

**THE ROLE OF NATIONAL BRANDING IN PROMOTING TOURISM IN  
KENYA: A CASE OF HOTELS IN NAIROBI CENTRAL BUSINESS  
DISTRICT**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been submitted in the same form or any other form to the University of Nairobi or any other university or institution for any award.

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

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## **DEDICATION**

To my husband Dr. Mugambi Karuguti for the support and inspiration. To my parents Mr. & Mrs. Peter Njiru Zakariah for their support in my education during early stages of life.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CBD	Central Business District
CBBE	Customer Based Brand Equity
RBV	Resource Based View
SPSS	Statistics Package for Social Scientists

## **ABSTRACT**

Globalization has brought about competitiveness among nations. Nations can no longer sit back and wait for tourists to visit their countries. Marketing of national attributes and creating awareness of what they possess has become the norm. Kenya has not been left behind. The country has engaged in national branding initiatives aimed at promoting Kenya as a preferred tourism destination. The purpose of this study was to establish the role of national branding in promoting tourism, a case of hotels in Nairobi central business district (CBD) area. The population of interest was all the hotels in Nairobi's CBD area. The reason for using hotels as the case was because the researcher believes that tourism performance has a positive effect towards the performance of hotels hence any initiatives geared towards promoting tourism will be of concern to hotels. The study was carried out on all 26 hotels found in Nairobi's CBD between the categories of five star and two star. A descriptive research design approach was used in this study. Primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaire which was divided into four sections, the first part consisting of general information, second part had questions aimed at measuring the understanding of national branding by the respondents, third part contained questions on contribution towards national branding and fourth part contained questions that addresses contribution of national branding towards promoting tourism in Kenya. Managers in the respective hotels were the target for answering the questionnaires. Data was analyzed using SPSS program. Descriptive statistics method was used to analyze data and results were presented in form of tables and charts. From the findings, there is some understanding of what national branding entails among the tourism stakeholders. The study also established that national branding had a positive role towards promoting tourism. The study recommends the need for the government to allocate more resources for national branding initiatives. Stakeholders in tourism industry need to get more involved in initiatives of national branding. There was limitation in the study as the study population was not exhaustive of all tourism stakeholders. The researcher recommends more replica studies based on other tourism sector stakeholders for comparison purposes.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background of the Study

As a result of globalization, nations must compete for attention, trust of investors, tourists, consumers and donors (Mikkelsen, 2015). Some time back, only neighboring countries would compete for each other's labor force, trade and income generated from tourism. This has however changed over the years and countries like Kenya which relies heavily on tourism for income has to compete with countries like South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia among others.

Brand is a framework in which communications are received rather than the communication itself. Messages are a mode of communication. Brand on the other hand is a background of reputation and perception of the subject matter of that message and it is a determinant in the way any message is received and interpreted by the receiver (Anholt, 2005). A brand seeks to identify certain characteristics of goods and services or a seller or a group of sellers that differentiate them from their competitors (Dinnie 2015). A concise and often quoted definition of a positive or successful brand is given by Doyle (1992), who suggests that "a successful brand is a name, symbol or design that differentiates a product from the competitors".

Branding is no longer confined to products, services and companies, the world has evolved to a level where branding is essential for any entity willing to succeed in this competitive market. It is fundamental for nations to understand how the outside world perceives them; how their people, culture, political activities, failures, achievements, economic and their products affect their brand image. In the 21st century, Jaworski & Foshier (2003), stated that "like any brand, nations have individual identities which are unique unto themselves". They use this uniqueness to brand and market themselves. National branding is still an under-researched field of study. Investigation in this area is just beginning to emerge and there are not many empirical studies of the topic (Caldwell & Freire, 2004). In practice the process has been undertaken by many countries over the last decades, but the investigation on the topic is limited.

Jevons (2005) attributes the growth and success of tourism to branding. Governments use branding to establish competitive advantages in a belief that strong country brand and positive image contribute to the country's sustainable development (Fetscherin, 2010). Tourism is cited as the leading sector in the Kenya's Vision 2030 blue print. The blue print was launched in year 2008 aimed at steering the development program of the country. According to the blue print, tourism GDP contribution was estimated to quadruple to more than Ksh. 200 billion, increase hotel beds from 40,000 to at least 65, 000 and raise international visitors from 1.6million in 2006 to 3 million in 2012. (Kenya Vision 2030).

### **1.1.1. National Branding**

In 1990's Anholt created the term "Nation Brand" and defined it as the totality of people's perceptions of a country across six areas of a nation's capability: exports, governance, tourism, investment and immigration, culture and heritage and people (Giannopoulos et al, 2011). According to Anholt (2006), together, the six areas make a hexagon. Among the six components of the hexagon, tourism plays a vital role in national branding. It is the component that is majorly seen as an indication of a strong or weak national brand (Giannopoulos et al, 2011), hence the reason of focus in this study. All countries in the world have attractive attributes which at times are duplicated in many of them and hence the need to stand out. With the advancement of globalization, nations are looking for a competitive edge. National branding is becoming more significant as nations must compete for attention, tourist, investors, donors, immigrants and governments (Anholt, 2007). It is clear that unless a country stands for something special and different, there is little chance that it will be able to compete successfully for attention.

A national image is its greatest asset: it is national identity made robust, tangible, communicable, and at its best made useful (Anholt, 2006). It refers to a destination competitive identity. It is the marketing of a country and its objective is to sell the attributes of that country as a preferred destination. National branding core purpose is to position the country in the best way possible globally given its strength and its weakness (Cromwell, 2016). National branding is a primarily new concept. According to Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride (2002), politicians, scholars and people around the world expressed their reservations on the idea of national branding. For

example they quote Michael Gerrand (1999) a French academic expressing his objections towards re-branding France. In his statement, Gerrand argues that a country is not a corporate entity where you can decide to change the name or attributes as you like. He stresses that a country, unlike a marketed product is a unique entity which cannot be tampered with.

However, according to Lee (2009), nation branding is a fundamental and powerful driver that enables nations to achieve their nation brand equity. To improve national development and competitive advantage, nations aim to obtain national brand equity based on brand personality and image.

### **1.1.2. Promoting Tourism**

It has been recognized for long that strong brands gives a competitive advantage to organizations. Competitive advantage can be attributed to a valuable resource that enables companies to perform its activities better or cheaply than the competitors (Collis & Montgomery, 1995). In light of this, performance of brands can be related to their competitive advantage. A brand with a competitive advantage will perform better than one without. Tourism is a competitive industry as countries compete for attention from the rest of the world through promotion. Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world; it has been proved that the sector plays an important role in the growth of economy (Osman and Sentosa 2013). Promotion is an important aspect in tourism.

Destination branding is geared towards the advertising of a nation (Szondi, 2007), and its basic purpose is to improve national image and to strengthen the national brand (Anholt 2009). Morgan and Pitchard (2000) stated the importance of destination branding stating that the competition for consumers in tourism cannot be won over value but over what is perceived and felt about the destination and branding will be the biggest contributor to that victory. Tourism branding and promotion cannot be conducted without considering the country's image. In other words, successful tourism promotion can only be achieved best if there is a successful national brand (Cromwell, 2016).

Tourism being a major contributor to national economy, Kenya has been investing in the promotion of the same globally. The Ministry of Tourism, Kenya Tourism Board and different tourism sector stakeholders associations have been vigorous in promoting tourism in Kenya. More recently in year 2008, the Kenyan government initiated Brand Kenya Board whose mandate is to create a nation brand and sustain it for the long term (Brand Kenya Board 2008). This shows the commitment the government has towards promoting tourism. All these bodies are tapping into internet and key events hosted in the country and outside the country, be they of a local or international nature, and using them as platforms to promote Kenya, both domestic as well as internationally and in turn promoting Kenyan tourism. Successful tourism comes with hotels, restaurants, car rental agencies, tour companies, service stations, shops equipment rentals and much more. All of these create income to the economy and employment.

### **1.1.3. Tourism in Kenya**

The Kenyan tourism is managed under the Ministry of Tourism and Kenya Tourism Board. Tourism has grown and changed over the years becoming one of greatest contributors to global economy (Kiprutto, Wambui & Koome (2011). Today, it is a major economic activity worldwide and a major contributor to the global economy. Tourism is one of the backbones of economy in developed, developing and underdeveloped countries and one of the major sources of the national income (Adenwala, 2014). According to TTEI (2016), in 2015 Travel & Tourism in total contributed US\$7.2 trillion to world GDP representing 9.8% of global GDP. In Kenya, the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP (including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts) was KES561.8bn in 2014 (10.5% of GDP) and was expected to grow by 4.2% to KES585.2bn (10.4% of GDP) in 2015 (TTEI, 2015).

The sector consists of various players whom through joint efforts, contribute to tourism demands. The tourism sector is also important to other sectors of the economy as it creates opportunities for them thus facilitating economic growth. Kenya purposes to be one of the top ten best tourist destinations in the world. To achieve this objective, the country has to increase the global and African market share

by offering new, differentiated products and services and enhance its strategic marketing outlook (Kenya Vision 2030).

#### **1.1.4. Hotels in Kenya**

Hankinson, (2004) considers hotels to be primary stakeholders in the processes of national branding for destination marketing. Hankinson (2004) further describes brand success to be one that is functioning under a model whereby the service industry supports the brand personality, the consumers and the brands' marketing and communication channels. Hotels are integral part of the Kenyan Tourism industry. They offer accommodation and food services to the tourists. The decline or decrease of tourism in a country affects the performance of hotels. This is the idea that formed the bases of using hotels as the case for this study.

Kenyan hotels are categorized according to the star classifications system. They range from small town hotels to five star hotels. Kenya target was to increase hotel beds from 40, 000 to at least 65,000 by year 2012 (Kenya Vision 2030). In the year 2015, bed occupancy decreased by 6.4% from 6,281.6 in the year 2014 to 5,878.6 in year 2015. This decline was attributed to the decline in tourism that went down to Ksh. 84.6 billion in 2015 compared to Ksh. 87.1 billion in 2014. International visitor arrivals also declined by 12.6% from 1,350.4 in 2014 to 1,180.5 in 2015. This decline was attributed to the insecurity concerns in the country and travel advisories from some countries during the year 2015 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). National branding initiatives have been seeking to restore the image of Kenya internationally and increase the number of visitors to Kenya. The Ministry of Tourism Kenya targets to receive 3 million tourists by 2018. According to the latest report by ForwardKeys, a privately owned company based in Spain that collects business intelligence data for the travel industry worldwide, international flight bookings to Kenya have gone up by 27 percent for the year 2016 summer season compared to the same time in year 2015. This may see a boost to the hotel beds increase.

#### **1.1.5. Hotels in Nairobi**

Hotels in Nairobi are classified using the star classification. According to Travel advisor, there are 158 hotels in Nairobi. In the Nairobi central business district, there are eight 5 star hotels and majority of hotels being 3 star hotels estimated to be more

than 10. The hotel bed occupancy in Nairobi for the year 2015 was 1,392.9 which was a decline from year 2014 whose bed occupancy was 1,507.9 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Nairobi hotels occupancy ranks second after coastal hotels which bed occupancy was 2,230.4 in the year 2015 a decline from 2,651.7 in the year 2014.

The decline in bed occupancy was experienced all over the country and attributed to the decline in tourism in the year 2015 at 1,180.5 from 1,350.4 in year 2014 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

## **1.2. Research problem**

According to Cromwell (2016), promoting tourism products successfully requires a setting that gives opportunity to potential visitors to appreciate what the country has to offer. The amount of efforts required in marketing the country to attract tourists will depend on how the country is perceived by the potential visitors. If the country is viewed as one that represents positive attributes like security, democracy and unique features, it is easy to convince visitors to visit. On the other hand if the country is perceived negatively e.g. one that is known of political instability, insecurity or corruption, more efforts will be required to convince potential tourists.

The idea of branding nations as destinations is quite new and academic investigations on the same are still in their infancy (Gnoth, 1998). However, as the choices of destinations available to tourist's increases, the idea of destination positioning becomes fundamental (Ekinici, 2003). This can be done through the creation of a competitive destination image. Ritchie and Ritchie (1998) conducted a study to identify some of the challenges faced by the tourism stakeholders when they try to use the concept of branding in the destination management context. They concluded that branding of destinations present very many unique challenges. For example, they established that destinations brand possesses many components and merging the many components into one unique brand, possess challenges to destination brand organizations.

These challenges were also identified by Pike (2005) who conducted a study on the challenges inherent in development of tourism destination brand slogans. This according to him is because branding of destinations is far more complex than



branding of consumer goods as destinations are very multidimensional. Nevertheless, nations have little choice but to create strong national brands and market them. Ministry of Tourism in Kenya, Brand Kenya Board, Tourism Board of Kenya and other entities in the tourism sector have been on their fore front in branding marketing Kenya. The creation of “Magical Kenya” and “Make it Kenya” being part of the marketing campaigns used by these entities to communicate about Kenya’s wealthy of attractions.

National branding and tourism is a unique area of interest as tourism is viewed by many nations like Kenya as a key bread basket. Studies show positive relationship between branding of nations and tourism performance. A study of British tourist board’s “the queen mother effect” slogan shows that the campaign boosted tourism to the United Nations (Govers & Kumar, 2007). In their study, Qu and Im (2011) concluded “destination image is a multi-dimensional construct influenced by cognitive, unique and effective images that collectively affect tourist’s behavior” and therefore for a competitive destination, nations must develop a positive and strong image to increase repeat visits by tourists and attract more tourists. Kalembe (2015), researched on the contribution of branding in enhancing performance of tourism sector in Rwanda. In her findings, Kalembe established that national branding had a significant positive effect on Tourism Performance in Rwanda. In her review of literature on the influence of nation branding on competitiveness of nations, Njeru (2010) concluded that national branding plays an important role on the performance of tourism and the way a nation portrays itself to the world is essential for the tourism sector.

Furthermore, Ogwoka (2012) researched on factors affecting performance of tourism sector in Kenya a case of Kenya Tourism Board, Bomas of Kenya, Kenya Utalii College and Kenya Wildlife Service. He found out that insecurity, infrastructure, marketing strategies, competition and legal framework were factors that affected the performance of tourism sector. From his findings, he recommended use of financial resources in the improvement of infrastructure and security. Kiveu (2013) researched on determinants of performance of the tourism industry in Kenya a case of Kakamega County and found out that the determinants of performance of the tourism industry, that the of the roads, state of the airport, standard rating of hotels, and lack of

entrepreneurial skills in the Kakamega County were impeding factors to the performance of the tourism industry. Karanja (2015) conducted a study on how to increase and attract more tourists into Kenya through experimental marketing. Her study sought to come up with a plan that would outline objectives for implementation of experimental marketing. Through the study she suggested that Kenya identifies target markets that it would focus its resources on in marketing Kenya. This study was limited to marketing objectives and strategies of marketing Kenya for tourist's attractions.

There have been several studies conducted on national branding and its influence on tourism but little has been researched on national branding initiatives role in promoting tourism in Kenya. Given this gap, this study sought to answer the question: what is the role of national branding in promoting tourism in Kenya?

### **1.3. Objectives of the study**

1. To establish the understanding of national branding.
2. To examine the contribution by tourism stakeholders towards national branding initiatives.
3. To establish the role of national branding in promoting tourism.
4. To identify some weakness in national branding.

### **1.4. Value of the Study**

The results of this study will inform the stakeholders in the Kenyan tourism sector on the roles of national branding initiatives. This may prompt collaborations between the national branding entities and the tourism stakeholders in order to grow the industry. Based on the findings the study will provide recommendations on areas that national branding may improve on, the roles that stakeholders such as the hotel industry may play and areas of collaboration between the two. Further, the results may be used by the government to inform national branding related policy. It will also be a contribution to academia for scholarly purposes.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of studies that sought to establish the role of national branding in promoting the tourism sector in other parts of the world. Those that were conducted in Kenya were also reviewed. Theories underpinning the main concepts in this study are also presented.

### **2.2. Theoretical Foundation of the Study**

#### **2.2.1. Brand Equity Theory**

Aaker (2009) defines brand equity as a set of assets such as awareness, customer loyalty, perceived quality and associations linked to the brand and which adds value to the product or service being offered by the firm to its customers. Aaker and Joachimsthaler's (2000) brand equity presents clearly the four dimensions; brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association and brand loyalty. Managing a country's brand equity can be of benefit and value adding to the national brand. The dimensions related to brand equity can also be used in national branding because they focus on the most central strategic issues in marketing planning (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2008). Making use of them, the dimensions can help a country gain competitive advantage. According to Keller (2001), building a strong brand, can be done through a series of steps called Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE). Each step is a contingent upon successful completion of the previous one. The steps involve building a brand identity, communicating brand meaning, factoring in consumer judgments and feelings towards the brand and building lasting relationships with the customers.

#### **2.2.2. Resource Based View (RBV) Theory**

The resource-based view theory of Wernerfelt (1984) suggests that competitiveness can be achieved by innovatively delivering superior value to customers in a way that customers consider appropriate. The resource-based theory defines the firm as a unique collection of resources, but the theory emphasizes that not all of these resources possesses the potential to provide the firm with sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). He further defines these key resources to include "all

assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm's attributes, information, knowledge etc. organized by an organization and that helps it to consider and execute strategies that are efficient and effective". Porter (2011), states that competitive advantage is created and sustained through highly localized processes where differences in national values, culture, economic structures, institutions and histories contribute to a country's competitiveness. He continues to state that there is striking difference between countries and no national can be competitive in every sector. Thus, every country stands a chance of competitive advantage through the uniqueness it possesses against its competitors.

Anholt (2007) uses the theory of competitive identity as a way for enhanced national competitiveness in the global world. He uses the theory to portray the world as a very competitive market as a result of globalization. Where its people are too busy with their own selves and no much time to recognize or pay attention to the happenings of the outside world. He also looks at the world today where every national is seeking attention. Anholt (2006), states that when governments have a strong, credible and affirmative knowledge of what their country stands for, is an asset towards creating a competitive national brand. This in turn benefits their investors, tourism sector, exporters and also their international relations.

### **2.3. National branding**

In tourism, a nation is a potential destination and its attributes and offerings are a matter of concern to potential tourists. According to Ritchie and Ritchie (1998), a destination brand is a label, mark, design or words that identifies, distinguishes the destination from other competing destinations and gives the consumers a unique, memorable experience. Morrison and Anderson (2002) defines national destination branding as a way of communicating a nation's exceptional personality that distinguishes it from the competitors. Brands enable consumers to assign identities to products. It has been established that when new brands are introduced from older brands, consumers tend to use the existing perceptions to evaluate the new entrant. This extension may impact positively on the performance of the new product if successful or negatively if the existing brand transfers negative perceptions. This concept is documented to be true when a country is considered to be a commercial brand. In an increasingly globalized economy, the challenge of distinguishing a

nation's product offerings from those of the competition has assumed critical importance for nations competing for both domestic and foreign consumers (Dinnie 2015). De Chernatony and McDonald (2003) indicates that nations should articulate long term plans which can help in changing any negative national attributes or associations that may be engrained in consumers' minds and which may prove difficult to alter.

Brand image and brand personality are the key components leading to brand loyalty and brand positioning (Plummer, 1985 and Keller, 1998). A destination can be packaged as brand and its image and personality will determine how loyal the customers (the tourists) will be. The world today has become very competitive and therefore destination image and destination positioning are fundamental for effective destination positioning (Hosany & Uysal, 2006). Cai (2002:722) states "destination branding is a strategic combination of a steady mix of brand elements that identifies and distinguishes it through positive image building. Different from goods and services, the name of a destination brand is usually the physical name given to that place".

#### **2.4. Promoting Tourism**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world; it has been proved that the sector plays an important role in the growth of economy (Osman and Sentosa 2013). "A destination is regarded to be competitive if it can successfully appeal to probable tourists and satisfy them" (Enright & Newton, 2004). National branding is concerned with the branding of a country (Szondi, 2007), contributes to the improvement of the overall image and to creation of a strong brand (Anholt 2009). The contribution of branding in promoting tourism is influenced by the destination image portrayed to the potential tourists.

The destination image created is influential not only to the selection of destinations to visit but also to how tourists behave after visiting that destination (Qu & Im 2011). Tourist's word of mouth and willingness to visit the destination again are some of the consequences of a destination image portrayed. In their study, Qu and Im (2011) concluded that destination image has multi-dimensional construct influenced by perceptive, distinctive and effective images that affect tourists behavior and therefore

for a competitive destination, nations must develop a positive and strong image to increase repeat visits by tourists and attract more tourists.

## **2.5. National Branding and Tourism**

National branding is vital in the management of destinations, as increase in tourist's opportunities and travel locations have resulted into increase of substitutes and undifferentiated attributes among some destinations (Pike, 2005). Morgan and Pitchard (2000) emphasized the consequence of destination branding saying that competition for consumers in tourism cannot be won over value but over what is perceived and felt about the destination and branding will be the biggest contributor to that victory. Blain and Ritchie (2005), argues that for tourists destination, the concept of tourists experience needs to be included in the process of branding because what a tourist experiences in a destination has positive effect to the value they attribute to that destination (Boo & Baloglu, 2009).

In many occasions, countries engage in branding in an effort to reconstruct a destroyed image. Image reconstruction calls for establishment of a new national identity and inspiration of confidence for growth of tourism to be realized. Yugoslavia for instance developed a post war brand as a tourism destination (Hall, 2002). Infrastructural changes such as construction of the Adiratic highway running across the whole Yugoslav coast projected the state as an international tourism destination (Hall, 2002). Similarly, New Zealand is cited to have successfully fronted tourism brands that have stimulated re-strategizing in other global cohorts with regards to national branding National branding often targets an international market aiming to advantage tourism and non-tourism enterprises such as agriculture and culture (Hall, 2010). The New Zealand's "New Zealand 100% Pure tourism campaign" which was a brand strategy seeking to find a competitive position where tourists would buy business investments, tourism, exports, cultural and educational packages could be a great example of strategic national branding.

Brand personality of a tourism destination creates a unique identity (Ekinici and Hosany, 2006) and can help improve a tourist destination image (Hosany et al., 2006; Hosany et al., 2007). Tourism is globally marketed as a service product that seeks to offer in totality physical and psychological satisfaction to tourists during their

travelling en route to the destination. It can be seen as a composite product, as the sum total of a country's tourist attractions, transport, and accommodation and of entertainment which result in customer satisfaction. Studies on destination image are traced back in the 70's with Hunt, (1975) assessing the influence of image development (branding) on tourism. Tourism destinations acquire additional equity when they relate well with their places of origin (Anholt, 2004). In fact, it makes more brand sense when a tourism destination is matched with provenance. This is a concept that has been broadly recognized by marketers and economists (Anholt, 2004). In this study specifically, the researcher seeks to examine the relationship between a national process of developing a functional national brand and the role it plays in promoting tourism Kenya.

Literature indicates that national branding ensures more value when consumer product is coupled with the service industry hence enabling the creation of consumer experiences (Berry 2002). This further facilitates the brand to not only connect with the company but further with a network of stakeholders offering the services (García, Gómez, & Molina, 2012). Hankinson, (2004) considers hotels to be primary stakeholders in the processes of national branding for destination marketing. Hankinson (2004) further describes brand success to be one that is functioning under a model whereby the service industry supports the brand personality, the consumers and the brands' marketing and communication channels.

## **2.6. Empirical Studies**

As suggested by Prayag, Hosany, Muskat, and Del Chiappa (2015) Tourists' perceived image of a destination is dynamic and is normally conceptualized as a psychological concept that consists of perception and impression that a tourist has of a certain destination. Destination marketers are keen to attract the tourists or visitors to their destinations and do participate in a variety of branding initiatives in order to influence the earlier mentioned mental or attitudinal construct (Manhas, Manrai, & Manrai, 2016). In several occasions, a tourism destination is considered to possess human characteristics which accord them qualities of having a personality. Among studies that have examined the role of branding on the on the personality of a destination for tourism purposes includes that of Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal (2006) who

indicates that that image of a brand informs the personality of the same hence influencing the consumer response.

Crockett and Wood (1999) study established that 'Brand Western Australia' had taken over from brand 'Western Australia' as the premier nature based tourist's attraction in the global market. This shows the power of destination branding towards the success of tourists attraction. Morgan and Piggott (2002) conducted a study on '100% Pure New Zealand' brand and concluded that through research, partnerships and by targeting its approach the brand was very powerful positioned as an appealing destination player in the global market.

The impact of tourism attractions on consumer's emotions has also been seen to influence tourism development in some brands. Prayag et al., (2015) conducted a study on emotional experiences, perceived overall image, satisfaction, and intention to recommend and concluded that a positive relationship was found between satisfaction and intention to recommend and the overall image as presented by an Italian domestic tourism brand. Traditional visual image of a nation or a city has been described by Rehan, (2014) as inadequate to sustain tourists/economic development.

Non- natural/physical factors affecting any urban image play very important roles, and must be linked to visual imagery to present a coherent city image (Rehan, 2014). Such strategies include diverse city development objectives and visions, such as large scale urban projects, signed architecture, events, media, city life, slogans, food etc (Helmy, 2008). Germany is good example of branding effort geared towards transforming Stuttgart from a traditional European city to an excellent place to live and visit. The features that were used included urban projects, city life per se, events and cultural activities, and signature architectural features. A 60% agreement that such efforts had an impact on the products character and whether it enhanced attractiveness to visit was recorded (Berkel, 2010).

In their study, Govers and Kumar (2007) found that tourism promotion does not entirely form the major impact of perception of travelers and that other sources of information have a greater influence on the formation of destination image. They therefore advise authorities to be aware that successful promotion is dependent of



many factors. Slovenia in developing its national image sought to incorporate the Slovenian people in living and sharing the destination brand (Konecnik, 2004). Institutions tasked with national branding have therefore a responsibility of not only marketing the physical attractions of a brand but also infuse and market suitable “personality” attributes in order to positively influence the consumer behavior. In any country, events that happen over time become impactful on a countries name. Proper management of events such as elections, policy development, conflicts, regional integration, development agenda, legislative processes, international relations, and resource management enhances the countries name and is good for tourism as a product (Brand Kenya Board, 2012). Kenya has gone through such events sometimes successfully and others not.

Africa countries as it is with the rest of the world, has tourism placed as an integral part of their economies (Bendixen, Cronson & Abratt, 1996), In Africa, tourism is perceived as an important sector of the fragile economies (Pitt et. all, 2007). He continues to state that African countries often suffer from the proximity of their locations as the continent is perceived to be under developed and political instability experienced in many countries. Nevertheless, the continent is geared towards becoming the most attractive destinations in the world due to the untapped resources and many tourists’ attractions.

According to (Pitt et al, 2007), Kenya has packaged itself as a destination full of beautiful nature scenery of wildlife, beaches and sports claiming to be a largest borderless heritage of wildlife in East Africa. Ghana is cited by Bentum-Ennin, (2014) as one destination that has diversified its definition of tourism attractions from the traditional high-density activity to more tailored activities such as study of ancient, traditional and natural heritage, in which Ghana is richly endowed. Branding of the Ghanian destination as a peaceful democratic nation from a historically unstable country with advancement in social economic spheres, has led to percentage increase of tourism of about 218% and an average annual increase of 13.9% in the past two decades. Rwanda has gotten beyond the genocide of 1994 to become one of the attractive tourists destination in Africa boosting its tourism sector which is considered to be the country’s largest economic driver.

While national branding for tourism destinations has been growing in the last several decades, literature development is still in its infancy (Pike, Bianchi, Kerr & Patti 2010) particularly in Africa. In this study, the researcher seeks to examine the relationship between a national process of developing a functional national brand and the perceived tourism consumer's response to this effort in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the method that was used in conducting this study. This includes the research design, target population, data collection instrumentation, data collection tools reliability & validity; and techniques for data analysis.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A cross-sectional descriptive research design utilising a quantitative method was used in this study. A descriptive research design comprises activities of acquiring information about units of a population, analyzing the data acquired, recording and reporting on the findings (Gay and Airasian, 2003). A cross-sectional study enables a researcher to identify the magnitude, existence or causal effect of a phenomenon at one point in time

### **3.3 The Population**

The population for this study was hotels categorized between 5 star and 2 star categories in Nairobi's central business district (CBD). The study targeted hotel managers. Hankinson, (2004) considers hotels to be primary stakeholders in the processes of national branding for destination marketing. The hotels forming an integral part of tourism stakeholders, the researcher found them to be an appropriate case for the study. The target population was 30 hotels of whom 26 responses were received. The study was conducted on the entire population due to the nature of its size. Gay and Airasian (2003) stated that when a population has fewer than 100 units, there is no need of sampling and a survey of the entire population is recommended.

### **3.4 Data collection & Instruments**

Data for this research was collected using primary method by the use of a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections; section one consisting of general information, section two had questions aimed at measuring the understanding of national branding by the respondents, section 3 contained questions on contribution towards national branding and section four contained questions that addresses contribution of national branding towards promoting tourism.

### **3.5 Reliability of Research Instruments**

Reliability is the consistency of a test. An investigation is termed as reliable if the same results are achieved for several times (Cherry, 2009). Reliability of the questionnaire was established through data collected in a pilot study. The pilot study was meant to serve two purposes; first, to gather feedback regarding the phrasing of the questions and whether any changes would be recommended so that the respondents of the actual research can answer with ease and to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. Five hotel managers who did not form part the actual study were requested to answer the questionnaire twice with a time difference of one week. The two data sets were entered in SPSS as different variables and analyzed through the Cohen's kappa reliability test. The Kappa score may vary from 0-1. The closer the value is to 1, the more reliable the questionnaire is described to be. The score in this case was  $k=0.66$ .

### **3.6 Validity of the study**

Face validity was established by consistently subjecting the questionnaire to the supervisor's expert opinion. Questions were phrased and rephrased in order to suit the expert's views with regards to the questionnaires suitability to measure the intended tests.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

Data analysis involves reducing the accumulated data to manageable size, developing summaries and looking for patterns and applying statistical techniques. In this study, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data capturing and analysis. Descriptive statistics was employed to summarize data and was expressed as means, standard deviations and percentages. Tables and charts were used to present the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

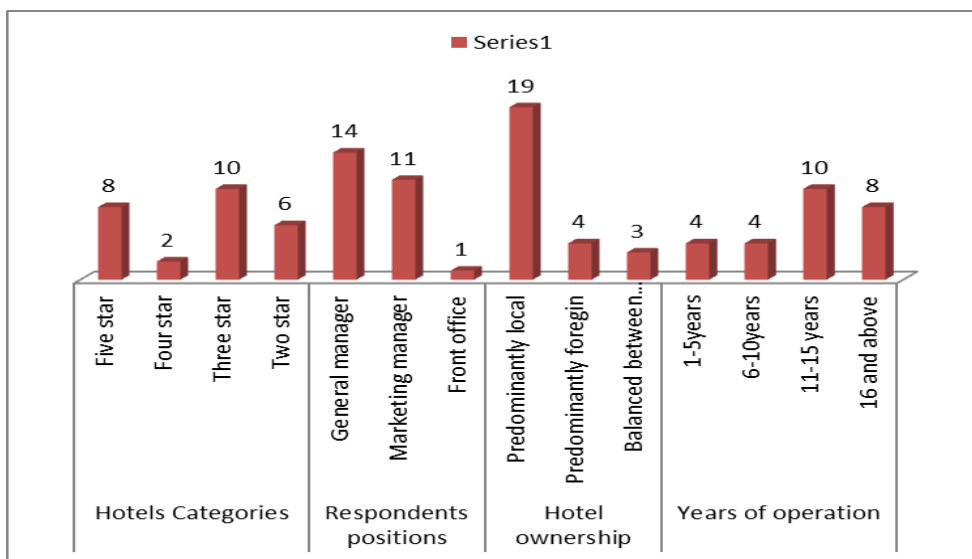
### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results analyzed from the data collected from hotel managers of various hotels between the categories of 5 star to 2 star at the Nairobi Central Business district. The purpose of study was to establish the role of national branding in promoting tourism.

### 4.2. General information

The information presented in this section includes the data as per the hotel categories, positions of respondents in the hotels, hotel ownership and year's hotels have been in operation. This was data derived from 26 respondents that represented 86.7% response rate.

**Figure 4.1: General Information**



**Source: Primary Data**

Figure 4.1 indicates the majority 10 (38.5%) of the hotels at the Nairobi central business district were categorized as three star while the least were categorized as 4 star 2 (7.7%). The managers who responded to the questionnaires were mainly general managers 11(42.3%). Most of these hotels were predominantly locally owned 19 (73%) and with 10(38%) of them having operated for between 11 and 15 years.

### 4.3. National Branding Initiative

According to Kaneva, (2011), national branding is not limited to immediate activities that attract tourists, but is compendium of discourses and practices aimed at reconstituting nationhood through marketing and branding paradigms. One of the major beneficiaries of a well branded destination is the hotel industry.

#### 4.3.1. Description of National Branding

Respondents were asked to indicate whether the statements in table 4.1 best described national branding. This was important as the findings were used to establish how the respondents understood national branding.

**Table 4.1: Best Description of National Branding**

National branding can be described as an initiative to market the country as a preferred destination		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	26	100.0
National branding can be described as an initiative to change the domestic and foreign perception about a country		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	6	23.1
	No	20	76.9
	Total	26	100.0
National branding can be described as an initiative to market the countries culture and natural attractions		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	6	23.1
	No	20	76.9
	Total	26	100.0
National branding can be described as an initiative to repair negative publicity caused by natural or human causes		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	6	23.1
	No	20	76.9
	Total	26	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

In Table 4.1, the results indicated that majority of the hotel managers understood national branding as an initiative to market a country as a preferred tourist destination scoring 100%. Other definitions of national branding presented to the respondents scored 23% each. This indicates an average understanding of national branding as the responses are majorly inclined towards marketing.

#### 4.3.2. Some of Entities in Tourism that are involved in National Branding

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were aware of some of the entities in tourism that were involved in national branding. This was important as the findings were used to determine if these entities were known by respondents.

**Table 4.2: Awareness of some of the Entities involved in National Branding**

Are you aware of the Ministry of tourism as a tourism promoting entity?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	26	100.0
Are you aware of the Kenya tourism board as a tourism promoting entity?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	22	84.6
	No	4	15.4
	Total	26	100.0
Are you aware of Brand Kenya as a tourism promoting entity?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	12	46.2
	No	14	53.8
	Total	26	100.0
Are you aware of the Kenya association of Hotels Keepers & caterers as a tourism promoting entity?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	11	42.3
	No	15	57.7
	Total	26	100.0
Are you aware of the Kenya association of Tour Operators as a tourism promoting entity?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	18	69.2
	No	8	30.8
	Total	26	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

In table 4.2, results reveal that the respondents are much aware of the Ministry of Tourism as the entity involved in national branding with the highest score of 100%. The Kenya Association of Hotels Keepers & Caterers was least known scoring the lowest score 11%. The results suggest that hotels are more aware of the entities created by the national government than those created by other bodies.

#### 4.4. Contribution towards National Branding

National branding is not a reserve of government or the business community. As indicated by Anholt (2006), the process is meant to be a combined effort between government, private and public sector. This section was based on how different entities have contributed towards national branding

#### 4.4.1. Contribution by Tourism Entities towards National Branding

The questions in table 4.3 were asked so as to establish whether the respondents thought that tourism entities had contributed towards national branding. The respondents were requested to state how they thought the tourism entities had contributed to national branding.

**Table 4.3: Contribution of Entities in Tourism towards National Branding**

Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding through marketing various tourists attractions in Kenya.		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	21	80.8
	No	5	19.2
	Total	26	100.0
Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding through marketing the hospitality industry to the international market.		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	5	19.2
	No	21	80.8
	Total	26	100.0
Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding through countering negative image about Kenya as a destination.		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	11	42.3
	No	15	57.7
	Total	26	100.0
Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding through advising the hospitality industry on packages on demand by tourists.		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	4	15.4
	No	22	84.6
	Total	26	100.0
Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding by creating a national brand for the country that is marketable internationally		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	19	73.1
	No	7	26.9
	Total	26	100.0
Entities in tourism have contributed to national branding through engaging the government in matters that affect tourism.		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	6	23.1
	No	20	76.9
	Total	26	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

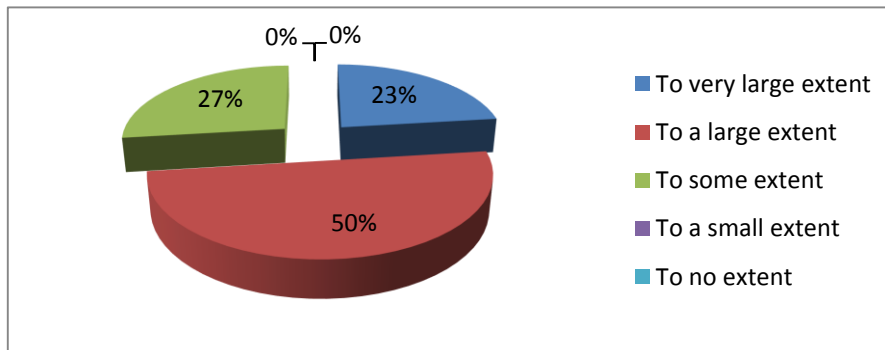
In table 4.3, the findings established that marketing of various tourists attractions in Kenya got the highest score of 80.8%. Advising the hospitality industry on the packages on demand by tourists scored the lowest at 4%. The results suggest that the respondents agreed that tourism entities had contributed to some extent towards national branding.



#### 4.4.2. Hotels Contribution towards National Branding

The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they thought their hotels had contributed towards national branding. They were also asked to the frequency in which they were involved in practices that enhanced national image. This was important so as to find out if hotels were contributing to national branding initiatives.

**Figure 4.2: Extent of Hotels Contribution in Improving Kenya's Image**



**Source: Primary Data**

As indicated in figure 4.2, all the hotels have to large extent contributed towards improving the image of Kenya as a destination with a score being 50%. Hotels that have contributed to a very large extent scored 23% while none of the hotels indicated not to have contributed in improving Kenya's image. Hotels have direct contact with the tourists hence a positive impression is expected when handling them. The study revealed that the hotels participated in tourism promotion activities to a large extent.

**Table 4.4: Frequency of Engaging in Practices that Enhance the Image of Kenya**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Frequency of conducting customer feedback survey	26	2.81	.849
Frequency of environmental management initiatives	26	2.46	.761
Frequency of corporate social responsibility initiatives	26	1.35	.485
Sponsoring advertisements that market Kenya	26	2.42	1.419
Training employees to enhance tourism service delivery	26	2.77	.430

**Source: Primary Data**

In Table 4.5, a frequency scale of Annually, Semi-annually, Quarterly and Not at all was used with a score of 1 representing annually and 4 representing not at all. Results revealed that the hotels engaged in conducting customer feedback survey more regularly (mean = 2.81 and a standard deviation = 0.849). Engagement in corporate social responsibility activities scored the least (mean = 1.35 and standard deviation 0.485).

The study reveals that the hotels are keen at improving the perception of tourists during service delivery more than the perception of the local society around them. It was noted that customer feedback surveys and training of employees to enhance tourism service delivery were conducted more frequent than environment management initiatives and corporate responsibility. The organization need to engage in more corporate responsibility activities.

#### **4.5. National Branding and Promoting Tourism in Kenya**

A destination image refers to a sum of all attributes, beliefs, impressions that people associate with a destination (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993). Cromwell (2016), states that successful tourism promotion can only be achieved best if there is a successful national brand. This section examines whether national branding has contributed to promoting tourism in Kenya.

##### **4.5.1. National Branding and Enhancing Kenya’s Image as a Destination**

The respondents were asked what they thought defined Kenya as a destination. This was asked so as to establish how Kenya’s image is viewed and results may help national branding entities into improving the country’s image. Image is important in national branding and it is believed that a good national brand contributes to enhanced tourism (Cromwell, 2016).

**Table 4.5: Description of Kenya’s Image as a Destination**

Do you think wildlife defines Kenya’s image?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	26	100.0
Do you think corruption defines Kenya’s image?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	6	23.1
	No	20	76.9

	Total	26	100.0
Do you think sports defines Kenya's image?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	23	88.5
	No	3	11.5
	Total	26	100.0
Do you think insecurity defines Kenya's image?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	4	15.4
	No	22	84.6
	Total	26	100.0
Do you think business opportunity defines Kenya's image?		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Yes	23	88.5
	No	3	11.5
	Total	26	100.0

**Source: Primary Data**

In table 4.6, wildlife scored highest as a factor that defines Kenya's image at 100%. Insecurity scored the least as a factor that defines Kenya's image as a destination at 15.4%. The results reveal that the respondents had a positive view of Kenya as a destination.

**Table 4.6: Contribution of Nation Branding towards Enhancing Kenya's Image**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
National branding initiatives have helped Kenya to rebrand her image domestically and internationally.	26	1.46	.508
National branding initiatives have helped Kenya to identify tourism market needs and trends.	26	1.69	.471
National branding initiatives have helped Kenya to promote national values.	26	2.27	.604
National branding initiatives have helped the counties and cities to brand themselves and promote their attractiveness	26	3.23	.430
National branding initiatives have helped improve country's engagement with the international community.	26	1.42	.504

**Source: Primary Data**

In table 4.7 a 4-point Likert scale was used to analyze the statements where a score of 1 represented strong agreement with a score of 4 awarded to a strong disagreement. According to the results, national branding initiatives scored the highest as having helped in improving the country’s engagement with the international community (mean = 1.42, standard deviation = 0.504). This can be supported by the number of international conferences held in Kenya in year 2015 and year 2016. National branding helping the counties and cities in branding themselves scored the lowest (mean = 3.23, standard deviation = 0.430). The promotion of national values also scored low (mean = 2.27, standard deviation = 0.604).

#### 4.6. National Branding Initiatives and Promoting Tourism

Respondents were asked to state if they thought that national branding initiatives had helped in promoting tourism in different ways. This was so as to establish how respondents thought national branding had contributed in promoting tourism.

**Table 4.7: National Branding Initiatives Contribution in Promoting Tourism**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
National branding initiatives have helped increase the number of tourists visiting Kenya.	26	2.12	.431
National branding initiatives have helped make longer time spent by tourists in Kenya.	26	2.04	.445
National branding has helped increase our revenue.	26	2.04	.344
National branding initiatives have helped us command bigger market share.	26	3.19	.402
National branding has helped us employ more people.	26	1.73	.452

**Source: Primary Data**

In table 4.8 a 4-point Likert scale was used to analyze the statements where a score of 1 represented strong agreement with a score of 4 awarded to a strong disagreement. The results show that most respondents agreed that national branding have benefited the hotels due to promoting tourism. Benefit in employing more people scored the highest (mean = 1.73, standard deviation = 0.452). Helping the hotels command a

bigger market share scored the lowest (mean = 3.19, standard deviation = 0.402). The results suggest that the hotels agree that there have been benefits brought about by national branding.

**Table 4.8: Effects of National Branding on Tourism**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
National branding initiatives have improved attractiveness of natural resources and portraying of their biodiversity.	26	1.77	.430
National branding initiatives have led to embracing of employment on the bases of competence and innovativeness driven by demand.	26	1.77	.430
National branding initiatives have led to embracing of complementary measures that have made the consumer packages more competitive.	26	1.69	.471
National branding initiatives have led to the destination being more competitive amongst other African countries.	26	1.69	.471
National branding initiatives have led to improved contribution of the tourism sector to the national GDP.	26	1.81	.402
National branding initiatives have led to improved visa issuance.	26	1.65	.485

**Source: Primary Data**

In table 4.9, a 4-point Likert scale was used to analyze the statements where a score of 1 represented strong agreement with a score of 4 awarded to a strong disagreement. The results show that national branding has helped in enhancing Kenya's competitiveness. Improved visa issuance scored the highest (mean = 1.65, standard deviation = 0.485). The contribution of tourism sector to the improvement of gross domestic product (GDP) scored the lowest (mean=1.81, standard deviation=0.402). It is however important to not even the lowest score had a higher mean ranging between strongly agree and agree.

#### 4.6.1. Some of the Weaknesses of National Branding Initiatives & Recommendations

For the purpose of identifying some of the weaknesses in national branding initiatives, the respondents were asked to indicate some of the areas they felt entities branding Kenya were failing and recommendations of what more could be done to enhance brand Kenya. This was important as it would inform these entities on some areas of improvement.

**Table 4.9: Some of the Weaknesses in Branding Kenya**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Entities branding Kenya are failing in promoting Kenya's attributes internationally.	26	3.27	.452
Entities branding Kenya are failing in researching on Kenya's tourism attractions and potential.	26	3.38	.496
Entities branding Kenya are failing in promoting Kenya's cultural diversity internationally.	26	3.31	.471
Entities branding Kenya are failing in seeking feedback from tourism stakeholders.	26	2.54	.647

**Source: Primary Data**

A 4-point Likert scale was used to analyze the statements where a score of 1 represented strong agreement with a score of 4 awarded to a strong disagreement. Results in Table 4.4 show that the respondents largely disagreed with the statements with scoring between (mean=3.38 and mean=3.31, standard deviation = 0.496 and standard deviation = 4.52) in the statements presented. Failure to seek feedback from tourism stakeholders was supported by most respondents with (mean = 2.54, standard deviation = 0.647).

The results reveal that entities mandated with branding Kenya are viewed to be doing their best to brand Kenya as a preferred destination.

**Table 4.10: Recommendations on what can be done to Enhance Brand Kenya**

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The perception about Kenya internationally needs improvement.	26	1.54	.508
The tourism sector stakeholders need to be involved more in national branding initiatives.	26	1.73	.452
The security of the country need to be improved.	26	1.38	.496
More resources need to be allocated for national branding.	26	1.73	.452
More campaigns of marketing Kenya needs to be initiated.	26	1.77	.430

**Source: Primary Data**

A 4-point Likert scale was used to analyze the statements in this table where a score of 1 represented strong agreement with a score of 4 awarded to a strong disagreement. The results in table 4.10 show that more respondents agreed strongly agreed that the country's security issues need to be addressed (mean = 1.38, standard deviation= 0.496). This revealing that most respondents felt that insecurity was tainting the image of Kenya. Many also agreed that the perception about Kenya internationally needed to be improved (mean = 1.54, standard deviation =0.508). Initiation of more campaigns of marketing campaigns scored the lowest (mean= 1.77 and standard deviation = 0.430). The results suggest that more needs to be done in regards to branding Kenya as a tourist's destination.

#### **4.7. Discussion**

This part of the study discusses the key results emerging from the investigation done with regards to the role of national branding in promotion of tourism in Kenya. Various comparisons are done with other similar studies conducted elsewhere.

Studies indicate that national branding ensures more value when consumer product is coupled with the service industry hence enabling the creation of consumer experiences (Berry 2002). This further facilitates the brand to not only connect with the company but further with a network of stakeholders offering the services (García, Gómez, & Molina, 2012).

The results indicated an average understanding of national branding as the responses were majorly inclined towards marketing. Qu and Im, (2011), stated that destination image is essential in creating a positive destination identity and to be able to brand a destination, the destination marketers must recognize all the characteristics of that destination that differentiates it from others. That way the tourists apprehend the image of that destination and store it in their minds (Florek, Inch & Gnoth, 2006). National branding initiatives must engage in change of perceptions about Kenya particularly domestically, marketing of the country's culture and natural attractions, as well as attempt to improve the country's image and alleviate negative publicity caused by natural or human activities.

Anholt (2006) indicates that leadership, and proper coordination between governments, the public and private sector, and the population in general have a responsibility to manage a country's international reputation and promote economic activities such as tourism. Although governments now hire public relations firms to brand the countries for among other goals tourism promotion, Teslik, (2007) reckons that not for profit organizations and the business world can better cooperate to make sure the communications a country is making internally and externally represent an essential common purpose of their country.

This study revealed that hotel managers conducted more surveys to gather feedback that would enhance tourism. This was in agreement with a study by (Denihan 2016) who indicated that clients' feedback and satisfaction was so important to the companies studied and had improved the companies' bookings. The feedback also had an impact on consistent improvement of standards that enabled the hotels to charge more. Weed (2013) indicates that guests' feedback is no longer about leaving a questionnaire in the room, but includes writing a first email and a second one if the first fails to get response. It also involves following on the web and social media on what the guest are saying about your services. This approach should be emphasized in the Kenyan context in order to maximize on guest feedback based service improvement.



When the study investigated the perceived description of Kenya's image as a destination, it was realized that wildlife majorly formed how Kenya is described as a tourist destination. Although Kenya had her own security challenges, this was hardly seen to define Kenya. However, as pointed out by Haubl (1996) both the brand name and the country of origin were found to have a significant impact on consumers' attitudes towards a product. It is therefore important for a country of origin such as Kenya to design a specific identity that can be used to influence the consumers desire to purchase the countries tourism products.

When the hotel managers were asked on whether they thought that national branding had a role to play in promotion of the tourism industry, the results suggested that the respondents agreed that national branding has positively affected tourism in Kenya. These findings are supported by Enright & Newton (2004) whom in their study on tourism destination competitiveness concluded that the success of tourism destinations is influenced by their competitiveness. It also supports the argument by Morgan and Pitchard (2000) who said that competition for consumers in tourism cannot be won over value but over what is perceived and felt about the destination and branding will be the biggest contributor to that victory. Njeru (2010) also supports this in her review of literature on national branding influence on competitiveness of nations where she concluded that national branding plays an important role on the performance of the tourism sector. However, the current study identified "failure to seek feedback from the hotels industry stakeholders by the branding entities" as a major weakness towards achieving tourism promotion related goals. It is therefore important for the branding entities and the hotels industry to create a network of communication to relay consistent two way feedback which would be used to clear faults.

The final part of this study sought to gather some recommendations for the Kenyan branding entities from the hotel industry. Key by the hotel managers was the issue of security in Kenya that had tainted the image of Kenya as a destination for a while. Kenya is listed by Morgan and Pritchard (2004) as one among the countries who's the challenge of terrorism may pose long term delay by investors and tourists following even a single attack. The security concern with regards to marketing the tourism products is not isolated to Kenya. Other destinations such as Kuwait and Croatia have

made tremendous efforts to eliminate the connotation of war from their national identity after having gone through a period of civil unrest. The Croatian government for example eliminated the war from representations of national history and repositioned Croatia as identical in history and culture to its Western European neighbors (Rivera, 2008). Similarly, Kenya through the national branding entities such as brand Kenya and the Kenya tourism board should make more efforts to ensure that in future, Kenya will not only be associated with insecurity but more as a destination of stunning nature and diversity of culture worth touring.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The chapter also gives suggestions for further study.

### **5.2. Summary**

The study established that the hotels surveyed fall under the category of Five Star and Two Star. 3 star hotels were found to be majority while the least were found to be in the category of 4 star. Most of the hotels have been in existence for 11-15 years while those which have existed for the shortest time existing between a period for 1-5 years and 6-10 years respectively. Majority of the hotels were found to be predominantly locally owned the least number of them were balanced between local and foreign ownership.

On the understanding of national branding, the findings established that the respondents had some understanding of national branding. The description of national branding as an initiative to market the country was cited as the best description while statements used to describe national branding scored low. The study also established that hotels knew the entities in the tourism sector mandated in promoting tourism presented them. Ministry of Tourism is the entity that was most known while Brand Kenya Board and Kenya Association Hotel Keepers & Caterers were not well known scoring the least scored. Nevertheless, it was clear that the respondents had some understanding on what national branding was all about and hence they were able to answer the rest of the questionnaire.

On the contribution towards national branding, the findings indicated that entities mandated with branding Kenya for tourism promotion scored highest in marketing various tourists' attractions. They however scored the least on advising the hospitality industry on packages on demand by tourists. There was agreement that the entities have created a national brand that is marketable internationally. The study also established that the hotels were to a large extent contributing to improving the

Kenyan image. Those who believe they contribute to a very large extent scored the lowest. The study also established that the hotels frequently carried out activities that enhance the national image. Carrying out Surveys on customer feedback was found to be most practiced activity and more regularly done while conducting corporate social responsibilities scored the least. The findings established that the entities involved in branding Kenya and the hotels involved in the study had contributed to branding initiatives in a large extent.

On the contribution of national branding in promoting tourism, the study established that the hotels view Kenya from a positive perspective. The findings indicated the on the country's viewed image, description of Kenya as a destination involved highly the wildlife followed by business opportunities and sports. The negativity of insecurity seemed not to be seen as a description of what Kenya is as a destination. National branding initiatives according to the findings have helped the country's engagement with the international community hence giving the country a platform to promote its national attributes.

Still on contribution of national branding in promoting tourism in Kenya, the findings show that national branding has positively helped Kenya in rebranding its image domestically and internationally. There is however failure on the initiatives in helping the counties and cities in Kenya in promoting their attractiveness. According to the results, hotels strongly agree that national branding initiatives had helped in creating more employment but there was however disagreement on market shares with majority of hotels stating that their market share had not increased. It was also established that national branding had led to improved visa issuance. The respondents agreed that national branding had also contributed to the improvement on the contribution of the tourism to the national gross product (GDP). Embracing of complementary measures that had made consumer packages and Kenya as a destination more competitive amongst other African countries and the attractiveness of natural resources had improved as a result of national branding.

Finally the findings also established that the respondents strongly disagreed that entities branding Kenya had failed in researching on Kenya's tourism attraction. They also strongly disagreed that the entities had failed in promoting Kenyan attributes or

in promoting cultural diversity internationally. Majority of respondents recommended that national security needed to be improved for the purpose of maintaining a positive national image. There was also agreement that improvement of Kenya's image internationally and also tourism stakeholders needed to be more involved in national branding.

The findings established that there is positive effect of national branding initiatives towards promoting tourism in Kenya. The stakeholders in tourism had to a large extent contributed towards national branding but also needed to be more involved in the national branding initiatives. The findings revealed that more need to be done in terms of improving the country's image.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

The study examined the role played by national branding in promoting tourism in Kenya. This was measured using the hotels in Nairobi central business district. Hotels are stakeholders in the tourism industry and direct beneficiaries of tourists visiting Kenya as they offer them food and accommodation. According to the findings, national branding is viewed as an important aspect in promoting tourism in Kenya. There is also recognizable marketing of Kenya as a destination but there seems to be a perceived gap on improving the country's image. Brand image plays a critical role in building a brand identity (Cai, 2002). Brand image and brand identity are claimed to be the key to a prosperous destination brand (Nandan, 2005, Florek et al, 2006, Qui & Im 2011 and Cai, 2002). Therefore the entities mandated with branding and marketing Kenya should do more and ensure that the national identity is well built through the improvement of national image.

The world has become very competitive. Countries have to compete for attention of potential tourists, which means that they have to do what it takes to stand out. National branding has become a must for countries wanting to remain competitive. The results suggest that Kenya needs to deal with the issue of insecurity which is affecting the country's image. This has been an issue that drags the tourism sector in Kenya behind. Tourists want to travel to safe destination hence the reason why the country must work hard to make Kenya secure.

#### **5.4. Recommendations**

There is need to allocate more resources to national branding initiatives to ensure that funds are not a hindrance to the initiatives. More branding campaigns are required so as to create more awareness of Kenya as a brand locally and internationally. Brand Kenya Board, an entity mandated with identifying attributes that Kenya possesses and creating a nation brand is not well known by the hotels according to the findings. Such entities need to be well funded so as to facilitate their promotion activities. The message communicated about Kenya should be consistent.

All entities branding and marketing Kenya should have a common message as communication of diverse messages may confuse the potential consumers. Hotels and other tourism stakeholders can also do more and engage in more activities that help in improving the image of Kenya. Being beneficiaries in tourism, hotels should get involved in sponsoring advertisements aimed at marketing Kenya as a social responsibility. Other stakeholders like the tour operators and local people need to get more involved. The responsibility should not be left to the national government alone, all stakeholders must get involved.

#### **5.5. Limitations of Study**

This study was limited to a population of hotels in Nairobi. A more comprehensive study is needed to reflect a bigger scope of tourism stakeholders. This will give an insight of how other tourism stakeholders perceive national branding as a tool of promoting tourism.

#### **5.6. Suggestions for Further Research**

Given the limitations of this study, the researcher suggests that a replica study should be extended to hotels in other regions in the country especially in the coastal areas for comparison purposes. A similar study should be carried out using other tourism stakeholders as the case to compliment this study.

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## APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Hotel Category (Please tick (√) appropriately).

- 5-Star [ ]  
4- Star [ ]  
3- Star [ ]  
2-Star [ ]

2. Please state your position in the hotel.....

3. Please indicate the ownership of the hotel using the categories below (Please tick (√) one).

- Predominantly local (51% or more) [ ]  
Predominantly foreign (51% or more) [ ]  
Balanced between foreign and local (50/50) [ ]

4. Using the categories below please indicate how long your hotel has been in operation. (Please tick (√) appropriately).

- 1-5 Years [ ]  
6-10 Years [ ]  
11-15 Years [ ]  
16 and above years [ ]

### SECTION B: UNDERSTANDING OF NATIONAL BRANDING IN KENYA

(Please tick (√) appropriately)

1. In your opinion, the following statements describe national branding?

An initiative to package the country as a preferred destination.	
An initiative to change the domestic and foreign perception about a country.	
An initiative to market the countries culture and natural attractions.	
An initiative to repair negative publicity caused by natural or human causes.	

2. Which one of the following tourism promoting entities are you aware of?

Ministry of Tourism	
Kenya Tourism Board	
Brand Kenya Board	
Kenya Association of Hotels Keepers & Caterers	
Kenya Association of Tour Operators	

3. Which of the above entities do you consider effective in branding Kenya to promote tourism?

Ministry of Tourism	
Kenya Tourism Board	
Brand Kenya Board	
Kenya Association of Hotels Keepers & Caterers	
The Kenya Association of Tour Operators	

### SECTION C: CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS NATIONAL BRANDING

(Please tick (√) appropriately)

1. In what ways do you think entities in Section B (2) & B (3) above have contributed to national branding?

Through marketing various attractions in the country.	
Through marketing the hospitality industry to the international market.	
Through countering negative image about Kenya as a destination.	
Through advising the hospitality industry on packages on demand by tourists.	
By creating a national brand for the country that is marketable internationally.	
Through engaging the national government in matters that affect tourism.	

2. Where do you think entities promoting Kenya are failing in enhancing national image?

Description	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Kenya's national attributes are not known internationally.				
Kenya's tourist attraction and potential has not been well researched.				



<b>Description</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The Kenya's cultural diversity is not well understood internationally.				
Stakeholders in the Kenyan tourism sector are not given opportunity to give feedback.				

3. Please indicate to what extent has your hotel done in pursuit of improving the image of Kenya as a preferred destination, using a scale of 1-5 below, in which;

- 1-To no extent.
- 2-To a small extent.
- 3-To some Extent.
- 5-To a large extent.
- 6-To a very large extent.

4. How frequent does your hotel engage in the following practices to enhance the image of Kenya as a brand.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Semi-annually</b>	<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>Not at all</b>
Conducting Customer feedback survey.				
Environmental Management Initiatives.				
Corporate social responsibility initiatives.				
Sponsoring advertisements that market				
Training employees to enhance tourism service delivery.				

**SECTION D: CONTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL BRANDING IN PROMOTING TOURISM (Please tick (√) appropriately)**

1. Which of the following do you think describes Kenya as a destination?

- Wildlife
- Corruption
- Sports
- Insecurity

Business Opportunities [ ]

2. What are the main reason of visiting Kenya by tourists residing in your hotel?

Game safari [ ]

Fun and relaxation [ ]

Business [ ]

Sports and recreation [ ]

Official and Training [ ]

I do not know [ ]

Other, indicate: .....

3. According to you, has national branding initiatives helped Kenya in the following ways?

Description	Strongly agree	Agree	disagree	Strongly disagree
Has enabled the country to rebrand her image domestically and internationally.				
Has enabled the country to identify tourism market needs and trends.				
Has enabled the country to promote national values.				
Has enabled the counties and cities to brand themselves and promote their attractiveness.				
Has improved the countries engagement with the international community.				

4. To what extent do you agree that national branding initiatives have helped your hotel in the following ways?

Description	Strongly agree	Agree	disagree	Strongly disagree
Number of tourists visiting Kenya has increased.				

<b>Description</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The time spent by tourists in Kenya is longer.				
Our revenue has increased.				
We command bigger market share.				
We have employed more people.				

5. Please provide your view on how the following areas of tourism have been affected by national branding initiatives.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
Attractiveness of natural resources and portraying of their biodiversity has improved				
The industry has embraced employment on the bases of competence and innovativeness driven by demand.				
The industry has embraced complementary measures that have made the consumer packages more competitive.				
The destination is more competitive amongst other African countries.				
The contribution of the tourism sector to the gross domestic product has improved.				
Visa issuance has improved.				

5. How much do you think needs to be done as far as national branding is concerned?

<b>Description</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The perceptions about Kenya				

<b>Description</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
internationally needs improvement.				
The tourism sector stakeholders need to be involved more in national branding initiatives.				
The security of the country needs to be improved.				
More resources need to be allocated for national branding.				
More initiative campaigns of marketing Kenya need to be initiated.				

**Thank you for your time and cooperation**

## APPENDIX II: LIST OF HOTELS USED IN THE STUDY

No.	Hotel Name	Category
1.	Laico Regency Hotel	5 star
2.	Hotel Intercontinental Hotel	5 star
3.	Nairobi Safari Club Hotel	5 star
4.	Sarova Stanley Hotel	5 star
5.	Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel	5 star
6.	Hilton Hotel	5 star
7.	Nairobi Serena Hotel	5 star
8.	Fairmont the Norfolk Hotel	5 star
9.	Sixty Eighty (680) Hotel	4 star
10.	Sarova Panafric Hotel	4 star
11.	Meridian Hotel	3 star
12.	Marble Arch Hotel	3 star
13.	Oakwood Hotel	3 star
14.	The Clarion Hotel	3 Star
15.	Boulevard Hotel	3 Star
16.	Decesa Hotel	3 Star
17.	Fairview Hotel	3 Star
18.	Hotel Central Park	3 Star
19.	Sunrise Hotel	3 Star
20.	Jamia Central Hotel	3 Star
21.	Ambassadeur Hotel	2 star
22.	Kenya Comfort Hotel	2 Star
23.	Kheweza Hotel	2 Star
24.	Hotel Kipepeo	2 Star
25.	Delta Hotel	2 Star
26.	Chester Hotel	2 Star