reveal that 71% said it took them less than four months, 16% said it took them 4-8 months and 5% said it took them between 8-12 months. In order to avoid risks, majority of travelers sought for information extensively and made decision within four months.

Table 4.10 shows the results of the number of travel destinations that the respondents considered before settling on the final one.

Table 4.10: Number of travel destinations considered

	Frequency	Percent
One	54	18.2
Two	81	27.3
Three	63	21.2
More than three	99	33.3
Total	297	100.0

The results show that 18% considered one destination, 27% considered two destinations, 21% considered three destinations while 33% considered more than three destinations. From the results below, majority of respondents had more than three choices which

indicate that in order to avoid ambiguity travelers will come up with many alternatives for a decision to be made on one, which is a risk avoidance strategy.

Table 4.11 shows the results on the behavioral attributes in relation to decision making for a holiday purchase. The statements regard uncertainty avoidance as a cultural dimension of purchase decision.

Table 4.11: Uncertainty Avoidance

	Mean	SD
The decision to make a domestic trip is highly dependent on the safety and security situation at hand.	4.31	.961
I do refer the destinations I toured last to my other friends and family.	4.22	.988
Extensive information search on many sources on holiday destination is very important before decision making	4.17	1.137
The decision to travel is highly dependent on the surety of a quality service; otherwise I avoid making decisions on the unknown.	4.12	1.014
I prefer travel packages that are well insured in case of any eventuality, even if it means paying a premium for it.	3.96	1.189
I prefer digital communication with the destination providers.	3.75	1.073
I am likely to choose destination that are advertised on digital platforms over analogue ones.	3.47	1.236
I am likely to visit the destination I toured last, because am familiar with them. I chose familiar brands to avoid ambiguity.	3.12	1.405
I prefer analogue communication with my travelling agents because am used to the system.	2.18	1.197

The results show that most of the respondents agreed that the decision to make domestic trips were dependent on safety and security situation at hand (mean = 4.31), an indication that many will shy away from highly insecure regions. The results showed that the respondents referred the destinations they last toured to other friends and families (mean = 4.22), an indication that loyalty is an important attribute in avoiding uncertainty, that one is sure of the previous experiences. The results further showed that the respondents

noted that an extensive information search on many sources on holiday destination is important before decision making (mean = 4.17). In order to shy away from uncertainty, travelers will search for information extensively in order to choose a less risky alternative. However, the respondents will shy away from analogue platforms (mean=2.1), and opt for digital platforms contrary to the fact that highly uncertain cultures shy away from innovation for fear of failure. In addition, many travelers will less likely to travel back to the previous destinations for loyalty purposes (mean= 3.11) for the reason being that many travelers would like new experiences, and therefore will refer these destinations to their friends but opt for new adventure to avoid repetition.

Table 4.12 shows the results on the sources of information for holidays that were important to the respondents. The sources were ranked in terms of the order of importance with the higher values denoting highly ranked choices (important sources).

Table 4.12: Important sources of information for holidays ranked out of 9.

Source	Mean Rank
Websites/internet	6.29
Own experience	5.28
Family	5.11
Travel agents	5.09
Friends and workmates	5.03
Club membership	4.91
Televisions, adverts and documentaries	4.74
Newspapers and magazines	4.49
Brochures	4.05

The results show that the most important source was internet and websites (6.29), followed by own past experience (5.28), information from family members (5.11), travel

agents (5.09), friends/workmates (5.03), club membership (4.91) T.V adverts (4.74), newspapers (4.49). The least sources were brochures at (4.05).

4.3.3 Power Distance

Table 4.13 shows the results for the importance of conforming to opinion leaders for any action in relation to purchasing a holiday destination.

Table 4.13: Importance of conforming to opinion leaders in relation to purchasing holiday destination

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	27	9.6
Important	81	28.7
Less important	96	34.0
Not important at all	78	27.7
Total	282	100.0

The study found that 38% of the respondents agreed that the conforming to opinion leaders was important to them while 62% said it was not important.

Table 4.14: Characteristics of Opinion Leaders

	Frequency	Percent
Age	51	17.3
Education	138	46.9
Wealth	27	9.2
Celebrity	48	16.3
Others	30	10.2
Total	294	100.0

The respondents were asked to state one characteristic of opinion leaders. The results shown in Table 4.14 show that 17% defined them by age, 47% by education, 9% by wealth, while 16% noted celebrities. However, some respondents felt that moral behavior is a very important attribute which missed from the list.

Table 4.15: Persons responsible for purchase decision making in the house

	Frequency	Percent
Husband	45	15.2
Wife	12	4.0
Joint (wife and husband)	216	72.7
Others	24	8.1
Total	297	100.0

Table 4.15 shows the results for the persons responsible for purchase decision making in the house. The results show that 15% were done by the husbands, 4% by wives, 73% by both husbands and wives, and 8% by others. Thus, couples made the purchase decisions together in the house, while decision making by wife ranked lowest at 4%.

The respondents were asked to state the parties that played the most dominant role in the final decision to travel for a holiday.

Table 4.16: Most dominant parties in final decision making for holidays

	Frequency	Percent
Own decision	117	39.0
Children in the household	15	5.0
Spouse	45	15.0
Joint family decision	123	41.0
Total	300	100.0

The results shown in Table 4.16 show that 39% made their own decisions, 5% of the decisions were made by the children, 15% by spouses, and 41% were made jointly by the families. This indicate that family role in decision making is an important factor in high involvement products. Parental role is also a major factor (39) , therefore parents have the final say in decision making of high involvement products, while children have no much influence in decision making of such decisions.

4.4 Influence of Culture on Purchase Decisions

The respondents were asked to state whether they ever plan for regular destination trips away from home within Kenya.

Table 4.17: Frequency of planning destination trips within Kenya

	Frequency	Percent
Very often(at least once annually)	138	45.1
Less often(once in three years)	84	27.5
Rarely (over three years)	84	27.5
Total	306	100.0

The results in Table 4.17 reveal that 45% of the respondents planned the trips very often; at least once annually, 28% planned the trips less often; at least once in three years, and 28% rarely planned the trips.

In Table 4.18, a summary of descriptive statistics on the main variables in the study is shown.

Table 4.18: Summary descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Purchase decision	306	1.82	.835
Collectivism	267	3.47	.584
Uncertainty avoidance	294	3.72	.646
Power distance	282	2.80	.954

The results show that collectivism (mean = 3.4688) and uncertainty avoidance (3.72) were significant dimensions of culture as far as purchase decisions are concerned while power distance (mean = 2.7979) was the least significant of the dimensions.

A regression analysis was carried out to examine the effect of cultural dimensions on consumer choice of holiday destinations. The results in Table 4.19 show that the model accounted for 12.3% of the variance in choice of holiday destinations ($R^2 = .123$).

Table 4.19: Model summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.350 ^a	.123	.111	.797

Table 4.20 shows the model fitness. As shown, the F-statistic was 10.724 and was significant, $p = .000$. This shows that the model used was fit to explain the relationship between cultural factors and choice of holiday destinations.

Table 4.20: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	20.428	3	6.809	10.724	.000 ^b
Residual	146.034	230	0.635		
Total	166.462	233			

The results in Table 4.21 show the coefficients of the model. As shown, collectivism had a negative but insignificant to the choice of holiday destination ($\beta = -.022$, $p = .827$). This suggests that the choice of holiday destination is not influenced by collectivism dimension of culture.

Table 4.21: Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.510	.435		8.063	.000
Collectivism	-.022	.102	-.015	-.219	.827
Uncertainty avoidance	-.476	.097	-.335	-4.895	.000
Power distance	.058	.057	.065	1.021	.308

The results also show that uncertainty avoidance had a negative and significant effect on choice of holiday destination ($\beta = -.476$, $p = .000$). This shows that the choice of holiday destination in Kenya is influenced by uncertainty avoidance. When individuals are uncertain about their choices, the process of decision making is negatively affected.

The results further show that power distance had a positive but non significant effect on the choice of holiday destination ($\beta = .058$, $p = .308$). These results mean that an individual's choice for a holiday destination in Kenya is not affected by the power distance.

4.5 Discussion on Findings

The descriptive results indicate that the highest number of respondents were women at 63% while men were 37%. This is an indication that women spend more time in the malls than males and that malls have more shop units selling women products. In addition, the nature of study made men shy away from participation for privacy concerns. Further, 33% of the respondents were single while 67% were married and therefore most of the respondents were guided by family values in filling the questionnaire whereby many of them had an average of two children. In addition, most of the respondents 76% were in the productive age of 47 years or below.

On the collectivism variable, most of the respondents were accompanied by an in-group for the holiday trip, an indication that most of the respondents had collectivist's traits at a combined 87% while those with individualists' traits were 13%, an indication that Kenya is a collectivist society. In addition, most of them were accompanied by family members; either with spouse or with spouse and children at a combined 61%, a strong indication of strong family values. Consistent with Hofstede (2003) study, collectivists are

characterized by a sense of belonging and maintenance of good relationships and therefore will rank higher in the concept of family values. In addition, Kau and Jung (2004), state that collectivists who are highly guided by family values, select products according to their family's needs, rather than their own personal wants.

The results further indicate that the holiday trips were facilitated by an in-group member at a combined 62% while self-facilitation was at 38%. These results indicate that most Kenyans have strong influence by reference groups and that the value system within the in-group is strong and therefore consistent with Kau and Jung (2004) who stated that the decision purchase for a collectivist is likely to be influenced by group goals. This is also consistent with the social identity theory where an individual identifies himself with a social group and therefore conforming to the values of that group, Korte (2007).

The results also show that most of the respondents purposed for domestic destinations so as to boost domestic tourism (mean=4.00, SD = 1.04), therefore highly ethnocentric; they want to promote domestic development which belongs to them. This is consistent with Shimp and Shama (1995), who stated that collectivist culture whose emphasis is on group identity will tend to show a greater tendency of ethnocentrism, by choosing local products over foreign products.

However, results showed that however much most Kenyans are collectivists by valuing in-group practices and values, collectivism has a non-significant and negative effect on the choice of holiday destination. These results lead to the conclusion that collectivism dimension of culture does not influence the choice of holiday destination in Kenya. These results indicate that the behaviour of an individual to either have the individualistic trait

or collectivist trait will largely depend on the product to be purchased, and the social status of the individual.

On the uncertainty avoidance variable, the results show that the most important attribute was safety, followed by cost, cultural attraction, climate change, quality service and lastly entertainment. These findings indicate that majority of the respondents are highly risk averse by considering risky factors to be most important attributes; safety and cost. People avoid participating in activities about which may not benefit them but get happy to get involved in activities which they are sure they will benefit from and they have no tolerance towards risk (Ahmed Ullah & Allam, 2014). Safety, costs and weather issues have strong variables for risk and therefore will be highly considered by holiday makers before travelling. Most of the respondents agreed that the decision to make domestic trips were dependent on safety and security situation at hand (mean = 4.31), an indication that many will shy away from highly insecure regions. The results further indicate that respondents referred the destinations they last toured to other friends and families (mean = 4.22), an indication that loyalty is an important attribute in avoiding uncertainty. Just like Australians Kenyans avoid uncertainty by opting for familiar brands. Australians prefer to avoid uncertainty and are likely to use the familiarity of brands to reduce ambiguity (Lowe & Corkindale, 1998). They make more habitual purchases than Chinese.

Furthermore, information search is an important risk avoidance behavior. According to Kau and Jung (2004), people from cultures high in uncertainty avoidance will be more likely to engage in information search than those from cultures low in uncertainty avoidance. They will search extensively for information in most trusted source in order to

make a safe decision. The results in this study indicate that the most important source was internet and websites (6.29), followed by own past experience (5.28), information from family members (5.11), travel agents (5.09). This is an indication that websites have most of the information that a holiday maker needs. However, the role of agents in the industry seem to be fading away by consideration of the available technological platform.

On power distance, the results indicate that Kenyans are not influenced by opinion leadership when making a holiday travelling decision. However much Kenyans ranks high in power distance according to Hofstede (2015) at 78%, opinion leadership does not influence choice in holiday making. This is an indication that power distance is not applicable to all consumer choice. The products are different in nature and the purchase behaviour towards them is different. The different kinds of consumer category will behave differently towards opinion leadership. This is consistent with De Mooij (2011) who argues that that inequality can occur in areas such as prestige, wealth and power and these are given different emphasis in different societies.

CHAPTER FIVE:SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, the conclusions of the study, recommendations for policy and practice, the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study sought to establish the influence of culture on consumer purchase decision of a holiday destination in the tourism industry in Kenya. The descriptive results showed that 74% of travellers were accompanied by an in-group member for the holiday and that 62% indicated that the event was facilitated by an in-group member; of this, spouses played a big role in facilitation against all other in-groups. These results indicate that most Kenyans have collectivist traits. In addition majority of the holiday makers travelled with their families and therefore guided by family values of bonding and togetherness.

On uncertainty avoidance dimension, most consumers indicated safety is the most sensitive factor followed by cost at mean rank of 4 and 3.8 respectively. As a risk averse measure, most consumers will search for the information on the website/ internet in relation to the next destination of choice (mean rank of 6.29). This therefore indicated that many travellers embrace the digital platforms and therefore marketers should provide the necessary information on the digital platforms. Websites need to be interactive and should be of good quality in order to attract consumers. Further, agents' role in holiday making seem to be fading away while the brochures they distribute ranked last as a source of information. In addition, safety measures to be streamlined in order to offer

confidence to travellers. A traveller need to be assured of security prior to travelling. Costs both direct and indirect need to be disclosed prior to traveling. This fact ensures confidence and the holiday maker is assured of the expenses which is important for effective budgeting.

In addition, further results indicated that collectivism (mean = 3.47) and uncertainty avoidance (3.72) were significant dimensions of culture as far as purchase decisions are concerned while power distance (mean = 2.80) was the least significant of the dimensions. Most of the respondents also made purchase decisions frequently at least once in a year (mean = 1.82).

Following a regression analysis, the study found that the model accounted for 12.3% of the variance in choice of holiday destinations ($R^2 = .123$). From the ANOVA, the F-statistic was 10.724 and was significant, $p = .000$, which shows that the model used was fit to explain the relationship between cultural factors and choice of holiday destinations. The study found that collectivism had a negative but non-significant to the choice of holiday destination ($\beta = -.022$, $p = .827$).

The results also showed that uncertainty avoidance had a negative and significant effect on choice of holiday destination ($\beta = -.476$, $p = .000$). Thus at 5% level of significance, uncertainty avoidance was instrumental in explaining the choice of holiday destination. The results further show that power distance had a positive but non-significant effect on the choice of holiday destination ($\beta = .058$, $p = .308$). This shows that at 5% level of significance, the choice of holiday destination was not explained by power distance. Irrespective of the fact that Kenyans rank high in power distance according to Hofstede (2015) at 78%, opinion leadership does not influence the choice of a holiday purchase.

5.3 Conclusion

The study examined the effect of collectivism as a dimension of culture on the choice of individuals' holiday destinations in Kenya. The results showed that however much most Kenyans are collectivists by valuing in-group practices and values, collectivism has a non-significant negative effect on the choice of holiday destination. These results lead to the conclusion that collectivism dimension of culture does not influence the choice of holiday destination in Kenya.

The study also examined the effect of uncertainty avoidance as a dimension of culture on the choice of individual's holiday destination in Kenya. The study found that uncertainty avoidance had a negative and significant effect on the choice of holiday destination. The results lead to the conclusion that safety concerns, cost; both direct and indirect and extreme weather affect the choice of holiday destinations for individuals in Kenya. In order to evade uncertainty, the most preferred source of information for most holiday makers is internet/websites followed by own experience and word of mouth advise from friends. The study indicates that the traditional role of agents could be fading away by ranking fourth and therefore their future survival should be examined. The level of trust against them fading away as they are known to push sales and focus on traditional holiday destinations over years and probably not providing new experience destinations to holiday makers.

The study also examined the effect of power distance as a dimension of culture on the choice of holiday destination in Kenya. The results showed that power distance had a positive but insignificant effect on the choice of holiday destination. The study concludes that holiday makers are no influenced by opinion leadership in making a choice.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This study used only primary data to examine the effect of cultural factors on the consumer choice of holiday destination. Thus, the study suffers from the limitations of using primary data alone as there is no triangulation to validate the findings.

The study also targeted shoppers within two malls, Junction Mall and the Village Market. Thus, the results are limited to the target respondents as the sample is not spread wide enough to cater for others shopping outside the two malls. The application of these results to the entire country should therefore be approached with care.

The study also focused only on the cultural factors that influence consumer choice of holiday destinations. Thus, this limits the determinants of holiday choice to the cultural dimensions examined in this study.

Further, this study was done at a time the country was healing from serious terrorism attacks and therefore could have been influenced by perception of the past events, especially on variables regarding uncertainty avoidance.

Finally, women were most respondents at 63% against men at a fact that indicate a large gap between these two sexes. The results therefore are more inclined to women than men.

5.4 Recommendations of the Study

The study makes a number of recommendations. First, the study recommends that various companies that offer holiday packages for individuals should take note of the fact that uncertainty avoidance is a significant determinant of the choice of holiday destinations in Kenya. Consumers will shy away from uncertainty in relation to safety and cost. In this case, the government through the concerned ministry should work hard to ensure security in all parts of the county necessary to bring about confidence in movement to any region in the country.

In addition marketers should make clear segmentation strategies on pricing, a factor that should be well communicated to the market necessary for decision making. All costs should be disclosed in advance, both direct and indirect cost in order to bring about clarity in the mind of a holiday maker.

The study further recommends that the marketers should ensure disclosure of information, a fact that will ensure that tour destinations provide sufficient information regarding their destinations. This will improve the choices of individuals who wish to tour those areas.

The study further recommends that marketers should embrace technology and therefore offer more information on the websites, because more consumers will focus on this platform for information. The platform should be quality and more interactive necessary to attract consumers. In addition, advertisement strategies should focus more on group experience with focus more on family because the family values seem to dominate decision making. There is great need of creating family bonding and togetherness as a way of enhancing family values in the society.

Further studies are required in this area that use mixed methodology in examining this phenomenon. Thus, a combination of primary and secondary data would provide more rigorous results that can be triangulated.

The study also suggests that future studies expand the sample to reach other shoppers outside Nairobi and, more specifically, outside the two malls examined here. This way, sensitivity of variables on a traveller's choice to be assessed between different groups in order to fully understand the influencers of consumer choice in relation to high involvement products.

Studies should also examine other factors cultural influencers to holiday destination by focusing on a different target group as far as income level is concerned. In addition, further studies should also be done on influence of culture in relation to other high involvement products. This way, a rich resource on influence of culture to consumer choice will be available.

Further, a more detailed study on effect of family decision making especially the influence of children to purchase decision of holiday should also be considered. Finally, a similar study to be repeated again at a future timing when the country heals from past serious security attacks, in order to benchmark any difference uncertainty variables. Lastly a study targeting men and women can be done separately so that to understand their different cultural concerns in relation to holiday making.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire

Kindly answer the questionnaire below by ticking in the appropriate box.

Part A ; Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Marital status: Single () Married ()
3. Age Bracket
(A) 18 – 27 () (B) 28 – 37 () (C) 38 – 47 ()
(D) 48 -57 () (E) Above 58
4. How many children do you have? Tick as appropriate
(A)None () (B) 1 () (C) 2 () (D) () (E) 4 and above ()
5. Place of resident,(optional) -----
6. How often do you plan for a destination holiday within Kenya?
(A)Very often (At least once year)
(B) Less often (once in three years)
(C) Rarely (more than three years without planning)

Part B: Cultural Dimensions

Collectivism

- 7 Who accompanied you for the trip the last time you went for a holiday getaway?
(A) Alone () (B) spouse () (C) with entire family; wife and children ()
(D) with friends/co-workers (E) Other
- 8 Who facilitated the process to travel?
(A)Self (B) Husband/Wife/ (C) Friends (D) Co-workers/ club membership (E)
Parents
(B) Boyfriend/ Girlfriend (F) others
- 9 The following statements pertain with the behavior necessary for decision making for a holiday package. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements. Use the scale and indicate the number that best

describes your position. Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, strongly agree with 12345 values

Question items	1	2	3	4	5
Group welfare and loyalty is more important than individual rewards; therefore individuals should only pursue their goals after considering the welfare of the group.					
Individual interest should be encouraged. Group welfare brings about slow growth in development, therefore should be discouraged.					
The decision to travel is made in confirmation to the goals of the in group (family, friends, and club initiative).					
The decision to travel is to emphasize the connectedness of the in group; family, friends or club interests. It improves quality of life and a sign of acceptance.					
I get more information on holiday trips (Costs, packages, quality, directions) from in-group and social platforms.					
Decision to make destination trip is personal and therefore likely to engage privately on internal sources of information like websites and magazines.					
I don't discuss personal matters with in-groups therefore peoples experiences don't influence my intention to travel.					
I feel proud associating with the best brands in the tourism industry. I choose the best					
I acquired the norm to budget and plan for the holiday from my parents.					
As a Kenyan citizen, I should purpose for domestic destination so as to boost domestic tourism and therefore economy.					
When evaluating purchase decision, domestic brands should be first and primary choice. Foreign brands against local hurts the economy.					

Uncertainty Avoidance

10 In any purchase decision, risks are involved. The following are attributes in decision making on purchase of a holiday package. Please rank them in order of importance to you against any fears or unexpected outcomes in touring. The most important attribute is given the highest value.

- Cost ()
- Climate/weather ()
- Safety ()
- Quality service ()
- Cultural attractions ()
- Entertainment ()

11 How long did it take you to make the decision to travel?

Less than 4 months		Between 4- 8 months	
Between 8 to 12 months		One year or more	

12 How many travel destinations did you consider before settling the one you finally decided upon?

- (A) One () (B) Two () (B) Three () (C) More than three ()

13 The following statements pertain behavioral attributes in relation to decision making for a holiday purchase. Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements. Use the scale and circle the number that best describes your position. Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, strongly agree with 12345 values:

Question Items	1	2	3	4	5
The decision to make a domestic is highly dependent on the safety and security situation at hand.					
I prefer travel packages that are well insured in case of any eventuality, even if it means paying a premium for it.					
The decision to travel is highly dependent on the surety of a quality service; otherwise I avoid making decisions on the unknown.					
Extensive information search on many sources on holiday destination is very important before decision making					
I am likely to visit the destination I toured last, because am familiar with them. I chose familiar brands to avoid ambiguity.					
I do refer the destinations I toured last to my other friends and family.					
I am likely to choose destination that are advertised on digital platforms over analogue ones.					
I prefer digital communication with the destination providers.					
I prefer analogue communication with my travelling agents because am used to the system.					

14 Please indicate which of the following sources of information was important and useful to you:

Power Distance

15 How important is it to you in conforming to opinion leaders for any action in relation to purchasing a holiday destination?

(A) Very important (B) Important (C) Less important (D) Not important at all

16 In the table below, please indicate one of the characteristic of an opinion leader to you?

Age		Education	
Wealth		Politician	
Celebrity		Others(Indicate)	

17 Who is responsible for purchase decision making in the house?

(A)Husband (B) Wife (C) Both wife and husband

(D)Others(indicate).....

18 Indicate which one of the following parties played the most dominant role in the final decision to travel for a holiday?

Own decision		Children in the household	
Spouse		Joint family decision making	