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Analysis of Destination Image Formation among Foreign Travel Intermediaries: The Case of Terrorism Events in Kenya

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**ANALYSIS OF DESTINATION IMAGE FORMATION AMONG FOREIGN
TRAVEL INTERMEDIARIES: THE CASE OF TERRORISM EVENTS IN
KENYA**

Department of Tourism and Geography

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a social phenomenon that relies on the positive destination images. Destination images are mental representations held by individuals of places and defer depending on the information received or actual visits by individuals. Events such as terrorism, war, political instability and natural disasters have negative impacts on destinations. They contribute to formation of negative destination images among potential visitors and tourist stakeholders. Interpretations of events by individuals depend on several factors such as the socio-demographic characteristics, cultural and historical backgrounds. In this study, the formation of destination images among the foreign tour operators and the travel agents after exposure to terrorism events in Kenya was explored. The main objective of this study was to find out how the foreign travel agents interpreted the images of destinations after exposure to terror attacks by studying the case of Kenya. A qualitative approach was utilised to find out how the tour operators and the travel agents interpreted the destination originated information agents, information from the media and guided by their socio-demographic characteristics formed the overall image of Kenya and how they reacted towards the new images. Semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires were utilised for data collection. Four themes emerged, the initial image of Kenya, the cognitive/perceptual and the affectual attributes, the overall images and finally the reactions of the tour operators after formation of the new images.

KEYWORDS:

Foreign tour operators and travel agents, Kenya, destination image, cognitive/perceptual, affective, reactions of the tour operators and travel agents, overall image

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 Rationale.....	1
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	4
2.1 Social Constructionism.....	4
2.1.1 Descriptions of Theoretical Components.....	6
2.2 Tour Operators and the Travel Agents.	6
2.2.1 Tour Operator Classification.....	7
2.2.2 Travel Agencies.	8
2.2.3 Tour Operators and Travel Agencies Discussion.	8
2.3 Terrorism	9
2.3.1 Social Construction of Terrorism.....	10
2.3.2 Definitions of the Term Terrorism.....	11
2.3.3 Causes of Terrorism.....	12
2.3.4 Effects of Terrorism on the Tourism Sector.	13
2.3.5 Reactions of Foreign Travel Intermediaries.	14
2.4 Destination Image.....	17
2.4.1 Definitions of Destination Image.....	17
2.4.2. Formation of Destination Image.	18
2.4.3 Gartner’s Model.	20
2.4.4 Gartner and Tasci Destination Image Model.	22
2.4.5 Role of Tour Operators in Image formation.	25
2.5 Effects of terrorism on the Foreign Travel Agents.....	26
2.5.1. Conceptual Framework Model.	27
3. THE CONTEXT OF KENYA.....	32
3.1 Description of Kenya.....	32
3.2 Terrorism in Kenya.....	35
4. RESEARCH METHODS	37
4.1 Study Approach	37
4.1.1 Research Methods.....	37
4.1.2 Destination Image Studies.	38
4.1.3 Case-Study Approach.	39
4.2 Data collection.....	40
4.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews.	41

4.2.2 Open-ended Questionnaires.....	41
4.3 Research Quality.....	42
4.3.1 Validity and Reliability.....	42
4.3.2 Researcher’s Role.	44
4.3.3 Positionality Statement.	44
4.3.4 Ethical Considerations.	45
5. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS	46
6. FINDINGS	52
6.1 Image of Kenya	52
6.2 The Cognitive/Perceptual and Affective attributes.	55
6.3 Affective Evaluations.	60
6.4 The Overall Image.	62
6.5 Reactions of Tour operators.	63
7. DISCUSSION	66
7.1 Conclusions	66
7.2 The Importance of Participating in Research by tour operators and Travel Agents.....	69
7.3 Limitations.....	69
7.4 Suggestions for Further Research.....	70
REFERENCES	72
APPENDICES	77
Appendix 1: Data Collection Request Letter.....	77
Appendix 2: Request Letter –Open Ended Questionnaire	78
Appendix 3: Interview Guide	79

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: List of Foreign Travel Intermediaries based in Sweden.	47
Table 2: List of UK tour operators and travel Agents.....	49
Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of the foreign travel intermediaries.....	59

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Theoretical framework outline	6
Figure 2: The role of Tour operators and travel agencies in the distribution chain.	9
Figure 3: Factors influencing the destination image formation	19
Figure 4: Gunn (1972) Stage theory model.....	20
Figure 5: A model of destination Image and its relationships.	24
Figure 6: Conceptual Framework model destination image formation.	31
Figure 7: Kenya on the African Map.	32
Figure 8: International Tourism Arrival numbers from 1995-2010.....	34
Figure 9: Illustration of Kenya 's image	53

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the tourism industry is one of the most important socio-economic sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2013). The industry contributes to around 9.5% of the world's GDP according to the report. In job creation, the industry has contributed to the creation of 266 million jobs globally or approximately one in every eleven jobs globally according to the report. The countries supporting the development of the industry benefit both socially and economically. Socially, the countries benefit from, preservation of their culture, promotion of peace and encouragement of intercultural interaction (Joldersma, Li and McCabe (2010). In economic terms, the industry contributes to, balance of payment, regional development and job creation (Hall, 2010).

Despite its benefits, the tourism industry is vulnerable to many external factors such as social, political and economic factors that hinder the growth of the industry by distorting the image of the tourist destinations. Events such as terror attacks, political instability and war, natural disasters and epidemics have a negative impact on destinations (Beirman, 2003). The repercussions of these events are a great concern to the tourist stakeholders; heads of states and even scholars in the field of tourism (Sonmez, Apostolopolous and Tarlow, 1999) because they destroy the image of a destination by affecting the perceptions of potential tourists in a destination.

1.2 Rationale

According to Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001), the tour operators and the travel agents influence the images of the destination by promoting particular destinations and avoiding others. This notion is supported by Ioannides (1998) who postulated that, the tour operators determine the flow of international tourists from one destination to another through their promotional procedures and sell of tourist products. By use of brochures, booklets and word of mouth, the tour operators create induced images of destinations.

Etchner and Ritchie (2003) agreed that, individuals have some form of mental representation of destinations even though they have never visited the destination. If you randomly ask anyone about Kenya, there is a high probability that they know one or two

things about the country either via the media, geography lessons in school or even by word of mouth from friends and relatives who have been to the country.

Gartner (1993) argued that, the images held by individuals of places are not static and can change with time when individuals are exposed to further information from various information agents. Events such as terrorism, war and political instability, world cup tournaments and international conferences in a destination are responsible for changing the images of a destination. Terrorism, crime, war and political instability influence the creation of negative images among individuals and tourism stakeholder's promoting a destination while events such as world cup tournaments, UN conferences encourages formation of positive destination images. The role of the tour operators in the tourism industry is to package tourist products and sell them to potential clients in the destination.

Due to their promotional procedures, tour operators and travel agents are highly affected by any new information about destinations they are promoting. For example if a tour operator is promoting Kenya as a destination, and Kenya happens to suffer from tribal clashes or war, the tour operators and the travel agents held images of the country may be affected. Regardless of the event, the tour operators and the travel agents will tend to analyse the situation depending on several factors; whether human-influenced or natural disaster, extent of the damage on tourist facilities, the aftermath of the event and their business procedures among other things (Cavlek, 2002).

In this study, the formation of destination image among foreign tour operators and travel agents as a result of continuous terror attacks was explored. Kenya as a tourist destination is highly promoted by foreign travel intermediaries across the globe. The country is famous for safari tours, pristine beaches and a tropical climate. Despite its wonderful physical attributes, the country has been prone to several terror attacks that have affected the positive images held by potential visitors and the foreign travel intermediaries. This has affected the flow of tourists in Kenya as foreign travel intermediaries shun the country or substitute it with other safer destinations. The efforts of the destination marketer's in promoting the country have been thwarted by the continuous terror attacks the country has been exposed to. In some instances, the tourists have been targeted by the terrorists thus affecting the tourism industry negatively.

Examples of terror attacks in Kenya include, the US embassy bombing in August 1998, Paradise Hotel bombing in November 2002, several grenade attacks from 2011 to 2013, police ambushes in the northern part of Kenya and recently the horrific Westgate mall terror attack in September 2013. The worst thing about the above mentioned terror attacks is that majority of the attacks have affected the tourism industry by targeting the foreigners or foreign establishments in the country. The country is highly marketed by the foreign tour operators and travel agents from Germany, UK, Sweden, Australia and also the USA among others. This study will go a long way in finding out how the terror attacks affect the initial images of Kenya held by the foreign tour operators and travel agents based in Sweden, UK and Australia.

Having noted the above, the main aim of this study is, to contribute to a better understanding of how terror attacks in Kenya influence the formation of destination image among foreign travel intermediaries promoting Kenya as a tourist destination. The research question in this study is:

1. *How do terrorism events affect the formation of destination image among foreign tour operators and travel agents promoting Kenya as a tourist destination?*

Sub-question for this study is:

1. *What are the information sources affecting destination images?*

The study contributes to the continuing research on the effects of continuous terror attacks on developing countries that rely heavily on foreign tour operators and travel agents. It also highlights the effects of terrorism in the formation of new destination image among the foreign tour operators and the travel agents.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework according to Merten (2005) is a paradigm that directs how the collected information, facts and figures in a research are used to explain the chosen topic. Creswell, (2009) adds to this by mentioning that, the paradigms or the philosophical world views are the assumptions and beliefs that help interpret social phenomena. The work of the paradigms is to guide the research design and the methodology. In social science research, there are four different paradigms that influence social research (Creswell, 2009).

The first paradigm is called the post-positivism and represents the traditional scientific approach which is mainly utilised by researchers taking the quantitative approach. The second group consists of, the social constructionism and is mainly used by researchers who believe that individuals constantly interpret and give meanings to events in society as they happen. They normally use the qualitative approach. The third group consists of the researchers who use the transformative paradigm and normally represent the marginalised groups in society and finally the pragmatists who believe that actions have consequences. Both the transformative and the pragmatists tend to favour the quantitative or the mixed methods research design (Creswell, 2009).

In conclusion, the researcher uses the preferred paradigm depending on the social phenomena under study. In this study, the researcher will be guided by the social constructionism paradigm in order to find out how terrorism affects the formation of destination images among the tour operators and the travel agents in destinations they promote by studying the case of Kenya.

2.1 Social Constructionism

According to Creswell (2009), the social constructionism paradigm originated from the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) and is utilised by researchers who aspire to understand how individuals interpret and give meaning to events and occurrences in their daily lives. The author argued that, “the social constructionists hold assumptions that, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work” (p.8). The interpretations given by the individuals of events in society influence the mental constructions they build and the way they behave towards other people or events in society.

By use of qualitative methods, the researchers unveils the participants meaning of events, experiences and objects based on their own historical background, beliefs and even culture. In order to bring out individual's interpretations of events in society, the research questions in qualitative studies are very broad in order to give room for the participants to digest, think and assemble the subjective meanings they give to different events. The answers given by the participants reflect the interaction between the individuals with what is happening in the surroundings based on their beliefs, cultural and historical backgrounds. Based on the above discussion Creswell (2009) identifies three assumptions that the social constructionists rely on,

1. "Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. A good example of this is money. In society, money is symbolically accepted as a medium of exchange.
2. Humans engage with the world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives. We are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture.
3. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising from the interaction with the human community" (p.9).

In this study, the social constructionism paradigm is utilised because it helps unveil the foreign travel intermediaries understanding of terror attacks in the formation of new images of Kenya and their behaviour as a result of terrorism events. In one way or another, the continuous terror attacks in Kenya have affected the promotional procedures of the foreign travel intermediaries. By use of the social constructionism paradigm, the researcher brings out their interpretations of the events and how they influence the changes in the existing images.

According to Turk (2004) in his discussion of sociology of terrorism, a terrorism phenomenon does not exist but it is the interpretation of events by individuals that result to terrorism. Therefore, terrorism cannot exist without individuals in a society. This means that, it is the individual's interpretation of certain events that result to understanding of what terrorism is. In this case, the purpose of this study is to find out how tour operators and travel agents construct the image of a destination after exposure to information about terror attacks in destinations they are promoting.

2.1.1 Descriptions of Theoretical Components. Guided by the constructionist paradigm, a theoretical framework of this thesis is developed, which is based on the interplay of the three main themes which are, the tour operators and the travel agents, terrorism and destination image. The first section will cover the definitions of tour operators and travel agencies and their role in the tourism sector while the second one will cover terrorism, how different scholars have interpreted the phenomena and how terrorism events have affected the tourist stakeholders such as the foreign tour operators and travel agents. The final section will identify how tour operators and the travel agencies construct images of destinations in the event of terror attacks in the destinations they are promoting. Below is a diagram showing a brief outline of the theoretical framework which will be discussed in further details in the following section.

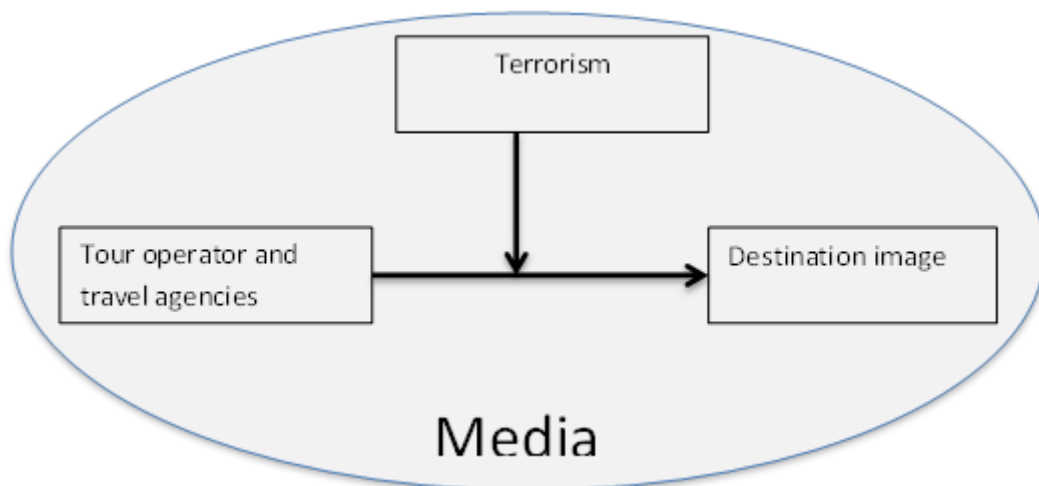


Figure 1: Theoretical framework outline

2.2 Tour Operators and the Travel Agents.

Sheldon (1986) defined a tour operator as “a company which negotiates with hotels, transportation companies and other supplies of tourism services and later combines these components into a packaged tour” (p. 352). The travel agents on the other hand purchases tourist services from the tour operators and sells them to clients directly. The tour operators and the travel agencies are the only true tourism stakeholders who are responsible for connecting the tourism products with the individuals in the society (Tapper, 2001).

Tapper (2001) stated that, by promoting a destination, the tour operators and the travel agents assist in creating a positive image of the promoted destination, thus influencing the client's choice of destination. Alternatively, by not promoting a destination they promoted previously may be an indication of problems such as lack of safety in destination or environmental degradation. For example, if a tour operator in Sweden bans all safari tours to Kenya due to terror attacks, the potential clients will be discouraged to travel to Kenya due to the decisions of the tour operators and travel agents.

Tour operators and travel agents differ in the clients they deal with. Some deal with foreign clients while others deal with the local clients. Although their main task is to act as an intermediary between the tourists and the destinations, they may differ in many ways such as the products they promote or the clients they deal with. In order to understand how they interpret events in society, it is important to know their classification according to the clients they deal with. It is also important to note that, classification of tour operators and travel agents according to the client base is not the only existing classification but for this study, it is the most important one in understanding their reactions in times of terror crisis in destinations they are promoting. A typical classification of the tour operators based on a USAID report: "The tour operator's manual" (2007) was utilised in this study in order to outline their main duties. Literature pertaining to the classification of tour operators from scholars in the field of tourism did not yield the same results and the manual was deemed appropriate.

2.2.1 Tour Operator Classification. According to the USAID report (2007), the tour operators are classified into inbound, outbound and ground tour operators. The inbound tour operators are based in a destination they are promoting and their main role is to package tours for their international clients who are visiting the destination. A good example of an inbound tour operator is Trip to Sweden AB. They organise holiday packages in Sweden and sell them to outbound tour operators and travel agents promoting Sweden as a tourist destination.

The outbound tour operators on the other hand, package holiday tours in foreign countries and sell them to clients based in the same country, they are located. A good example of this company is Tour Africa Company based in Stockholm but sells safari trips to Kenya and Tanzania to the Swedish people. The third category of tour operators are the

ground tour operators. They plan and arrange local tour packages for their clients who are based in the destinations they are promoting. They specialise in activities such as corporate team buildings, boat trips, mountain climbing and tours around national parks. They are a great source of local information that can be utilised by the outbound and inbound tour operators. A good example of ground tour operators is Trek and Tours travel Company based in Kenya but specialise in weekend gateways and honeymoon packages.

2.2.2 Travel Agencies. The travel agencies on the other hand, purchase holiday packages from the tour operators and sell them to the tourists directly. They also vary according to the type of clients they deal with, and are mainly inbound, outbound and ground. The inbound travel agencies purchases holiday packages from the inbound tour operators and sells them to foreign tourists who want to visit the country they are based while the outbound travel agencies purchase holiday packages from outbound tour operators and sell them to their clients in the countries they are located. A good example is Resia Resebyrå here in Sweden.

They buy holiday packages to Kenya from Tour Africa AB and Jambo Tours Scandinavia Ab based in Stockholm, and sell them to the Swedish people. The ground travel agencies arrange tours such as cruises and bus-trips in the destinations they are located. They also offer ticketing services to their clients who are travelling abroad. Good examples of travel agencies are Flygresor and Travel partners based in Sweden (USAID Report, 2007).

2.2.3 Tour Operators and Travel Agencies Discussion. Critically analysing the above classification, the tour operators and the travel agencies are categorised according to the types of clients they deal with. It is important to note that, the examples given above are not part of the report and I have used them to foster understanding of the concept. Apart from the above classification as given by the report, review of existing literature on the classification of tour operators and travel agencies by different scholars identified a different categorisation. Scholars such as Cavlek (2002), Dieke (1991) and Sinclair (1992) used the word foreign tour operators to mean outbound tour operators while Grosspietch (2004) referred to foreign tour operators as international tour operators.

Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2002) and Aleddinoglu and Can (2010) referred to tour operators and travel agencies as tour operators and travel agencies without giving any

classification. In this study, the main focus will be on the outbound tour operators and travel agencies who will be referred to as foreign travel intermediaries. The foreign travel intermediaries in this study refers to a person, group or companies not based in Kenya but based in Sweden or any other country and conducts business which involves preparing holiday packages in Kenya or purchasing holiday packages and selling them to clients based in any other country apart from Kenya. Below is the diagram showing the role of tour operators and travel agencies in the distribution chain in the tourism industry.

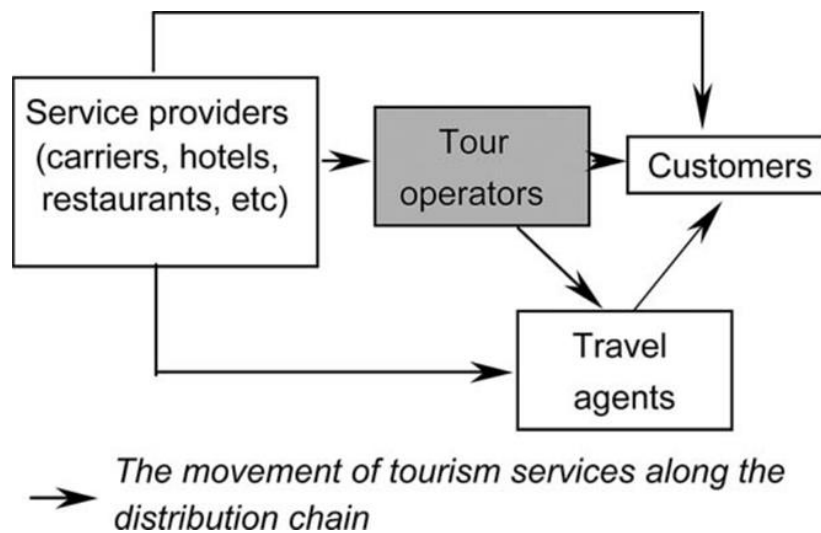


Figure 2: The role of Tour operators and travel agencies in the distribution chain. Adopted from Budeanue (2005) p. 3

2.3 Terrorism

Historically, Baker and Coulter (2007) reported that, terrorism events existed at least since 6AD when the Jewish loyalists protested against the Roman rule and launched a terror attack towards them. Since then, the phenomenon has evolved as the activities involved vary and increase in intensity. Examples of famous terrorist events around the globe include, the New York World Trade centre attack in September 2001, the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005 in Indonesia and the Sham el Sheikh bombing in Egypt in 2005.

Currently, terrorist attacks attract media attention worldwide due to high levels of publicity. With modern technology, news about terrorism in one region spread very fast across the globe. The media on the other hand does not choose the receivers of the

information and the news may be interpreted in many different ways by the receivers due to their understanding of the events based on their historical and cultural backgrounds (Somnez and Sirakaya, 2002). This begs the questions of, what is terrorism, how does terrorism affect our day to day lives and how are terrorism events interpreted by individuals in society.

According to Agada and Mogire (2011), the term terrorism is a contested and ambiguous term that has different definitions and interpretations depending on the perceived acts and the individuals defining it. A study by Lee, Takaku, Ottati and Gonggu (2004) on the different interpretations of the 9/11 attacks in New York revealed that, the Christians, Muslims and the Chinese people had different interpretations of the events depending on their cultural and social backgrounds. The Muslim group perceived the 9/11 attacks as a sign of bravery and freedom fighting while the Christians labelled the events as violence and terrorism. The Chinese group labelled the violent acts as terrorism.

Taking a constructionist point of view, Creswell (2009) noted that, individuals try to understand and give subjective meanings to events as they occur in society. By this, actions such as terror attacks and natural disasters may have different interpretations depending on individual's religion, socio-cultural and historical backgrounds. In the next section, a discussion of how terrorism is socially constructed is outlined.

2.3.1 Social Construction of Terrorism. Turk (2004) in his discussion of social construction of terrorism emphasized that, "terrorism is not given in the real world but it is an interpretation of events and their presumed causes" (p. 271). In other words, there is no such thing as terrorism but it has been created by people as they try to interpret actions and events as they occur in society. The author emphasised that, terrorism is one of those phenomenon that is created by interactions of people with the events in society. If one group defines certain acts of violence as terrorism, then they become so and the acts are labelled terrorism acts. Different acts may be labelled terrorism by different groups of people in society as noted by Turk (2004). As a result, there is no agreed upon definition of the word terrorism.

Assessment of terrorism literature identifies different definitions of the term terrorism by organisations and scholars in the field of terrorism. According to Coady (2004a), the term terrorism has more than 100 definitions given by different scholars in

various academic fields. This helps to illustrate how a single phenomenon in society can have different interpretations. Coady (2004a) argued that, the definitions of terrorism given by individuals, scholars and government bodies are subjective and based on their interest, power and also context. To put the point across, an illustration of the different definitions proposed by the different groups is given below.

2.3.2 Definitions of the Term Terrorism. A definition given by Schmid and Jongman (1988) as quoted by Prabha (2000) defined terrorism as “*an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by clandestine individual groups or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby, in contrast to assassination, the direct targets of violence are not the main targets*” (p. 126).

A second definition of terrorism as given by Enders and Sandler (2006) ascertained that terrorism is the “*premeditated use or threat of use of extra normal violence or brutality by subnational groups to obtain a political, religious or ideological objective through intimidation of a huge audience, usually not directly involved with the policy making that the terrorists seek to influence*” (p. 145).

Alternatively, the definitions given by the heads of state and government bodies described terrorism as a criminal act punishable by law. In Kenya for instance, there is no solid definition of the term terrorism but the Terrorism Legislation act stipulates that “The Penal Code of Kenya does not define terrorist activity. However, any act that causes danger to life or property is prosecuted through various provisions of the Penal Code” (Kenya Terrorism Legislation Act, 2010). In the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI, USA) website, the term terrorism has been given two definitions that is, international and domestic terrorism.

The first is, international terrorism and involves “*violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law and occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum*”. While that of domestic terrorism stated that, “*domestic terrorism involves acts dangerous to human life that violates federal or state law....and occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the*

U.S” (USA, FBI website). A definition given by the European Union legal document that criminalises terrorism activities proposed that,

“given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organization where committed with the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilizing or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization” (Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism Report, 2002).

Critically analysing the above definitions, Ganor (2002) highlighted that, there can never be an internationally agreed upon definition of the term terrorism due to its different interpretations. This is evident in the definitions shown above of the term terrorism by different organisational bodies and scholars around the world. In explaining the disparity, Turk (2004) emphasised that, some groups in society get involved in terror activities due to religious convictions while others use it as a tool of communication. The famous notion that says “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” (Ganor, 2002 p .287) helps to clarify this issue.

Despite the many definitions of the term terrorism as given by scholars and government bodies, a definition by Agada and Mogire (2011) that says “terrorism is the deliberate use or threat of violence by individuals and non-state actors against targets that are chosen in order to manipulate a wider audience for political, ideological or criminal goals” (p. 473) will be used as a guide to describe terrorism in this study.

2.3.3 Causes of Terrorism. In his discussion of the causes of terrorism, Pilat (2009) observed that, since there is no agreed upon definition of the term terrorism, there is also no clear explanation as to why people involve themselves in acts of terror. However, in order to curb and control terrorism events, the government and heads of state postulate that, terrorism can be caused by factors such as;

“rising populations, increased poverty and scarcity, racial tensions, inflations and unemployment, increased tension between the haves and the have not’s, waves of refugees shoved about by wars and repression, immigrants moving from poorer nations to wealthier ones often bringing with them the conflicts of their home countries sometimes causing resentment among the citizens, rapid urbanisation, the disintegration of traditional

authority structures, the emergence of single issue groups, the rise of aggressive fundamentalist religious groups and finally religious groups or cults.” (p. 172).

Critically analysing the causes of terrorism, classification of the causes can be grouped into three main categories namely political, social and economic. Alternatively, the author can argue that, impacts of globalisation and modernisation could also play a role in inducing terror events. In conclusion, terrorism is a social phenomenon that affects the day to day activities of individuals in society and taking into consideration that, tourism involves the movement of people from one place to another, acts of terror in one destination can affect the flow of tourists in destinations due to the creation of negative images as discussed in the next section.

2.3.4 Effects of Terrorism on the Tourism Sector. According to Cavlek (2002), the tourism industry thrives well in safe and peaceful environments. Terrorism on the other hand disrupts peace and harmony in destinations. Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) postulated that, safety in a destination is one of the most important attributes that influences the formation of a positive destination image where actual visitation had not taken place. In addition to this, Sonmez and Sirakaya, (2002) proposed that, in developing countries, safety is one of the factors that contributed to the development of the tourism development. Destinations prone to war, terror attacks or political instability deterred potential tourists from visiting due to perceived levels of risk.

Review of literature by Chen and Noriega (2004) on the effects of September 9/11 terror attacks in the USA revealed that, an estimated 6,000 people lost their lives in the tragedy thereby causing psychological trauma in the minds of potential travellers. The attacks had a negative impact on potential tourists due to perceived risk. The aviation industry lost an estimated value of 1.2billion US dollars and an estimated 453,000 jobs were also lost due to the terror attacks. The image of the destination was affected negatively by the terror attacks thus causing a decline in the number of international visitors.

In Indonesia, a study done by Baker and Coulter (2007) after the terror attacks in 2002 and 2005 revealed that, tourist arrivals declined drastically after the two incidents of terror attacks due to increased risk perceptions. On a separate note, in Kenya, tourist

arrivals declined by 20% from September – December 2013 as compared to the same period in 2012 after the West-Gate terror attacks in September 2013 (Kenya Tourist Report, 2014).

Somnez et, al (1999) contended that, terrorism events in a destination are responsible for damaging the positive images held by potential visitors and repeat visitors who are interested in visiting a destination thus affecting international arrival numbers. Decline in tourist numbers may hamper economic development in destinations relying on tourism for the provision of foreign exchange earnings. The tourist stakeholders on the other hand may result to promoting other destinations and shunning the affected destinations.

Baker and Coulter (2007) observed that, one of the most important factors in the recovery of a destination from events such as terror attacks is proper crisis management procedures, word of mouth from happy customers and positive media coverage or no coverage at all of the terror events. Proper marketing efforts of by the destination marketers and foreign tour operators and travel agents may assist a destination to recover from the broadcasted images. An interesting observation of Bali in Indonesia by Baker and Coulter (2007) revealed that, there was an increase of international tourist arrivals after the 2005 and 2007 terror attacks in Bali. This was attributed to the declining media attention of the affected areas. With time, individuals forgot about the terror attacks and tourist arrivals increased steadily. This showed that, risk and terror are social constructed phenomenon.

To this end, terror attacks in a destination affect the positive images held by the tourist stakeholders and potential clients planning to visit the destination. Nevertheless, terrorism does not only affect the tourism industry but also other industries in the destination thus causing a crisis in the destination. When destinations suffer from terror attacks and the tourists happen to be the target, the destination suffers from a tourism crisis according to Somnez et, al (1999). The authors argued that, when the tourists in a destination are targeted, destinations may take long to recover from the crisis, because they must convince the potential tourists that all is well and that it is safe to travel in that destination again.

2.3.5 Reactions of Foreign Travel Intermediaries. According to Cavlek (2002), the behaviour of the tour operators and travel agencies towards a destination affected by

tourism crisis depends on several factors. These factors are “business procedures, types of crises, dimensions of the crises, consequences of the crises and vested interests” (p. 481). As part of their business strategies, tour operators and the travel agencies trend carefully when choosing destinations affected by human-influenced crises such as terrorism, war and political instability. The tour operators rely heavily on information agents such as the media, newspapers and even the internet in order to get first-hand information (Cavlek, 2002).

After getting the information, the tour operators and the travel agents decide on the best way forward taking into consideration factors such as business practicalities, the damage done, whether their governments have given travel bans or not, dimensions of the crisis and even vested interests. The marketing tools that the tour operators and the travel agents use to market the destinations include brochures, magazines and advertise destinations via media. The brochures are used to create induced images of destinations and do not necessarily contain any information of uncertainties in destinations because events such as terrorism are unpredictable.

To protect the tourists from such unplanned uncertainties, Sheldon (1986) observed that, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) advocates for protection of tourists by making sure that, they get the right type of information especially on the package tours and gives a recommendation that “all brochures should include the legal identity of the tour operator, destinations and itinerary, means of travel, total price with services included, accommodation quality, booking procedures and cancellation policies ,safety and regulation procedures among other things” (p. 354).

On a separate note, Ioannides (1998) noted that, in most cases, the tour operators may shun destinations affected by terror crisis because as part of their business procedures, their main goal is to maximise profits and they may not take the risk of promoting destinations that are affected by terror attacks due to lack of clients. In addition to this, the tour operators and the travel agents are not loyal to destinations because they market holiday types such as sun, sand and beach and not destinations such as Kenya, Uganda or Sweden. A good example of this is when foreign tour operator marketing safari destinations in Kenya replace Kenya with Tanzania if Kenya is hit by terror attacks.

On the types of crises, the tour operators categorise the crisis as natural disasters or human-influenced. Terrorism events in a destination are categorised as human-influenced and by this, the tour operators analyse the damages caused. They check whether any tourist facilities are affected or whether any tourists are involved. Alternatively, they may shun tourist attraction sites in a destination altogether if the whole country is affected by war, political instability or terrorism. A study by Grosspietch (2006) of perceived and projected images of Rwanda by tourists and tour operators revealed that tour operators still perceived Rwanda to be unsafe and discouraged their clients to visit the country claiming that it was still unsafe even after the 1994 Rwanda genocide that had ended two decades ago.

The third factor assessed by the tour operators in a destination affected by crisis is the dimensions of the crisis. The tour operators assess the location and the damages caused by the disasters then decide on what actions to take. In this case, they may ignore a destination totally or continue promoting the destination. In Kenya for instance, tour operators continue to promote safari tours in the national parks and advise their clients to avoid certain areas such as Nairobi-the capital city due to perceived levels of risk. A clear case of this is seen in the Resia brochure about Kenya. They advise their clients to avoid being near the US embassy in Kenya if they do not have to.

A fourth factor which tour operators consider when promoting a destination after crisis is the “consequences of the crisis” (Cavlek, 2002 p .481). In this case, the effects of the crisis are assessed in regards to whether they have destroyed any tourist areas such as accommodation facilities and infrastructure. Hall (2010) adds to this by observing that, although financial crisis affect the flow of tourism in destinations, other forms of crisis such as natural disasters and man-made disasters in a destination affect the physical and built environment such as infrastructure and accommodation facilities in destinations.

The last factor according to Cavlek (2002) is the issue of vested interests. Tapper (2001) highlighted that; destinations such as Kenya are promoted by overseas tour operators since they have vested interests in Kenya’s tourism industry. The author argued further that, many tour operators may promote a destination if they stand to gain more from the destination in terms of high levels of profits or if they own hotels or other tourism establishment rather than promoting the types of products in the destination.

Apart from the above given factors, tour operators obey travel bans and advisories as given by their host countries to either stop promoting the destinations altogether or change the destinations. Cavlek, (2002) emphasised that, the images formed by the travel intermediaries after the occurrence of the terrors attack will determine how they react in terms of how they promote that destination in the future. In conclusion, Cavlek, (2002) observed that, tour operators promotional procedures in destinations affected by terrorism depend on many factors not only those ones mentioned above but the most important one is that, they will always protect their brand image and avoid any destinations that is prone to risk.

2.4 Destination Image

According to Somnez and Sirakaya (2002), a good destination image is an asset to any country or region that is participating in the tourism industry. Destinations with positive images have a high probability of succeeding than those with negative destination images. The authors agree that a positive image is an added advantage when competing for international tourists especially in developing countries in Africa which have similar tourist products. The authors emphasized that, a positive image in a destination influences the decision making process of potential visitors to a destination. In this section, a brief history of the destination image concept will be covered followed by a discussion of how terrorism affects formation of destination image among foreign travel intermediaries.

To begin with, a destination in this study refers to countries or regions promoting tourism and not single entities such as attractions or resorts. Destination image on the other hand has various definitions depending on how individuals construct and give meaning to what they see, read or hear about a particular destination. Different scholars discussing formation of destination image propose several definitions depending on their conceptualization of the subject. Etchner and Ritchie (2003) in their discussion of destination image conceptualization have quoted several scholars who have defined the concept in various ways.

2.4.1 Definitions of Destination Image. First, Hunt (1975) defined destination image as “the overall perceptions held by potential visitors of a place” (p. 41). Second, Crompton (1979) defined destination image as “*the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination*” (p .41). Third, Gartner (1989) defined a destination

image as “a complex combination of various products and associated attributes” (p .4). Based on the various definitions, Etchner and Ritchie (2003) argued that, there is no agreed upon definition of the term destination image in tourism studies because of the multi-dimensional definition of the term image from different fields of study.

Review of literature by Baloglu and McLeay (1999) revealed that studies of destination image in environmental psychology included attributes such as the perceptual/cognitive and affective attributes. The perceptual/cognitive attributes are beliefs, convictions and knowledge about a place while the affective attributes are the emotional attachment of the place. In geography for instance, an image of a place is a mental construction of a place in the absence of the real physical features of the destinations.

Taking a qualitative approach, Kotler et, al (1993) defined destination image as “a set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that individuals have of a place or a destination” (Baloglu and McLeay, 1999 p. 871). Taking a quantitative approach Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977) as quoted by Baloglu and McLeary (1999) defined destination image as “the expression of all knowledge, impressions, prejudices and emotional thoughts an individual or a group has of a particular place” (p. 871).

In conclusion, Gartner and Tasci (2007) in their discussion of definition of destination image proposed that a destination image is the total sum of beliefs, convictions and emotional attachment that individuals have of a destination that is, the cognitive/perceptual and affective images. Last but not least, Etchner and Ritchie (1999) postulated that, a destination should always strive to portray a positive image at all times in order to maintain the flow of tourists in the destination and also attract other tourist stakeholders such as new foreign travel intermediaries.

2.4.2. Formation of Destination Image. Etchner and Ritchie (2003) observed that “formation of an image is the development of a mental construct based upon a few impressions chosen from a flood of information” (p. 38). Supporting this proposition, Jenkins (1999) postulated that, before individuals travel in a destination, they already have in their mind a subjective construct of how the destination looks like. This is formed by the numerous sources of information gathered from either tour operators, travel agencies, online searches and word of mouth from friends and relatives. Apart from this, other

factors such as psychological factors, socio-demographic characteristics and culture play a role in the formation of destination image (Gartner and Tasci, 2007)

Many scholars have proposed ways in which images of destinations are created by establishing models that explain the process. Below is a discussion of those models.

To begin with, a model by Stabler (1988) as noted by Jenkins (1999) implied that formation of destination image is formed by some common factors in all the individuals. The author noted further that, although every individual forms a unique image of a destination, there are several factors that are common in all individuals and assist in forming the destination image.

The factors are divided into demand and supply factors. The demand factors are; motivations, perceptions, psychological characteristics and experiences while the supply factors include education, media and the marketing items by the tourist stakeholders. Below is a diagram summarising the agents of destination image.

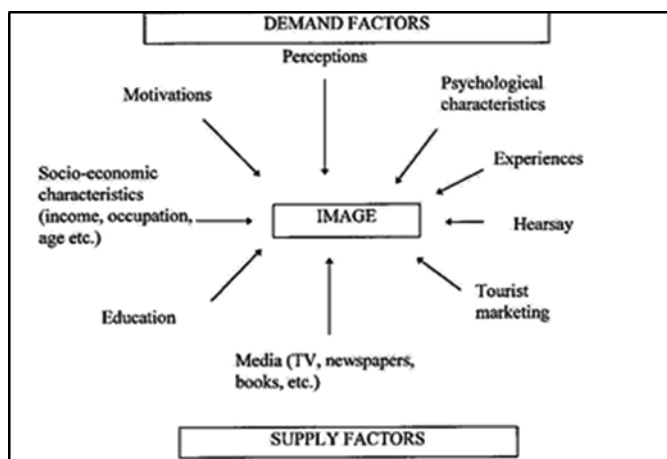


Figure 3: Factors influencing the destination image formation according to Stabler, (1988). (Adapted from Jenkins, (1999, Pg. 3).

In an attempt to create a theoretical framework, Gunn (1972) came up with the stage theory model which took into consideration modification of images according to various information agents (Jenkins, 1999). According to the theory, the formation of the images is developed in two different stages. The first stage is called organic stage and is formed through information sources such as books, magazines, newspapers and television documentaries. The second stage is called induced and is formed through marketing sources of information such as brochures, advertisement from tour operators and travel

agencies and also stories from friends, relatives who have been in the destination.

According to Gunn (1972) the key component of this theory is that, the images are constantly being formed and modified once the potential tourists visit the destination. Supporting this discussion, Jenkins (1999) argued that, the images held by potential visitors may differ from the images held by individuals who have already visited the destination. This is supported by studies done by Chon (1990) and Pearce (1982) as quoted by Jenkins who pointed out that, “images held by return visitors tend to be more realistic, complex and differentiated” (Jenkins 1999, p. 3). When it comes to marketing procedures, the tour operators and the travel agencies uses brochures as agents of creating induced image. The induced images can be controlled unlike organic images which cannot be controlled because they are formed by experience. Below is a diagram explaining Gunn’s (1972) stage theory model.

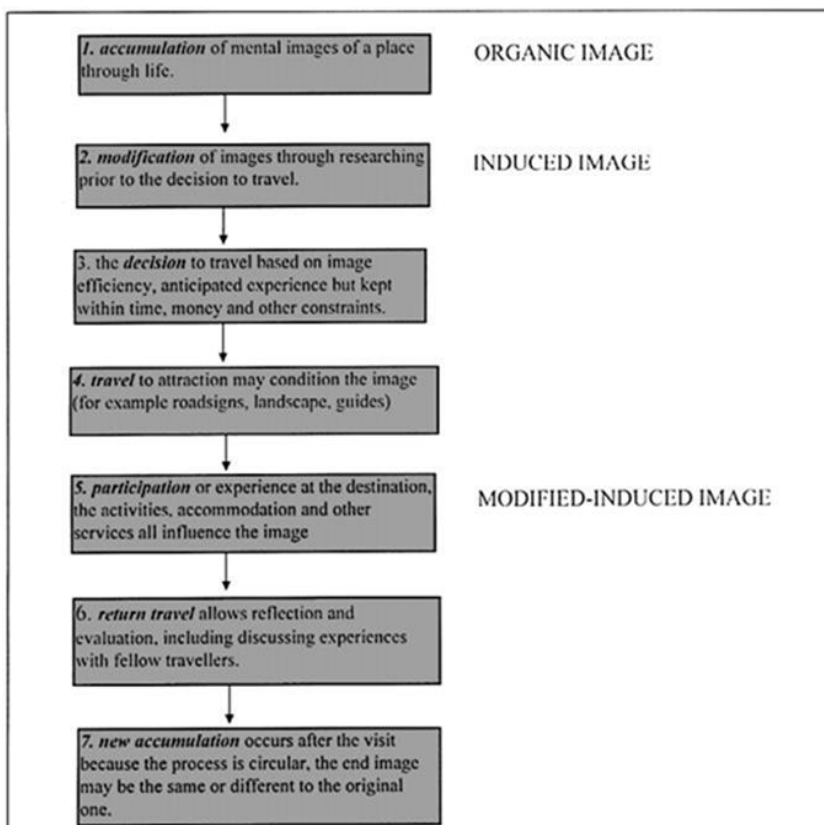


Figure 4: Gunn (1972) Stage theory model.

Adopted from Jenkins (1999) pg. 4.

2.4.3 Gartner’s Model. Taking a different perspective, Gartner (1993) as quoted by Somnez and Sirakaya (2002) developed a model of destination image formation which

expanded on Gunn's stage theory. The model is a set of eight connected elements of information sources that influence destination image processes. In the model, Gartner (1993) differentiated the agents into four main components which are the induced, autonomous, solicited and unsolicited organic and the organic agents. Below is an outline of the model.

1. "Overt induced 1- includes the conventional sources of advertising. In this category, advertising is an important factor in attracting potential visitors in a destination because it helps to create images of destinations without actual visitation.

2. Overt induced 11- In this category lies information sought from tour operators and travel intermediaries. As noted earlier, tour operators and travel agents use marketing brochures in promoting a destination.

3. Covert Induced 1- This represents destination reviews by famous celebrities after visiting a particular destination. In this category lies recommendations from family members who have been to the destination.

4. Covert Induced 11- In this category lies reports, letters to the editor and stories told by people about their experience in the destination.

5. Autonomous agents – Gartner (1993) noted that, autonomous agents such as news broadcasted about the area, documentaries and even movies influence image formation processes. A good example is the Budapest sight-seeing tour documentary.

6. Unsolicited Organic agents – this is unrequested information from friends and colleagues who have visited the places and have a lot of information including photos and videos.

7. Solicited organic agents- Sources of information in this category originate from requested information from friends and relatives concerning a particular destination. Potential tourists in a destination may look for people who have been in the destination they want to visit and request information from them.

8. Organic agents- in this category unlike the one in Gunn's stage theory, involves images formed after the actual visitation to a destination" (Somnez and Sirakaya, 2002 p.184).

In their discussion of Gartner's model, Somnez and Sirakaya (2002) pointed out that, despite its advantages, the model faces some challenges when it comes to "credibility, destination cost and market penetration" (p. 185). Considering credibility, induced agents such as advertising and information requested from travel agencies may not be 100% reliable as compared to solicited information from friends and relatives who have

previously visited the destination. Tour operators have been highly criticized because of their use of brochures to market destinations since they only concentrate on specific attributes such as the physical attributes of a destination and not the holistic attributes.

When it came to the destination cost, Gartner (1993) noted that, the sources of information ignore factors such as the time and money set aside in creating a good image although this may not be so important. For market penetration, advertising is mainly used to capture new markets and to woo potential visitors which may not be as reliable as celebrity testimonies of destinations.

Nevertheless, Gartner (1993) postulated that, other factors such as the projected image of a destination, the resources set aside to market the destination and the demographic characteristics of the image receivers among other attributes are also important in destination image formation. To this end, it is important to note that the overall image of a destination is not formed by one agent but by different related agents and attributes.

2.4.4 Gartner and Tasci Destination Image Model. In a separate study, Gartner and Tasci (2007) came up with a conceptual framework that takes into consideration the functional relationship of the destination originated information, the information agents, and the receivers of the information in the formation of destination image. The authors suggested that, the model consists of three major elements which are paramount in destination image formation. The elements are;

1. "Supply- side or destination originated information.
2. Independent or autonomous information agents.
3. Demand or image receiver's characteristics". (Gartner and Tasci, 2007 p. 414).

The marketing and promotional materials originating from the destination consists of the supply side. Destinations through their destination marketers and other stakeholders such as the inbound tour operators and travel agencies advertise the destination in order to lure potential tourists and to encourage repeat tourists to visit the destination. The autonomous or independent information agents on the other hand include the media, related information such as news, documentaries, movies, advertisement and newspaper reports. All these sources of information according to Gartner and Tasci (2007) are uncontrollable by the destination. The receivers of the autonomous information such as

foreign tour operators and travel agencies regard the information highly especially if it concerns a destination they are promoting.

Media reports of events such as terrorism and threats of terrorist attacks receive great publicity especially if they involve tourists in a destination. Gartner and Tasci (2007) purported that, individuals will have faith in broadcasted images and news reported of events such as terrorist attacks especially if the affected area is far from where they live. A case in point is what happened in Kenya on May 16th, 2014. News about new terror threats to Kenya by the Alshabab terror group targeting the foreigners were broadcasted by various media houses such as Aljazeera, CNN and even local media channels (Daily Nation, accessed on the 17th may 2014).

After the announcement, Thomson group and First Class tour operators evacuated more than 700 tourists from Kenya, citing high levels of insecurity. This proves how the media is a very powerful information agent when it comes to creation of negative images especially those concerning the safety of individuals. Gartner and Tasci (2007) agreed that, autonomous information agents are capable of deleting the initial positive images held by potential clients which were initially created by the destination marketers. In this case, the autonomous information agents seem to be more powerful than the destination originated information when it comes to formation of destination image.

The third category in this model is the image receiver characteristics. Gartner and Tasci (2007) claimed that, an image is a mental representation of an object formed after interpretation of the received messages. In this case, individual characteristics have a role to play in how the received messages are decoded. The socio-demographic elements such as age, educational levels, past travel patterns and willingness to involve in risky adventures will determine the images formed by the individuals despite the received information. (Gartner and Tasci, 2007). When it comes to the foreign travel intermediaries, the socio-demographics elements such as years of operation, business practicalities and vested interests play a role in the image formation (Cavlek, 2002).

Taking all the elements into consideration, Gartner and Tasci (2007) created a model of formation of destination image process that took into consideration the functional relationship between the elements that influence destination image formation factors

together with the receiver characteristics. The authors proposed that, destination images can be formed through the three factors which are the promotional materials from the destination, the autonomous information agents and the receiver characteristics. The images formed are the cognitive/perceptual evaluations, the affective evaluations and finally the overall images of the destinations.

The perceptual /cognitive attributes are the pre-suppositions, beliefs and the knowledge about a place which comes from the autonomous (media related) induced (promotional materials) and the organic (perceiver characteristics) agents. The affectual attributes on the other hand are the sentimental or temperamental attachments individuals have of a place and which arise from the perceptual /cognitive attributes. The overall image is the summation of all the attributes. The overall image created by the individuals is utilised in the choice factor when deciding which destinations are viable. The model below is a reflection of the above discussion. The overall images determine consumer behaviour.

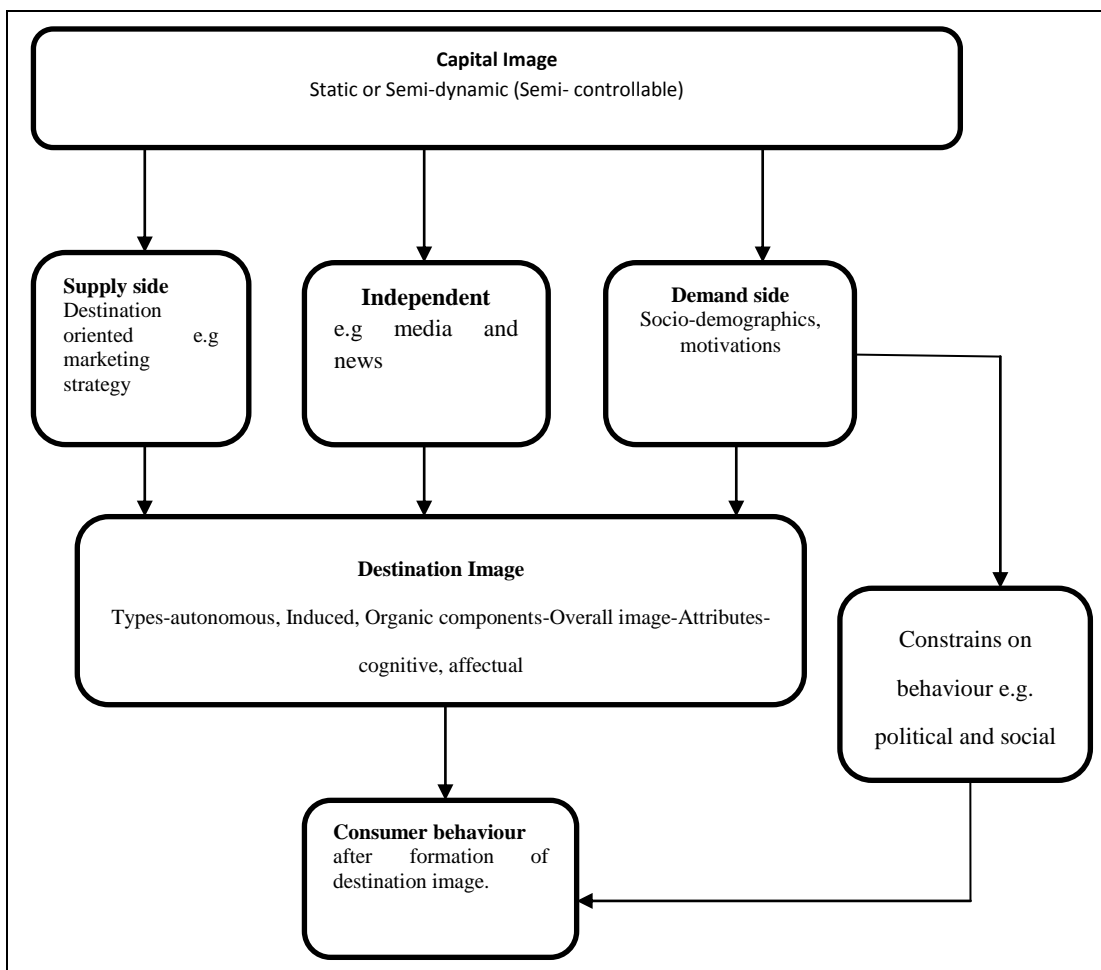


Figure 5: A model of destination Image and its relationships. Adopted from the Conceptual framework of Gartner and Tasci (2007) p. 422

2.4.5 Role of Tour Operators in Image formation. With reference to Gartner's (1993) model of information agents, the tour operators and the travel agents fall in the second category of overt 11 induced information sources. In Gartner and Tasci (2007) model, the inbound tour operators and the travel agents fall in the supply side and together with the destination marketers; market the destination to the foreign travel intermediaries. The foreign travel intermediaries market the destinations to the international clients. When providing information to their clients, tour operators use brochures, magazines and also advertise their products via TV, media and internet. The promotional materials used by the tour operators help to create awareness, modify the existing image, stimulate interest and manipulate the decision making process of the potential visitors.

In addition to above, the visual and textual images depicted in brochures used by tour operators are meant to lure potential customers by creating curiosity and admiration of the destination which increases the desire to travel and hence purchase the holiday package (Esteban and Molina, 2006). The visual images may depict photos of sandy beaches, swimming pools, accommodation facilities and cultural attraction sites while the textual messages may describe the weather patterns, activities to be undertaken during vacation and hospitality of the local people. Although the images may create high expectations as noted by the scholars, this may not be realistic on the ground but it is one of the marketing gimmicks used by the tour operators and the travel agencies.

A study by Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2002) that investigated the perceived images of Egypt, Greece, Italy and Turkey by US tour operators and travel agencies revealed that, the tour operators and the travel agencies promoted only positive images of destinations and rated them highly because they sold trips to those destinations. The perceptual/cognitive attributes such as attractive scenery, cultural attractions, safety and security and the affective attributes such as the unpleasant, gloomy and exciting were among the factors that were rated highly when it came to promoting a particular destination. In issues pertaining to security, the study found out that, Egypt and Turkey were rated negatively by tour operators and travel agencies because of political instability and terrorism events despite having rich, cultural and archaeological attractions.

Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2002) concluded that tour operators and travel agencies

perceptions of a destination would determine if they promoted a destination or not. The authors also noted that, the travel intermediaries represented the images held by their clients therefore it is paramount for the destinations to relay positive images to the foreign travel intermediaries because they influence the potential visitor's images by use of their promotional materials. Somnez and Sirakaya (2002) asserted that, developing countries that promoted tourism were encouraged to maintain a positive image all the time although this may not be possible. Alternatively, destinations promoting tourism are encouraged to host events such as world cup tournaments, music festivals and big conferences such as the UN summit in order to attract positive media attention.

2.5 Effects of terrorism on the Foreign Travel Agents

According to Pryer, Roberts and Stanbury (2005), the media is one of the main agents used by the individuals in the formation of destination images. The authors argued that, "the media largely determines public perceptions and play a major role in constructing and informing consumer images of destinations" (p. 398). As mentioned earlier events such as terror attacks attract massive media attention from popular media houses such as CNN, Aljazeera and BBC. This makes it easier for travel agents, tour operators and the general public to access the information.

This has several effects as mentioned by Somnez et, al (1999) "the media coverage of terrorism or political upheaval has the potential to shape individual's images of a destination. It is argued that a symbiotic relationship exists between terrorist and the journalists and that terrorism is a symbolic event and a performance that is staged for the benefit of the media attention." (p. 15). Going back to the model by Gartner (1993) on the factors influencing destination image formation, the fifth stage lies the autonomous factors such as news, media reports and broadcasted images. As discussed above, the media is a powerful tool that is used in the formation of destination image and is capable of changing the image of destinations in a short period of time.

The authors argued further that, "this might be true for cases in which these agents depicted dramatic events especially with content that would make people more conscious about safety and security" (pg. 416). Tour operators and travel agencies on the other hand just like the general public are usually affected by the information broadcasted by the

media which causes them to take drastic measures such as avoiding the destination altogether or continue promoting the same destination but only concentrate on the unaffected areas. To this end, it is important to point out that, the media does not choose its audience and by broadcasting events such as terrorism, destinations may suffer but media houses may gain more revenue through advertisement in the midst of such news.

2.5.1. Conceptual Framework Model. Based on the reviewed literature, it is important to emphasise the role played by the destination marketers, the characteristics of the receivers and the information agents in formulating the image of a destination. The initial image marketed by the destination marketers according to Gartner and Tasci (2007) is a controllable factor in the formation of destination images. The destination marketers chooses the best physical attributes of a destination and market them across the globe to foreign travel intermediaries and other tourist stakeholders thus creating induced images of the destinations.

On the other hand, the initial destination image is not constant and may change if something happens in the destination. Events such as terror attacks modify the initial images held by potential visitors and the induced images marketed by the destination marketers if negative images are broadcasted by the autonomous information agents. By this, Gartner and Tasci (2007) confirmed that, the induced images of destinations are not static but the autonomous information agents are uncontrollable. The destinations don't have a choice when international media houses broadcast events such as terror attacks in destinations. The media, books and documentaries have a high level of credibility among tourist stakeholders and potential tourists in a destination than the information given by the destination marketers.

The third image formation factor comprises of the demand side or the socio-demographics characteristics. Gartner and Tasci (2007) denoted that “depending on their socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, people have different needs, inclinations, interests, and motivations, which define what they select to see, hear, read, think about, and pay attention to. This, in turn, affects how they interpret destination characteristics and ultimately destination image” (p. 422).

Taking the above discussion into consideration, a brief history of Kenya as

discussed in the next section of the context of Kenya revealed that, the tourism sector in the country developed as a result of information agents. A study done by Akama (1999) on the evolution of tourism development in Kenya revealed that, tourism growth in Kenya followed the Tourism Area Life cycle model as described by Butler, (1980).

In brief, Kenya was discovered by the British people who visited the East Africa hinterland and by the help of the local people ventured into the eastern part of Africa. They later went back to Britain, wrote a lot of publications about their adventure in the East Africa hinterland. By use of written publications, photo galleries and word of mouth, they unknowingly advertised Kenya to the rest of the world. As a result, Kenya received a lot of international visitors during the colonial times and this marked the beginning of the tourism industry in Kenya. (Akama, 1999).

As time went by, the initial destination images of the country was destroyed by events such as political instability, terrorism events and tribal clashes. Despite all this, the tourism industry thrived very well and international arrivals increased steadily until the last two decades when the country suffered from continuous terror attacks, political instability and tribal clashes that have destroyed the initial images of the country. The worst tragedy that has affected the country is the continuous terror attacks. This has made Kenya to be famous among the media houses for all the wrong reasons. This in turn has affected the foreign tour operators and travel agents promotional procedures in promoting Kenya as a tourist destination.

Taking all the above elements into consideration, that is the terror events, the information agents and tour operators and travel agents characteristics and finally the reactions of the tour operators and the travel agents after terror attacks in the destination, the author came up with a conceptual framework that takes into consideration the relationship between all the elements in the formation of new images. The information sources consists of the destination originated information and the autonomous information agents while the third factor will consist of the foreign travel intermediaries' characteristics (Gartner and Tasci, 2007).

The factors above assist in the formation of the cognitive/perceptual and the affective images. The cognitive/perceptual images result from exposure to terror attacks in

the destination by the media and destination marketers which are processed by the foreign travel intermediaries based on their socio-demographic characteristics. The affectual images are the emotional attachments towards a destination after digesting all the information.

The combination of the knowledge and the emotional aspects of the destination result to the overall image. In this case, the overall image is the combination of the cognitive/perceptual and the affectual images of the destination. It is important to state that, the overall image in destination image studies may consist of several other factors (Baloglu and Mcleary, (1999) but in this study, the overall images is based on the two factors which are, the terrorism knowledge held by the tour operators and the travel agents together with the emotional attachments that arise from the received knowledge.

The final component consisted of the reactions of the foreign travel intermediaries to the new image that is formed as a result of all those factors. It is important to note that, at this stage the focus is on the images formed as a result of terror attacks and not anything else such as political instability or any positive event such as world cup tournament or UN world summit. This is because the autonomous agents are capable of influencing both positive and the negative images depending on the events in a destination.

In the below model, the initial destination image represents the image of Kenya held by the foreign tour operators and the travel agents before the terrorism event. According to the model by Gartner and Tasci (2007) as shown in figure 5, the destination marketers through information agents assist in creating the capital image of a destination by marketing it globally. The terrorism events in the second row confirms Gartner`s (1993) proposition that destination image is not static and can change any time if events such as terrorism happens in a destination.

The third row contains the image formation factors which are; the destination originated information agents such as books, videos, marketing tools and advertisements about a destination. The Second one represents the autonomous information agents which originates from the media inform of news, reports, newspapers and documentaries. The third element on the third row is the socio-demographic characteristics of the tour operators.

The fourth section represents the images formed after exposure to information sources pertaining to terrorism events in the destination with the help of the socio-demographic characteristics. In this section lies the cognitive, affectual and overall image formed after the exposure to terror attacks. The cognitive /perceptual attributes comes from the new knowledge acquired from the media and the internet about what is happening in the destination. The affectual attributes are the emotions that develop from the acquired information and could be feelings of sadness, desolation and empathy. The overall image is a combination of the cognitive/perceptual and the affectual attributes which could lead to reactions of the tour operators.

The final section is the reaction of the tour operators after formation of the destination image based on all the components in the model. Their reactions will depend on the formed images and not forgetting other factors such as their business procedures, the types of crisis, the dimensions of the crisis and vested interests in the destinations (Cavlek, 2002)

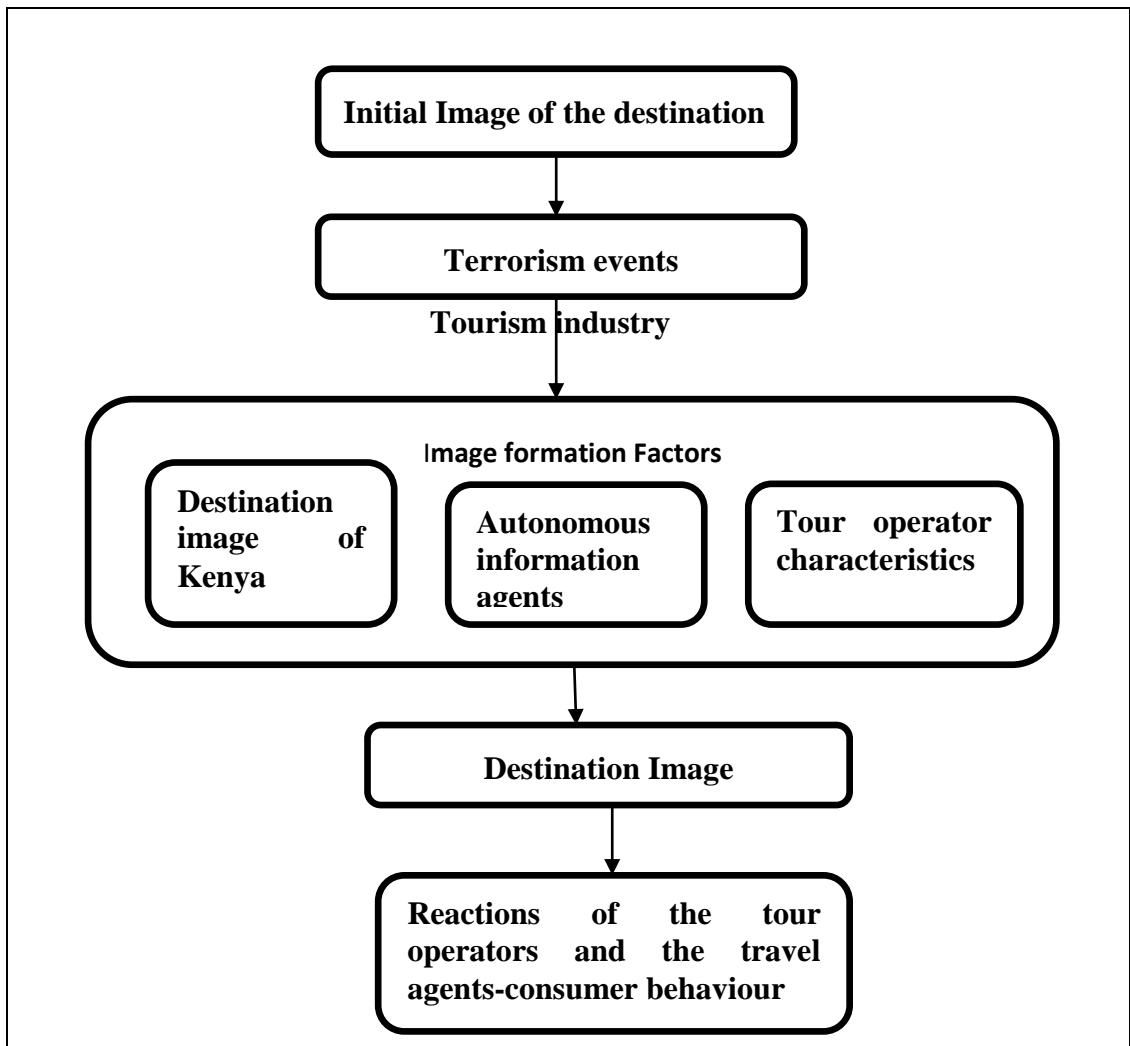


Figure 6: Conceptual Framework model destination image formation.

3. THE CONTEXT OF KENYA

3.1 Description of Kenya

Kenya is a country in East Africa bordering Ethiopia to the north, Somalia to the east, Uganda to the west, Tanzania to the south and South Sudan to the north east (World Bank Report, 2010). Before the colonial rule, there was little known about Kenya or East Africa to the rest of the world. The Arabs were the first visitors in the East African region who came for slave trade in the 10th century followed by the Portuguese and then the British people who colonised the country and divided the East Africa into several countries, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

After colonisation, the British masters created a socio-political and economic system by the help of the local people and even introduced a running government. From 1895-1963 Kenya was under the British colonial rule and also a British protectorate (Akama, 1999). According to Akama (1999), “the few westerners who dared to venture into the Africa hinterland during this period were not the usual or average travellers. These were the dare devil adventurers who could be classified within Plog (1973) tourist typology as the allocentrics” (p. 11). Below is the map of Africa showing where Kenya lies in the African continent.



Figure 7: Kenya on the African Map.

Adopted from (<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/africa/kenya/keflags.htm>)

During the colonial times, there was no solid tourist development in the country but Akama (1999) mentioned that, it was at its initial stages of development and according to the Tourist Area Life Cycle by Butler (1980), it could be placed at the explorative stage. When the British colonisers returned to Britain, they wrote a lot of publications about Kenya, its physical attributes, its people and their culture. In some of their publications, they described Kenya as a beautiful, exotic and unexploited land filled with hostile African people and a range of wild animals. Travellers such as “David Livingstone, Joseph Thomson and Henry Morton Stanley” were among the first pioneer tourists in Kenya (Akama, 1999 p.11).

During the colonial period, several tourist facilities were developed for example the Hotel Stanley in 1890, Nairobi club in 1891 and Norfolk hotel in 1904, national parks and game reserves were clearly demarcated and declared protected areas. At the same time, the country was marketed by the British government across the globe. According to Akama, (1999) the period between 1900-1945 were known as the “Era of Big-game Hunting” (p. 12).

After Kenya got independence in 1963, the British colonisers had to return back to their country, having established a socio-economic system and also the tourism industry. The new government was faced with deep financial crisis as the colonisers left with their resources and expertise. In a bid to solve the financial crisis, the new government turned to promoting tourism in order to achieve balance of payments. The second challenge faced by the new government was lack of expertise to run the tourist industry since it was dominated by the British people. To counter this problem, the government introduced new policies that encouraged the British people to continue running the industry. The policies that were established include, “tax concessions, favourable fiscal policies for capital investment and profit repatriation,” (Akama 1999, p. 15).

The policies encouraged the big multinational organisations to promote tourism development in the country. Hotels such as the Intercontinental hotel, Hilton Hotel in Nairobi and Diani beach hotel in Mombasa were later constructed after the independence. In addition to this, the country was also promoted by international tour operators such as Kuoni, Hayes and Jaris and Grand Viaggi .This set the precedence of reliance on tour

operators in the provision of tourists in the country. The challenge still faces the country up to today (Akama, 1999).

Critically analysing the history of the Kenya tourist industry, it can be noted that, the initial development of the industry was done by the foreigners, thus setting a precedent in the management of the same even after the country gained independence. Considering the historical background and the current state of affairs, the country still relies heavily on foreign tour operators and travel agencies in the provision of tourists in the country. This has seen the tourist industry grow and increase in the number of international arrivals as the years go by. Due to lack of proper statistical documentation, it was very difficult to access data from the colonial period up to now. The graph below shows international arrival numbers from 1995 to 2010. As the trend shows, the number of international arrivals has been going up despite various challenges facing the country.



Figure 8: International Tourism Arrival numbers from 1995-2010.

Accessed from: <http://mecometer.com/whats/kenya/international-tourism-number-of-arrivals/>

Despite having a steady growth in the tourism development, the industry has been exposed to many terrible events such as political instability, tribal clashes, poaching and terrorism that have also affected other industries in the country. This has destroyed the image of Kenya as a favourable tourist destination. Keeping all other factors constant, the study will concentrate on the effects of terrorism on foreign travel intermediaries or

outbound tour operators and travel agencies who promote Kenya as a tourist destination.

3.2 Terrorism in Kenya

According to Agada and Mogire (2011), terrorism in Kenya dates back to the colonial times when the British colonialists labelled the freedom fighters by the name Mau-Mau terrorists. The freedom fighters used home-made guns and crude weapons to fight the British soldiers. The freedom fighters were fighting the British people because of taking away their land and using them as slaves in their own country. The Mau-Mau freedom fighters claimed that, the British soldiers kidnapped them, harassed them and made them to work as slaves in their own land thus labelling them as terrorists. On the other hand, the Kenyan people accused the British soldiers of using terror tactics to manipulate and rule the Kenyan people.

Review of literature by Agada and Mogire (2011) on the Kenyan Human Rights reports of 1998 and 1999 revealed that, the new government that was formed after independence used terror tactics against its opponents in order to remain in power. In addition to this, several non- state groups such as the Maskini Liberation Movement, Sabaot Land Defence Force and the Mungiki engaged in terror activities such as kidnapping, murder and taking hostage of civilians in various parts of the country during and after general elections were also labelled terrorists by the government of Kenya due to their activities.

Apart from the above mentioned terror attacks in Kenya, the tourism industry has been targeted by several international and local terror groups such as, the bombing of Norfolk hotel in 1980 by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), The US embassy bombing in Nairobi in 1998, the Paradise hotel bombing in Mombasa in 2002 by the Al-Qaeda terror network in Kenya (Agada and Mogire 2011) and the recent West-gate mall attack that occurred in September 2013. All these attacks have adversely tarnished the image of Kenya as a favourable tourist destination.

A research done by the Kenya Television Network in April 2014 revealed that, from October 2011 up to April 2014, there was 81 grenade attacks in various parts of the country and an estimated 300 deaths and casualties as a result of the terror attacks. The

Alshabab terror group based in Somalia but operating in Kenya has claimed responsibility of the grenade attacks. The attacks by the Alshabab were retaliatory measures by the group because the Kenyan government had sent troupes to Somali under the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISON) in October 2011 to fight the Alshabab terror group. The government of Kenya claimed that, the group had resulted to attacking tourists by hijacking them and demanding for ransom.

According to the Kenyan tourist report (2014), the tourist industry earnings declined by 15.8% in the year 2013 as compared to 2012 and generated 1.78 billion Kenya shillings in 2012 while 1.5 billion in 2013. The decline in tourist earnings in 2013 was attributed to the West-gate terror attack that saw many foreigners avoid visiting the country due to the terror attacks. After the terror attacks, several countries such as the UK, Australia and even the USA issued travel bans to the country. Kenya receives many tourists from these countries.

To this end, the tourism industry in Kenya is one of the most important industries in the country due to its socio-economic benefits. The industry contributes to around 5-10% of the country's GDP and helps create more than 300,000 jobs in the country. Terrorism events destroy the brand image of Kenya as one of the best safari destinations in Africa thus affecting the foreign tourism stakeholders such as the tour operators and the travel agencies (Akama, 1999).

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Study Approach

In this section, a comparison of the two research methods that is the qualitative and the quantitative approaches is outlined. The advantages and disadvantages of both approaches is also outlined followed by their application on destination image studies. The second section outlines the case- study design which is used in this thesis followed by the data collection section. The methods used in data collection are semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The third section outlines the research quality techniques applied in this study and constitute of validity and reliability, researcher's role, positionality statement and ethical considerations.

4.1.1 Research Methods. In tourism studies, both qualitative and quantitative research techniques have been applied to investigate different social phenomena in the society. The main aim of qualitative research is to foster understanding of different aspects and patterns of the society as constructed by the individuals. Qualitative studies seek to explore processes where the researcher interprets what is happening in the society (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative studies on the other hand are mostly used to test people's attitudes and perceptions in social sciences. The quantitative studies reduce ideas into variables that can be tested and compared statistically and utilises the post-positivism paradigm. The main strength of using quantitative methods is that, the findings can be generalised to the population. (Creswell, 2009).

A comparison of the two research designs revealed that, qualitative studies are subjective while the quantitative ones aim to be more objective. The researchers applying the qualitative approach try to understand a given type of reality as given by the participants own in-depth descriptions of events as they occur in their daily lives while those applying quantitative methods seek to explain why individuals behave the way they do by testing hypothesis.

In data collection, the researcher is the main instrument in qualitative studies unlike in quantitative studies where the researcher uses instruments such as surveys and questionnaires. The data collected from qualitative studies is rich and descriptive while that one collected by quantitative studies is numerical and can be compared statistically.

Having compared the two research designs, qualitative approach fits well in this study because the main aim of the study is to find out how the foreign travel agents form images of destinations after exposure to terrorism events in the destinations they are promoting.

4.1.2 Destination Image Studies. In their discussion of destination image measurements, Etchner and Ritchie (1991) recommended that, structured and unstructured methods should be combined in order to capture the holistic and overall images of a destination. The structured method consists of the quantitative approach while the unstructured methods constitute of the qualitative approach. Baloglu and Mangalolu (2001) contended that, “the studies that adopt structured measurement technique in destination image studies employed the semantic and differential or Likert scale for measuring the cognitive and affectual components of destinations” (p. 3).

On a separate note, Etchner and Ritchie (1991) pointed out that, researchers that utilised the unstructured methods instead of the structured methods aimed at capturing the unique features or characteristics of events in destinations and also complex components. Baloglu and Mangalolu (2001) supported this notion by mentioning that, “the studies which uses the unstructured techniques aim at examining the complex structure of image. These studies contend that, measuring image by pre-identified attributes fails to capture the richness of image and image items salient to the individuals” (p.3).

The justification of using a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative approach emanates from the fact that, destination images studies in tourism are a social phenomenon that involves interaction of people from different societies and exchange of socio- cultural ideas due to movement of people from one destination to another. By using the qualitative approach, the researcher is able to bring out the individuals understanding of reality. Qualitative studies are able to answer questions of why and how a social event is interpreted by individuals in society unlike in quantitative studies where multivariate and statistical comparisons are done (Etchner and Ritchie, 1991).

Negating the above point on qualitative studies in measurement of destination image, Etchner and Ritchie (1991) proposed that, unstructured methods are not adequate when used alone in measuring destination image components because they are dependent on the participants knowledge of the products and the researchers bias unlike in

quantitative methods whereby the researcher cannot influence the answers as given by the respondents. The authors argued that, in structured methods of destination studies, data can be compared and generalised to the population but this is not possible when using the unstructured or the qualitative methods.

However, Gartner and Tasci (2007) argued that, due to the complex relationship of the destination image formation factors that includes the destination originated information, the autonomous information agents and the receivers socio-demographic characteristics, the use of structured or quantitative approach may not capture all the components required to measure destination image and may fail to bring out the meaning receivers construct after exposure to certain events in a destination.

Concluding this discussion, Etchner and Ritchie (1991) confirmed that, the use of unstructured or qualitative methods in measuring formation of destination image is useful in bringing out specific unique attributes of destinations such as safety and security. In this study, the use of qualitative research methods is utilised to capture the effects of terrorism among foreign travel intermediaries formation of destination image in destinations they are promoting. To counter the problems that could arise when using qualitative studies in measuring destination image, Etchner and Ritchie (1991) proposed that validity of the collected data should be done by determining the accuracy of the research findings from the participants and also from the external auditors.

4.1.3 Case-Study Approach. According to Yin (2003) a case study is “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). The case-study approach is guided by the social constructionist paradigm which recognises that human-beings make sense of the world in which they live in based on their historical perspectives and interactions with other people. By narrating their stories, the researcher is able to interpret and give meaning to the participant’s description of events.

A case-study approach in research is useful in a number of ways. First, it is useful in conducting qualitative research and when answering why and how questions. Second, it is useful when the researcher cannot influence the participants in a study and finally, when there is no clear demarcation between the social phenomena and the circumstances that

influence the event.

Taking this into consideration, the research question in this study is, “how do terrorism events affect the formation of destination image among foreign tour operators and travel agents promoting Kenya as a tourist destination?” The main objective of this study was to find out how the foreign travel agents describe the images of destinations after exposure to terror attacks by studying the case of Kenya. In this case study, the social phenomenon is the formation of destination image by foreign travel intermediaries who promote Kenya as a tourist destination. By answering the research questions, the study will find out how foreign travel intermediaries construct the images of a country they are promoting in the wake of continuous terror attacks.

In so far as the boundaries of the study are concerned, Yin (2003) postulated that, it is important to demarcate the boundaries of your case study in order to be as objective as possible. This is done by illustrating the unit of analysis, the time taken in conducting the research, activities to be done and the context of the study. In this case-study, the unit of analysis is the foreign travel intermediaries based in Sweden, UK and Australia. The social phenomenon to be tackled is how tour operators construct the images of destinations after terror attacks in destinations they are promoting. The context is that of Kenya. In conclusion, the exploratory case-study type was utilised because it allows the researcher to use various data collection methods and analysis in order to find out the meanings given by the participants.

4.2 Data collection

According to Creswell (2009), “the data collection procedures demand establishing the boundaries of the research and gathering information through various types of methods such as observations, interviews and written materials” (p.177). By setting the boundaries of the study, the researcher must purposefully select the participants who are relevant in a particular study. The researcher must consider the settings where the study will take place, the participants who will be interviewed or even observed (Creswell, 2009).

In this study, the foreign travel intermediaries based in Östersund, Sweden, UK and Australia were purposefully selected based on the fact that, they promoted Kenya as a tourist destination. After selection, semi-structured interviews and open-ended

questionnaires were sent out to them for data collection. The data collection procedure is outlined in the empirical research section because as Creswell (2009) noted, in qualitative research, data collection and analysis go hand in hand and it is very difficult to demarcate between the two. The following section describes the methods used to collect the data.

4.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews. According to Mason (2004), a semi-structured interview is a type of interview that is used to collect data in qualitative studies especially in case-study designs. Mason (2004) argued that, the method “reflects an ontological position that is concerned with people’s knowledge, understanding, interpretations, experiences and interactions” (p. 3). By means of dialogue, the participant is able to narrate what they know and understand about the social phenomena.

Semi-structured interviews are guided by an interview guide which contains the questions arranged thematically according to the topic of discussion. The interview guide directs the discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee. One advantage of semi-structured interview is that, it allows an interactive dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee and also allows probing of the interviewee thereby generating rich descriptive data. One disadvantage of collecting data using semi- structured interviewing is that, the data collected cannot be compared or standardised because it relies on the participants own understanding of the phenomenon (Mason, 2004).

Having noted the above, semi- structured interviews were utilised in this study because they assisted in exploring how the terrorism phenomena was interpreted by the foreign travel intermediaries with the help of the interview guide that was used to control the topic of discussion by following the questions that were outlined.

4.2.2 Open-ended Questionnaires. According to Creswell (2009) open-ended questionnaires are used in qualitative research in order to get the participants understanding of the social phenomena. By use of open-ended questionnaires the participants describe in writing how they perceive events in their day to day lives in unlimited ways. They are able to express themselves and be as creative as possible. One advantage of this is that, it reveals individual’s logic and frame of reference.

Despite the many advantages, the method has several disadvantages. First, the

respondents may understand the questions differently thus giving irrelevant information that may not be necessary in the research findings. Secondly, the participants may decide to answer shallowly by giving Yes or No answers instead of giving deep descriptions of events. This may affect the coding process. Another disadvantage with this method is that, the researcher has to believe what the participants write as the gospel truth. If by any chance the information given is false, the research findings may not be reliable. Nonetheless, open-ended questionnaires were utilised in this study because the respondents refused to be interviewed and instead opted to answer the research questions via this method.

4.3 Research Quality

According to Bryman (2012), the quality of research is assessed by checking the accuracy of the research findings and the instruments used in data collection. A general and accepted standard of measuring the quality of the research findings in qualitative studies is validity and reliability. In the following section, validity and reliability of the research findings is outlined. This is followed by the researcher's role, positionality statement and the ethical considerations.

4.3.1 Validity and Reliability. According to Creswell (2009), validity in qualitative research determines the accuracy of the research findings from the participant's point of view, the external auditors and the researcher. To check for credibility of the research findings, Creswell (2009) proposed several strategies commonly used to check the validity of qualitative research. The first procedure used to check the validity of qualitative studies is triangulation. Triangulation consists of using a variety of data sources to research a social phenomenon and to justify the application of the categories and themes used in data analysis.

The second one involves spending a lot of time in the field when collecting data. Creswell (2009) pointed out that, in ethnographic studies, spending much time observing and participating in the participants activities helps one to collect rich detailed data. The same method should be applied when conducting interviews. By giving the participants enough time to answer and explain their experiences enables the researcher to gather rich and descriptive data that contains the participants understanding of the social phenomena.

As a result, the researcher gives an account of the participant's settings, events and experiences.

The third criteria used to check for validity is taking the research findings back to the participants to confirm whether the findings are in line with what they discussed in the interviews. Lincoln and Guba (2000) described the procedure as credibility of the research findings which helps in counter checking the accuracy of the collected data. The fourth criteria used in checking for validity by the researcher is to state clearly the researcher's bias in the study. By this, the researcher acknowledges how elements such as the researcher's historical, socio-cultural background may affect data interpretation. The fifth criteria used by researchers to check for validity is the use of external auditors or advisors in the field of study to check for consistency between the research findings and the research questions (Creswell, 2009).

In this study, the above strategies were utilised in data analysis in order to confirm for validity. Triangulation was utilised by searching for data from different sources such as the internet, books and brochures in order to check the participant's details. Data was collected by two methods, the semi-structured interviews that were recorded and transcribed and also by use of open-ended questionnaires. The interview time ranged between 30 minutes to one hour. Special attention was taken when observing the participants sign language. This helped in interpretation of data in the analysis section. In order to check for inter-coder consistency, help was sought from one of my class mates and also advice from the advisor. After the data analysis procedure, the final copy was sent to the participants for confirmation before handing over the document to the advisor for further review.

The second procedure was to check for reliability. According to Creswell (2009), reliability in qualitative research pertains to whether different researchers will produce the same type of results if they conducted a similar study using the same research design and methods. To determine reliability in qualitative studies, the researcher has to document all the procedures taken in conducting the study including the steps taken during data collection. This would assist other researchers to replicate the study following the same steps.

The author argued further that, a researcher may enhance reliability by doing the

following, checking for possible grammatical errors, use of traditionally accepted research designs and data collection procedures and finally by use of other coders to test for inter-coder reliability. In this study, reliability was enhanced by documenting all the procedures used in data collection and data analysis. The codes were generated theoretically as well as the interview questions. A comparison of the data collected with the generated codes was done to ensure proper generation of categories from the codes.

4.3.2 Researcher's Role. Unlike in quantitative research where the researcher uses instruments such as surveys for data collection, in qualitative studies, the researcher is the main instrument when it comes to data collection. This calls for an identification of the researcher's historical background, beliefs, prejudices and personal experiences that can influence how the researcher formulates the research questions, data collection and interpretation of the collected data. By outlining the researcher's historical backgrounds and experiences, the researcher is in a better position to curb any form of biases that may arise when doing data analysis. Below is the author's positionality statement.

4.3.3 Positionality Statement. My perception of terrorism events in my life have been shaped by my past experiences with terrorism. Having lost my father to terror attacks during the Paradise Hotel bombing in Mombasa in 2002 in Kenya, I have always been interested in understanding why people behave the way they do and what exactly runs in their minds when they decide to undertake such heinous acts like taking the lives of innocent individuals. In pursuit of finding answers in my life about this issue, I undertook a bachelor's programme in Sociology specialising in Criminology and religious studies.

By focussing on the two subjects, I became more enlightened on how individuals' lives were shaped by factors such as religious beliefs, cultural ideologies and historical backgrounds. Although, I did not get all the answers to my questions, I became more curious in trying to understand how people interpret different events and experiences in their lives. As a result, I always find myself inclined to doing qualitative studies as they offer a chance to understand people's way of interacting with the society and their experiences. By this way, I am able to delineate why individuals think and act the way they do.

Taking all this factors into consideration, and that it is very difficult to separate my personality, past experiences, educational and historical background with my role as a

researcher, I am aware that all these factors have a direct or indirect influence on my research in terms of the question I chose to research on, the data collection procedures and the way I interpreted the research findings. I made a conscious effort to control any prejudices and biases that could arise in the course of this study by making sure I remained as objective as possible and made sure that, I brought out the participants meanings of the social phenomenon.

4.3.4 Ethical Considerations. In qualitative studies, the main focus is to explore and describe the participant's meanings of the social phenomena in their natural settings. In most cases, the researcher interacts directly with the participants when collecting data in focus groups, observation and even interviews. Creswell (2009) noted that, any qualitative study that involves interaction with the human beings in any way must consider ethical considerations in the process of data collection. In this study, the following ethical considerations were followed.

First, the researcher articulated the research objectives to the participants both by writing and also verbally. For the interviews, the research objectives were outlined before conducting the interview. The participants were then asked whether they could like to participate in the research and when they agreed; I went ahead and did the interviews. For the participants who refused to be interviewed a request letter was sent to them as attached in the Appendix. Permission was sought for the use of names from the participants in the data analysis section. After data collection and analysis, a copy of the thesis was sent to the participants for further confirmation.

Another ethical consideration that was followed was confidentiality of the collected data. The data was just used for the purpose of this study only and was not revealed to anyone else apart from my advisor in the university. Last but not least, I made sure that I represented the participant's ideas and experiences as reported.

5. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, the data collection and analysis procedure is outlined step by step followed by a discussion of the themes. It is important to note that in qualitative studies, the collection of data and analysis procedures are related as mentioned by Creswell (2009).

The first step in the data collection procedure was a visit to the Östersund tourist office to get a list of the foreign tour operators and travel agencies that promote tourist destinations in Africa. The assumption here was that, if they promoted destinations in Africa, there was a high possibility that, they promoted Kenya as a tourist destination. The list from the tourist office in Östersund contained one tour operator and four travel agencies that promoted destinations in Africa. The names of the tour operators and the travel agencies are Resia Resebyrå, Ticket Resebyrå, Big travel Resebyrå, One way two travel Resebyrå and Rese-agenten Resebyrå.

The second step involved confirming whether the tour operators and the travel agents promoted Kenya as a tourist destination by making an inquiry about safari in Kenya. This was done by via telephone. Resia, Ticket and Big travel reported that they do not have their own safari packages but they sell safari tours from other tour operators such as Jambo tours, Escape travel Ab and Tour Africa. One way two travel and Rese-agenten travel agencies reported that, they only sell flight tickets to Kenya upon request and not holiday packages.

After confirming this, I wrote an email to all of them requesting data collection (Appendix 1). I waited for response for one week but none of the participants responded. To avoid wasting more time, I visited their offices and I took along the letter just incase they missed the first one I had mailed. In four companies, Ticket, Big travel, one way two travel agents and Rese-agenten, representatives refused to participate in the study citing lack of knowledge about Kenya and lack of permission to participate in the study from their bosses. In Ticket resebyrå, the lady acknowledged the fact that she was just a summer worker who barely knew what was happening in Kenya.

Fortunately, one sales agent in Resia Resebyrå accepted to participate in the study and after two days I conducted the interview in Swedish, recorded it and later translated it to English during transcription. Having had a low response rate in Östersund, I decided to contact other foreign travel intermediaries based in Sweden. The participants were chosen based on the fact that they promoted Kenya as a tourist destination. A letter requesting their participation in the study was sent to them via mail. All the information from the chosen travel intermediaries was retrieved from the internet. The table below shows the list of the foreign travel intermediaries that were contacted.

Table 1: List of Foreign Travel Intermediaries based in Sweden.

	Company Name	Location
1	Africa safari Ab	Stockholm Agent.
2	Big travel Ab- Stockholm Branch	Stockholm
3	Jambo tours Scandinavia	Stockholm
4	Kenzan tours Ab - Stockholm	Vasterås
5	Kilimanjaro Safari Company.	Stockholm
6	Ramfelt Touring Company	Stockholm
7	Resia Resebyrå in Stockholm.	Stockholm
8	Spectrum Scandinavia Ab.	Ingäro- Sweden
9	Ticket Resebyrå in Stockholm	Stockholm
10	Topp Africa Ab.	Stockholm Agent
11	Tour Africa Ab.	Solna -Stockholm

As I waited for response from the tour operators and the travel agents I had requested participation in this study, I started analysing the first interview. The first step involved reading through the interview transcripts several times and correcting any grammatical errors. Identification of sounds and comments was also taken into account. All this was done to enhance reliability. The second step involved separating parts that had the same subject and putting them together.

All the parts were then assigned a code. The process described above is referred to as open coding and it involves “breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising data” (Boije, 2010 p.96). Boije (2010) stated that, open coding is done after the first round of data collection when little is known about the value of the collected data. It is advantageous because, it assists in sorting, organising and categorising the data.

After several weeks of waiting, I sent them a letter reminding them to participate in the studies. This was followed by telephone calls to each one of them. After doing the above, only one tour- operator –Tour Africa based in Stockholm accepted to participate in the study by answering the questions and sending them back to me via email. Four companies; Big travel in Stockholm, Ticket Resebyrå in Stockholm, Africa Safari Ab and Resia Resebyrå in Stockholm declined to participate in the research citing lack of time and personnel to participate in the study since most of the staff were away for summer holidays. Ramfelt Tour Company promised to communicate via email after the telephone call.

After two days, I got an email from Ramfelt Tour Company with the contacts of the company responsible for organising safari tours in Kenya. I wrote an email to them but I did not get any feedback. I contacted them via telephone and they declined to participate in the study claiming lack of time. I did a follow- up call on the remaining company but did not get any positive feedback.

Having failed totally to get proper response, I was really discouraged and felt like giving up but I decided to contact the tour operators in the UK since majority of the tourists visiting Kenya come from the UK. According to Kenya tourism report, (2012), United Kingdom is the most dominant market source for tourists in Kenya followed by the USA, Italy and Germany. Considering this, I wrote a letter to 10 tour operators based in the UK and one based in Australia as shown by the table below and requested for telephone or Skype interviews (Appendix 2). The companies were also chosen based on the fact that they promoted Kenya as a tourist destination.

Table 2: List of UK tour operators and travel Agents

No.	Name of the companies.	Location
1.	Eco Travel Africa Limited	UK
2.	Hartley Safaris Group UK	UK
3.	Safari Consultants UK.	UK
4.	Safari Legacy UK.	UK
5.	Somak Holidays UK.	UK
6.	Tribes Travel UK.	UK
7.	Wild Africa tours -Australia	Australia
8.	Journeys discovering Africa UK	UK
9.	The Luxury safari Company UK.	UK
10.	Theobald Barber UK.	UK

Out of the ten tour operators I contacted, I received two responses, the Luxury Safari Company and Wild Africa Tours- Australia. The two tour operators did not accept a telephone interview but instead answered the research questions and sent it to me via email. After four weeks, I received an email from Big Travel Agency here in Östersund and notified me that, person who promotes destinations in Africa was back from annual leave.

The person who deals with destinations in Africa narrated that, she does not know much about Kenya since they only sell trips organised by Escape Travel Tours Company and I was offered a brochure. She also gave me contacts of a private tour operator based in Östersund and who takes students and tourists to East Africa. I sent a request letter to Escape Travel Company but received no response. I also contacted the private tour operator and was granted an interview. After one week, I did the interview, recorded it and transcribed it.

After data collection, all the transcripts were read thoroughly and different parts of the data that had the same topic were grouped together and assigned a code. It was interesting to learn how the foreign travel intermediaries' interpret events such as terror attacks in Kenya but it was also very discouraging to hear the respondents describe bad things about my country. Acknowledging my weaknesses as a researcher, I tried my level best to guard against researchers biases during the process of data analysis.

After the first coding process, I requested one of my former classmates to confirm whether I had coded properly. The process was done to assess for reliability. After the process, one more code emerged. I had failed to include a code for the destination originated information agents because the data pertaining to the same was not sufficient. I contacted the same respondents who had accepted to participate in this study via telephone and I got four positive responses. The telephone interviews provided data on the sources of destination originated information which was placed under the promotional materials originating from the destination code.

The second stage involved combining the codes that had the same topic under one category. For example TV, internet and newspapers were grouped under autonomous information agents, while the number of years a tour operator had been in operation was grouped under socio-demographics. The process utilised in this case is called axial coding. According to Boije (2010) “axial coding relates categories to sub categories , specifies the properties and dimension of a category and re-assembles the data you have fractured during initial coding to give coherence to the emerging analysis” (p.108). In this process, the theoretical framework was used as a guide to categorise the data.

The third stage involved describing the categories, for example, booklets from Kenya tourism board were put under information originating from the destination then to the induced information agent which later formed the cognitive/perceptual image. The process described above is referred to as selective coding. Boije (2010) described selective coding as “the process involves looking for connections between categories in order to make sense of what is happening in the field” (p.14).

The main aim of performing selective coding was to determine different categories that could lead to the core category. The core category on the other hand becomes part of the theoretical model. Boije (2010) noted that, “the core category is central to the integration of theory” (p. 115). After the whole process of open coding, axial coding and selective coding, four categories emerged which are; the initial image of Kenya, the cognitive/ perceptual and affective images of Kenya after exposure to the terror attacks, the overall image held by the foreign travel intermediaries and the reactions of the tour operators after the new destination images. The initial images of Kenya held by the foreign

travel intermediaries describe the images of Kenya before the terrorist attacks. After exposure to the terrorism events, three bias factors; destination originated information, autonomous information agents and the foreign travel intermediaries' characteristics aided the formation of the cognitive/perceptual and affectual evaluations.

The cognitive/perceptual images consists of what the respondents knows, thinks of, remembers, evaluates and understands about the destination. The affective attributes on the other hand describes the feelings associated with the knowledge acquired of the destination. This could be feelings of sadness, love or even worry. The overall image is formed by the two attributes, cognitive and the affectual. The overall image is an important factor in interpreting the behaviour of the foreign travel intermediaries after formation of the new images.

To this end, it is important to note that, the destination images formed by the tour operators and the travel agencies are described by their own words, that is, their professional terminologies. This can be seen as a weakness of this study due to the loss of identity of the actual images in the ground for example, sun, sand and beach destinations instead of destinations which are near the ocean or sea and have warm climate, but in the real picture, it enhances the validity of the study. In the analysis, the author will use the pseudonyms A, B, C, D, and E instead of the foreign travel agents names as described in table 3. The section that follows outlines in details the themes that emerged after the analysis.

6. FINDINGS

6.1 Image of Kenya

The initial image of Kenya held by the foreign travel intermediaries represents the mental pictures of what they know about Kenya in general, the physical attributes and psychological attributes among other things. The mental construction of Kenya as a tourist destination is the main reason why it is promoted by the travel intermediaries. Gartner and Tasci (2007) suggested that, “the images formed by individuals are a unique mental construction or representative of the destination through their comprehension, understanding and interpretations of the received messages” (p.416). The respondent’s descriptions of the images of Kenya illustrated their understanding and construction of what they knew about the destination.

A description of Kenya by the respondents confirmed Gartner and Tasci (2007) proposition. *“Kenya is, without doubt, a stunning and beautiful country. From the white sands beaches of its Indian Ocean coast to the primitive aridity of Turkana in the north, Kenya tours and safaris offer a variety of different landscape as well as charming people and unforgettable wildlife”* (Respondent E).

Considering the fact that, the respondents are a special group of tourist stakeholders who are responsible for connecting destinations with the clients, the images held by them as described above may describe the physical features and the psychological features of destinations. This confirms Etchner and Ritchie (1991) proposition that, images of a destination can be formed as a result of functional attributes and psychological characteristics. The functional characteristics contain the physical features such as the mountains, savannahs while the psychological characteristics include political instability, hospitality and security.

Etchner and Ritchie (1991) noted further that, the images of a destination as held by the individuals can vary from “common functional and psychological traits to those based on more unique features, events, feelings or auras” (p. 43). The images of Kenya held by the respondents were based on the physical attributes of Kenya such as the Savannahs and the wildlife. The unique attributes included the safari trips and the hospitality of the local

people. Respondent E quoting their website noted the following;

“The picture that most people have of Africa is golden savannahs filled with wildlife and dotted with flat-topped umbrella acacias. This landscape of Kenya which is featured in many Hollywood movies and wildlife documentaries is embedded in people’s mind when they think of an African wildlife safari. With luxury lodges in serene national parks & wildlife reserves, Kenya safari tours are a bucket list items for many people”.

Below is a diagram showing Etchner and Ritchie (1991) model of destination image.

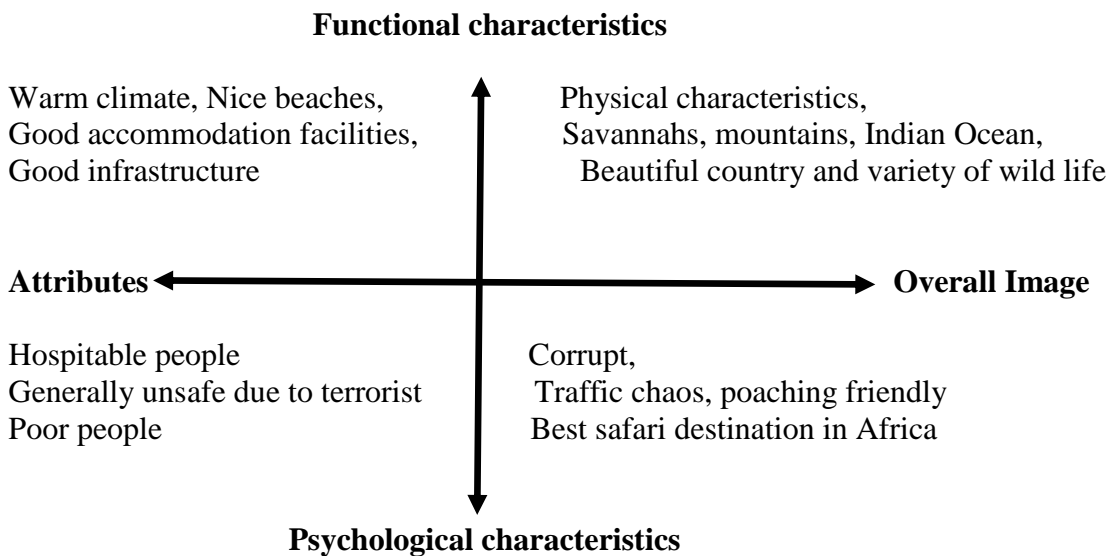


Figure 9: Illustration of Kenya’s image according to Etchner and Ritchie (1991) model by the foreign travel intermediaries.

Gartner and Tasci (2007) noted that, the images held by individuals of a destination can change with time due to occurrence of human-influenced or natural disasters such as earthquakes, political instability and war or even terrorism. The respondents in this study confirmed that, the terror attacks in Kenya had resulted to changing the previous image of Kenya. They noted that, the country was no longer safe and attractive due to the occurrence of the events. Respondent A noted that,

“The most of it is very positive but, what is worrying me is what is happening in Kenya at the moment. The terrorist especially down the coast where we have Alshabab form Somalia, coming down, we even have Mombasa ehe....ehe ehee,, Republic Council and they are threatening the possibility of hitting the tourism industry in Kenya. I think the people in Europe and the United States think it’s very dangerous to go to this part of the

world and in Africa in general. But even the east Africa nowadays, Kenya is a hotspot for terrorism, that is what they think and that's the problem” (Respondent A).

By this, the author can argue that, respondents A's view of terrorism are twofold. First, the effects of terrorism are responsible for changing the images of the country among potential clients, not only his but also globally. Second, this could have a negative effect on his business. Somnez et, al (1999) noted that, events such as terrorism introduce the subject of risk perception in the society which is responsible for modifying the held images of destinations. This in turn affects individuals understanding of certain events. When it comes to destination images, the image of a destination could be seen as dangerous as described by the respondent when he noted “what is worrying me”.

According to Gunn's (1972) stage theory, modification of previously held images by individuals of a destination can occur if they are exposed to new information. The media, according to Somnez et, al (1999) is the most commonly used instrument in the modification of destination images in society because it does not choose its audience and affects the potential visitors in a destination and also tourism stakeholders. William (2008) in his discussion of social judgement theory stated that, when individuals receive new information that does not match with what they know, they first evaluate the information based on their ego and attitudes. In this case, when the travel intermediaries receive any bad news about the destinations they promote, they assess and evaluate the situations accordingly and then form new images which affect their promotional behaviours of the country.

To this end, according to the model by Gartner and Tasci (2007), some features of the destinations are either static or semi dynamic. The physical landscape and history of a destination is static and cannot be changed unless the destination suffers from natural disasters. Alternatively events such as terrorism can change the built environments and the socio-political systems by distorting the images of destinations thus making it semi-dynamic. The initial images held by the respondents about the country are very positive but the occurrence of the terrorism events in the country is destroying images of Kenya as a suitable tourist destination and this is affecting the promotional procedures of the foreign travel intermediaries. Despite the attractive physical features and the hospitality of the Kenyan people, the occurrence of the terrorism events dilutes the good picture.

6.2 The Cognitive/Perceptual and Affective attributes.

The cognitive /perceptual images held by the respondents emerged as a result of exposure to the information agents originating from the destination and the media which was later decoded depending on the foreign travel intermediaries' characteristics. Gartner (1993) stated that, the cognitive/perceptual evaluations of destinations are formed as a result of interpreting received messages that come from other sources such as the media and other sources. On destination information, two respondents noted that, their main source of information originated from friends in Kenya and their fellow business partners in Kenya. Respondent A noted that,

“I have a lot of friends in Kenya and I get information from them. Am usually in touch with them, during the year and communicating with them via the internet. I have been calling them; they give me a lot of advice every year, again, we do new things than we have done before” (Respondent A). While respondent D stated that, *“We rely on the reputation of our ground tour operators to keep our clients safe and follow their advice on whether it is safe to travel or not”* (Respondent, D).

Alternatively, the foreign travel agents rely on the images held by the tour operators who organise the holiday packages and sell to them. Respondent B noted that, *“Well, I do not follow soo much, like the tour operators; well I guess I do not follow soo much like Fritids resor or Ving who usually take people to Kenya with a whole flight”* (Respondent, B). According to Gartner's (1993) model of eight different but related information agents on p. (16), the information sort from friends and fellow business partners falls in the category of solicited organic information agents and are easily believed by individuals than the information from the destination marketers. Respondent B's statement confirms the model by Budeanu (2005) that shows that, the travel images purchase tourism products from the tour operators. Indirectly this can mean that, their images of destinations are also influenced by those ones held by the tour operators.

An interesting observation in this study about the destination originated information was that, none of the respondents acknowledged the information they got from the destination marketers. The telephone interviews from respondent A, B, D, and E revealed that, they do not rely on the destination marketers in the provision of information because

the destination marketers information is not always true .The four respondents noted that, they would rather rely on their fellow business partners than any information from the Kenya tourist board or tourist stakeholders from Kenya.

This confirmed Ioannides (1998) proposition that, tour operators do their research thoroughly well in destinations and do not just accept the information given by the destination marketers. This proposition was supported by Gartner and Tasci (2007) who mentioned that, the main aim of the destination originated information is to change the existing images of destinations by use of promotional materials. In this case, the destination marketers would ignore any information that is related to terrorism in destinations by all means and only market the positive images of the destination.

In relation to the influence of autonomous information agents on the cognitive/perceptual images of the destination, all the respondents acknowledged that, the media was the greatest source of information especially on terrorism related issues. By watching the TV, or reading the newspapers, they were updated on what was happening across the globe and even in the destinations they promoted. The internet was also a good source of information used by the respondents. When it came to the images formed as a result of exposure to these sources, the respondents acknowledged that, the media usually broadcasted unpleasant events about Kenya and Africa in general thus affecting the images formed by their potential clients, thus affecting the induced images formed by the promotional materials. Respondent A noted that,

“When they are reading the Swedish newspaper or listening to the TV, they normally get very scared and ask questions. And then I must find a way to explain, that we can still go to Kenya despite what they have seen or heard , at the same time, tell them that alshabab is dangerous” (Respondent A).

The media is responsible for creating positive or negative images of destinations depending on the materials they broadcast. In this case, the respondents acknowledged the fact that, due to the terror attacks broadcasted by the media about Kenya, the whole region was affected and this affected the promotional procedures of the East Africa region.

Respondent C noted that, *“But the whole region is affected by media covers, they have as you know a tendency to write bad things and blame all on terrorism when some of the things happening are criminal acts just as we have in Sweden when criminals are burning*

each other's properties" (Respondent C). This confirms Baker and Coulter (2007) and Somnez et, al (1999) propositions that, terror attacks are responsible for destroying the images of the said destination but also for the whole region.

According to the symbolic interactionism theory by Blummer (1969) the media is one of the information agents used in the society to create subjective reality by individuals based on their interpretations of social phenomena as broadcasted by the media. Individuals believe what they see or hear from the media regardless of whether it is true or not and then assign specific meanings which influences the way they act in the society. In this way, the media unknowingly creates symbols of risk in destinations when broadcasting terrorism events in destinations.

All the respondents agreed that, the international media was the most influential in the formation of destination image than the destination originated information. The messages broadcasted by the media about Kenya were interpreted differently by the respondents depending on their socio-demographic characteristics such as their education level, experience and previous visits to the destination. The table below shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Taking a closer look at some of the responses from the respondents, the author can deduce that, the respondents were very intelligent and this was revealed by the way they interpreted the images of Kenya as depicted by the media. Respondent A noted that,

"I think many people usually say that, the media still has a "Colonial view of Africa". And it means, the people are poor, the people are not active, and people cannot solve their own problems and many people can be a little bit worried about going to Africa,....People need a lot of help and so on and ehee, I think it's much better now, than it was about 10years ago, they are more positive, the media, it's too much" (Respondent A).

In this case, individuals are seen as active participants in the received messages by the media because they construct the meanings according to their own interpretations of the information. The interpretation depends on the cultural and historical background of the individuals. To this end, Gartner and Tasci (2007) noted that, the autonomous information agents are highly believed by individuals and can change the image of a destination in a very short time.

The third category that assisted formation of the cognitive/perceptual image was the foreign travel intermediaries' characteristics. The socio-demographic factors, psychographics factors and the respondent's motivation of promoting Kenya as a tourist destination played a role in the formation of destination images. The table below simplifies these characteristics. According to Gartner and Tasci (2007) "people's socio-demographics and cultural characteristics define their needs and motivations, and the combination of these characteristics, needs and motivations determine their behaviour and ultimately affecting the destination image" (p.422).

All the respondents had different reason as to why they promoted Kenya as a tourist destination. Respondent (A) noted that, "*The reason is that, I have lived in Kenya for many years, and I found the years I was there, Kenya had a lot of things to show people from Europe especially the Swedish people*" (Respondent A) while Respondent (C) mentioned that, "*Best end, easiest destination for safari and beach. Demand*", while respondent (D) noted that "*one of the best safari destinations in Africa*".

Based on the above sentiments, I can deduce that, the foreign travel intermediaries' reasons for promoting Kenya as a destination could be interpreted to mean that, Kenya is a viable business opportunity and also due to personal preferences. Confirming this, Akama (1999) noted that, after independence the new government encouraged the foreign tour operators to promote tourism in Kenya by making policies that suited their business activities. One of those policies was repatriation of profits back to their countries of origin. In this case the statements by the respondents could be interpreted to mean that, Kenya could be promoted by foreign travel intermediaries because of the possibility of repatriating the profits to back to their countries.

Another socio-demographic characteristic that aided the images of destinations is past travel patterns and experience in the destination. The respondents in this study who had visited Kenya had a clearer image of the destination than the respondent who had not visited the destination. Respondent (C) noted that "*I have been to Kenya approximately 80 times, my first safari was 1988 and I know the country better than most of Sweden when it comes to tourism*" while Respondent B noted that, "*I have not been to Kenya, but I think it has very beautiful scenes and safari tours*".

Based on the above, Gartner and Tasci (2007) suggested that, the images held by individuals who have visited a destination are different from the ones who have not visited the destination. It is clear that, the images held by the respondent who have been to Kenya many times are different from the ones who have not been in the country. Comparing the two, the images held by respondent (C) are more defined than those ones held by respondent B.

In conclusion, the tour operators and the travel agencies socio-demographic characteristics are important in forming the cognitive/perceptual images of destinations. At this point it is important to highlight that, the images held of Kenya by the tour operators in this study differed from the ones held by the travel agency. The images formed by respondents A, C, D and E was different from respondent B who is a travel agency.

Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of the foreign travel intermediaries.

Tour operator and travel agencies	Description of tour operators and travel agency	Brief description of respondents role	Brief description of respondents characteristics	Image of Kenya
African travelling Group- Birka folkhögskola (A)	-Started in 2004, -Deals with exchange students. -Takes around 50 people to Kenya every year. -Aims at helping people to know Africa.	-Teacher in the African course and owner of the tour operator. -Responsible for taking tourists and students every year to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, -Responsible for all the trip arrangements	-Very informed on issues pertaining to Kenya, -Has lived in Kenya for many years -Always trying something new. -Friendly, sociably and educated.	Knows Kenya very well and has a clear image of the destination. -Kenyan images affected by the terrorist attacks
Resia Resebyrå- Östersund (B)	-Branch of Resia Resebyrå in Stockholm. -Been in operation since 2003 in Östersund. It's a travel agency. -Resia byrå has 4 shareholders. -Buys trips to Africa Kenya Jambo Africa and Tour Africa.	-Deals with holiday packages, business trips and group and conferences. -One of the shareholders. -Has promoted Kenya as a tourist destination for a long time but not now.	-Does not know much information about Kenya since he only sells holiday packages bought from other tour operators. -Has never been To Kenya but has been in Tanzania.	-Image of Kenya not clear, based on secondary sources
Tour Africa AB- Stockholm (C)	-Started in 1979. -It is a tour operator and arranges holiday packages to	-Sales Manager in Tour Africa. Deals with selling trips to Africa via	-Very informed about Africa and Kenya in particular. -Has been in Kenya more	Very clear image of Kenya. --Knows

	Africa, e.g. Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa. -Sells holiday packages to travel agencies e.g. Resia resebyrå	the travel agencies and individual travellers. -organises trips to Africa.	than 80times. -Has worked in Tour Africa for a few months.	Kenya better than most parts of Sweden
Wild Africa Travel Company (D)	-Has over 15years of arranging tours in Africa. -Based in Australia. -Deals with safari tours in East Africa and south Africa -Travel agent. -Part of Experience Travel group.	-Director of the company. -Responsible for selling Africa tours especially Kenya,	-Knowledgeable about the country. -Has been to Kenya previously. -Very positive about the country.	-Very positive and clear image of the country
Luxury Safari Company UK (E)	-Arranges top-end tourism. -Has been in operation for four years. -Promotes many countries in Africa	-Responsible for arranging tours in Africa. -Liaises with ground tour operators to get good deals.	-Has visited Kenya previously. -Has promoted Kenya as a tourist destination for 10years. -Very positive about Kenya in general.	Very clear images of Kenya

6.3 Affective Evaluations.

The affective images formed by individuals of destinations emanate from the individuals interpretations of the accumulated knowledge. According to Baloglu and Mcleary (1999) the affectual images are influenced by the cognitive/perceptual images of a destination and consist of the emotional evaluations an individual has of a destination. Sentiments such as love, hate, disgust and dismay are some of the words used by the individuals to describe affectual images of the destinations. The affective evaluations of Kenya by the respondents were expressed after exposure to terror attacks and varied across the respondents.

The descriptions of affectual images varied among respondents depending on the socio-demographic attributes. It was clear that, the tour operators and the travel agents reacted differently after exposure to terror attacks. Respondent (D) noted that, “*horror, danger and disgust*” while respondent (C) mentioned that, “*poor people, it’s like your loved ones has a terrible accident*”. Respondent (B) on the other hand noted that, “*well, I don’t know, but there are so many different things happening in the world right now, so it’s not special to Kenya*”. The differences in the respondent’s reactions could emanate from their attachment to the destination and also from their business procedures.

Based on their business procedures, the tour operators organise holiday packages in destinations while the travel agents purchase holiday packages from the tour operators. In this case, due to the tour operator's business practicalities, they tend to suffer losses if destinations they are promoting are affected by terrorism events. The travel agents also suffer losses but not as much as the tour operators. This could explain the variance in their emotional evaluations. Alternatively, the affective evaluations of the destinations can also be interpreted as a sign of despair in the tour operators business procedures because, the terror attacks may tarnish the induced images their clients have formed after the marketing procedures.

Baloglu and Mcleary (1999) in their discussion of affective evaluations of a destination mentioned that, "the affective evaluations can also denote attachments to a destination" (p. 70). Confirming this proposition, respondent A narrated a lot about Kenya, the causes of terrorism in the country and the socio-political system in the country. He was very informed about what is happening in Kenya and this could be a sign of attachment to the country. The statement below confirms the above,

"I think you know better than me, the people in Mombasa say that, the hotels and everything there is owned by the rich people in Nairobi. And they do not get anything from the tourism resources; they are still poor down the coast, because money goes to international companies and already rich people in Nairobi and politicians for example Uhuru Kenyatta. I think he is the owner of some hotels there. The conflicts down there, the bottom of them are social conflicts, I think that is why the MRC, I think they say that, "they are some old papers that during the Arabic times, the land down the coast was their own land and due to historic reasons they want the land back. But the biggest reason is that, they want to find this paper and go it customarily because they want to be owners of the coast and the hotels. I think they are fighting for resources" (Respondent A).

In conclusion, the affective evaluations of a destination according to Baloglu and McLeary (1999) are the emotional attachments individuals have of destinations and they are influenced by the knowledge and beliefs they have of destinations.

6.4 The Overall Image.

According to Baloglu and Mcleary (1999) the overall image of a destination is a composite of the cognitive/perceptual and affective evaluations of a destination by individuals. The overall image according to the authors “is dependent upon individual attributes” (p.873). In this category, the overall images held by the tour operators and the travel agents is composed of the overall impressions the tour operators and the travel agents have of Kenya as tourist destination in relation to terror attacks. The respondents in this study described Kenya as one of the best Safari destinations in Africa but the terrorist events affected the positive images held by the respondents.

Respondent (D) noted that, *“having been to Kenya, it is a wonderful country and the people are lovely. It’s a shame that a minority group in Somali spoils such a lovely country”*. According to Lopes (2011) in his discussion of brand image, the brand image of the destination is described as the accumulated set of beliefs, knowledge, convictions and the emotional attachment individuals have of destinations, that is, the cognitive/perceptual and affective evaluations held by individual’s on various products. In this case the brand image of Kenya held by the respondents is very positive but as they claim, the terrorist activities are spoiling everything.

According to Baloglu and Mangaloglu (1999) the overall image of destinations is dependent on the individual’s attributes. Respondent (B) noted that; *“My image of Kenya has not changed. I still believe the country has very beautiful safari tours but due to terrorism, the safari destinations are restricted and we cannot take the tourists there”*. Again, the individual’s socio-demographic characteristics have a role to play in the formation of the overall images of the destinations. For the foreign travel intermediaries, the individual attributes are not the only determining factor in the overall image because of their businesses procedures. According to Gartner and Tasci (2007) the overall images held by individuals determine the consumer’s behaviour and choice of destination.

The overall image held by the respondents influences the behaviour of the tour operators and travel agencies in promoting Kenya as a tourist destination after the occurrence of terrorism events. This is because, “tour operators are considered liable not only for the non-performance of the services involved, but also for the physical injuries of

their clients if this could be in any way linked to negligence due to them, or even to their service providers” (Cavlek, 2002 p. 480).

6.5 Reactions of Tour operators.

In this category, the reactions of the tour operators and the travel agents were influenced by the overall images formed by the cognitive/perceptual and affective evaluations they had of destinations. Unlike the individuals who decide whether to visit the destinations or not based on the new images, the foreign travel intermediaries’ reactions are guided by several factors which are the business procedures, the dimensions of the crises and the consequences of the crises (Cavlek,2002). The respondent’s reactions towards Kenya after the formation of the new images were tested against the above factors.

It was interesting to know that, the reactions of the travel intermediaries were guided by their business practicalities and also their client’s needs. It was evident that the tour operators trended carefully when dealing with destinations prone to terror attacks. Respondent B noted that, *“I don’t know exactly whether it is safe or not, but it feels like it has cooled down a little bit, but you never say never, that is 100% safe, but we continue selling trips to Kenya”*

The second factor that determined their behaviour as noted by Cavlek (2002) is the dimensions of the crisis. The respondents in this study noted that, they are more careful with the places their clients visit and most often avoid certain places which they suspect could be potential targets for terrorists. Respondent C mentioned that, *“We tell them to keep away from crowded places such as Mombasa town and not stay in Nairobi if they don’t have to”* Gartner and Tasci (2007) introduced the concept of constraints on behaviours during the visit to a destination if the image held previously was modified. The authors noted that, the effects of certain events such as terrorism may affect the experience of the visitors in a destination. Respondent (A) followed the tourists in Kenya and confirmed the above by stating that,

“My image of Kenya has not changed much, but after the attacks, just being more careful with where I want to go, for example, down the coast. Before, we used to travel with the train and buses down the coast and ferry to the south coast and with matatus....but

not anymore,, now am a bit more careful, this time we flew from Nairobi to Lamu, before that I usually went by train to Mombasa, we took a bus up to Malindi from Mombasa and from Malindi another bus, then a ferry to Lamu. We never do that nowadays”. As indicated by this statement, the respondent’s reactions were shaped by the new images of the destinations.

Another factor that determined the reactions of the foreign travel intermediaries is the consequences of the crisis. By this, the foreign travel intermediaries assessed the repercussions of the crisis in the destination by checking whether the terrorism event targeted the tourists or tourist establishments. According to respondent (A) on his discussion of West gate terror attack in Kenya mentioned that, “*. I think the most difficult one to explain to my customers is ehee, eehee, the west gate attack... , because my customers could identify themselves in the attacks, they could have been there, that is what I think”* (Respondent A). Somnez et al, (1999) suggested that, if the tourists or tourist establishments are targeted by the terrorists, the image of the destination is highly tarnished thus affecting the tourism industry in the country.

According to the respondents, the overall image was not the only destination image factor that affected their behaviours and promotional procedures of Kenya as a tourist destination. The business procedures and the travel advisories also contributed heavily on how they reacted to terror attacks in Kenya. Four respondents acknowledged that, they followed travel bans given by their countries of residence but one said that their company does not follow travel bans because they do not take tourists to places which are prone to terror attacks. The respondents also mentioned that, the travel bans in Kenya affected their business procedures and by their impressions, they did not like them.

Respondent (B) noted that

“ . In most cases, for example, if there is a travel ban for Kenya in March, we can request the tourists to go to other destinations for example Thailand or South Africa, if they don’t want their money back. If something like that happens in a destination, we don’t usually go back to that destination because it costs a lot of money and we end up losing”.

This confirms Cavlek (2002) proposition that, tour operators avoid unsafe destinations because of the possibility of making losses. Supporting the above proposition by Cavlek (2002) some respondents claimed that, they substituted Kenya with other safer

destinations which had the same products in order to avoid making losses for instance “Respondent (C) noted that, *“It is very complex thing and Kenya is now suffering and paying the price, numbers are decreasing with tourists and Tanzania is gaining a lot in number”*. Respondent (B) on the other hand mentioned the same thing when asked about the effects of the travel bans on their business. He claimed that

“Alternatively, we give them advice on purchasing other holiday packages because we are not sure that if we give them back the money, they will use it for holiday. So for example, we tell them, it is fritids resor that had trips to Kenya, but they also have trips to Egypt and you may get 1000kr discount, if you book a trip to Egypt instead of taking your money back. So, the 1000kr, you lose but you still have the business” (Respondent B). The above confirms Ioannides (1998) proposition that, tour operators and travel agents are not loyal to destinations and do not promote specific destination but deal with holiday types such as sun and beach and safari tours and not destinations such as Kenya or Tanzania.

Despite the negative images formed as a result of the terror attacks and the media influence, the respondents were still hopeful that things would change and that the country will regain its lost glory of the best safari destination in Africa. They were also hopeful that the new president will assist in the modification of the tarnished image of the country due to terrorism. Respondent (C) noted that, *“just hope Mr. Uhuru does something useful for tourism soon, decreasing park fees with 10USD is just a drop in the ocean.*

In conclusion, the reactions of the tour operators were influenced by the new overall image of the destination. Factors such as, business procedures, the consequences of the terror attacks and the dimensions of the terror attacks were some of the factors considered by the travel intermediaries in their decision making process. It is important to note that, the reactions of the foreign travel intermediaries can depend on other factors such as vested interests in the destinations or just personal factors. This was not evident among the respondents

7. DISCUSSION

In this section, the conclusion, limitations faced when conducting the research and suggestions for further research are discussed. The first part will outline in brief the whole research taking into consideration the research questions. The second part will outline the challenges faced when conducting this study and the final part will outline suggestions for further research.

7.1 Conclusions

This thesis attempted to find out how terrorism events affect the formation of destination image among foreign tour operators and travel agents promoting Kenya as a tourist destination and what were the main information sources affecting destination images. The research findings shed light on how the foreign travel intermediaries constructed the images of Kenya when exposed to different information sources regarding terrorism events in Kenya. The main sources of information unmediated from the destination and through the media. The received images were decoded depending on the respondent's socio-demographic characteristics, motivation and even business practicalities.

The relationship of the three bias factors helped in establishing the cognitive/perceptual and affectual evaluations of Kenya. The combination of these two amounted to the overall image which was a determining factor in the behaviour of the foreign travel intermediaries towards the destination after exposure to the terrorist attacks.

Despite the low response rate, the research findings managed to answer the first and second research questions. The findings revealed how the foreign travel intermediaries interpreted terrorism events and how they interacted with the new acquired knowledge. The outcome of the mental constructions held by the respondents confirmed the social constructionist paradigm that says, individuals give meaning to events as they occur in their daily lives. The subjective meanings in this case represented the overall image of Kenya as held by the foreign travel intermediaries.

The reactions of the tour operators resulted from the overall images held by the respondents. The reactions were guided by several factors such as the business procedures, the consequences of the terror attacks, the dimensions of the terror attacks and the personal preferences. Due to the differences in the socio-demographic characteristics among the respondents, their reactions towards the destination also varied. The tour operators claimed that, they made massive losses if terrorists affected Kenya and they had to follow travel bans. It was evident that the tour operators and the travel agents behaviour towards Kenya after exposure to terror attacks were different. The travel agents relied heavily on the images formed by the tour operators. If they failed to promote a destination such as Kenya because of the terror attacks, they also failed totally to do the same.

In regards to the information sources, the media emerged as the most commonly used information agents by the respondents. The destination originated information from the destination marketers was avoided, ignored or hardly believed. Information from the business partners and friends was utilised more than the destination originated information. In addition to the information sources, the Swedish embassy website was also mentioned by some respondents as one of the sources of destination originated information.

To this end, it is important to acknowledge that, the research findings managed to answer the research questions despite the low response rate. If by any chance the response rate was higher than it was, it could have been easier to compare how different tour operators and the travel agents constructed the images of destinations after exposure to terror attacks. Secondly, the findings could have shed more light on how different tour operators and travel agents behaved towards the destination as a result of new destination images.

It is also important to note that, the research findings based on the five travel intermediaries cannot be generalised to other foreign tour operators and travel agents across the globe but they seem to confirm similar studies by other scholars involving tour operators and travel agents as outlined below. A study by Alaeddinoglu and Can (2010) that assessed the destination images of Turkey as held by the UK travel intermediaries had a 33% response rate .Out of the 131 questionnaires mailed out by the researchers, only 47 questionnaires were returned and only 44 were used for data analysis.

A similar study by Baloglu and Mangalolu (2001) that determined the perceived images of Egypt, Greece, Turkey and Italy by the US-based tour operators and travel agents suffered from a low response rate. Out of the 313 questionnaires mailed out to the chosen respondents, only 42 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 13.6%. In an attempt to increase the response rate, the researchers sent out 50 more questionnaires to non-respondents who were chosen randomly. This generated 4 responses and raised the response rate to 14.9% that was used for data analysis.

In a different study by Ioannides (1998) that examined the role of tour operators as major players of the travel industry “given their ability to shift tourist flows from one destination to another” due to various reasons such as disasters, environmental degradation among other factors had similar problems of low response rate. Out of the 250 questionnaires mailed out by the researcher for data collection, only 83 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis that is a response rate of 33.2%.

Based on the above studies, Ioannides (1998) and Sheldon (1986) emphasised that studies involving tour operators and travel agents tend to suffer from low response rates due to high levels of competition among the tour operators and the travel agents. The authors noted further that, the tour operators and the travel agents business is characterised by high level of secrecy due to fear of espionage from their competitors. The tour operators and the travel agents do not trust anyone especially with the socio-demographic information such as the number of clients they have or the profit levels they make due to high levels of competition.

Having noted the above, the tour operators and the travel agents are the most important tourist stakeholders in the tourism industry because of their role of connecting destinations with the potential visitors. Nonetheless their participation in research is also very important because of their influence in the wellbeing of destinations. In the next section, the importance of the tour operators and travel agents participation in research are highlighted.

7.2 The Importance of Participating in Research by tour operators and Travel Agents

According to the Tour Operator Initiative (TOI) report (2010) accessed on the 7th October, 2014, the tour operators and the travel agents are important stakeholders in the tourism industry and their participation in research is paramount.

First, the tour operators and the travel agents are involved in maintaining the flow of tourists in a destination by their promotional procedures. In the long run, their business procedures could have severe repercussions in the environment. By participating in research, they can assist destinations with information that can be useful in assessing the environmental impact of tourists in a destination.

Secondly, since tourism is a social phenomenon that has social, economic, political and cultural impacts in a destination. The work of the tour operators and the travel agents has a greater impact on the environmental well-being of destinations, countries and even regions. By participating in research, they may shed light on various aspects of destinations such as designing the best tourist products, sustainable development measures and even corporate social responsibility.

Thirdly, by participating in research, the travel intermediaries demonstrate to the community that, their business is not just profit minded but also ethically responsible. In this way, they could contribute to the continuing research of sustainable development done by the researchers in the tourism industry.

In conclusion, the importance of the tour operators and the travel agents participation in research must be emphasised and encouraged. In order to be successful, the researchers must outline why tour operators and travel agent's participation is important and assist the tour operators and the travel agents in understanding their significant in participating in research.

7.3 Limitations

In this section, the limitations faced by the researcher in undertaking this research are outlined. The greatest challenge faced by the researcher was that one of low response rate. Out of the 29 participants contacted for data collection, only five accepted to participate in this study that is a response rate of 17%. This means that the study findings

could not be generalised but the study confirmed what other scholars such as Alaeddinogglu and Can (2010), Baloglu and Mangaloglu, (2002) and Ioannides, (1998) found as described above.

The second challenge faced by the researcher was language barrier. The first interview was done in the Swedish language, transcribed and then translated. Taking into consideration the low level of my Swedish, it was difficult to probe for more information as the respondents used professional terminologies when narrating. To counter this problem, I had to use the help of a Swedish friend in translating in order to maintain the respondent's exact meaning.

Another interesting observation that could be labelled as a limitation is the fact that the respondents knew that I was from Kenya and avoided talking openly and negatively about some issues. I realised that, the respondents tried to be as polite as possible when describing certain issues. For instance respondent A noted that, *"...Of course, eastly, but even kibera, all that, I don't like the word slum, but what they usually call them slum areas. Not because people are more violent, most people are very friendly and peaceful, but when you have so many people together, violence can be possible. I know a lot of people can easily be frustrated, they are poor and they can show it in many ways"*. By giving polite descriptions of situations places or people, the actual image could have been distorted.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The main aim of this study was to find out how foreign travel intermediaries interpreted terrorism events in destinations they promoted by studying the case of Kenya. This was done by introducing three bias factors, the destination originated information, the autonomous agents and the foreign travel intermediaries characteristics. The images formed consisted of the cognitive/perceptual and the affective evaluations of the destination. A combination of this two evaluations resulted to the overall image which influenced their actions. As a point of departure, further research is recommended in this study in order to shed more light on several factors that seemed to influence the formation of destination image among the foreign travel intermediaries.

To begin with the respondents were not only concerned about the terrorism events in the destination but other socio-political factors such as corruption, political instability, traffic jam and tribal clashes. Respondent (A) noted that, *“If they happen to take away the three things, the ethnic clashes, the MRC and Alshabab and manage to solve that problem, Kenya has a very big potential for tourists”* “MRC in this case means Mombasa Republican Council is a separatist group based in the coast of Kenya and advocates for secession of the Coast region of Kenya. A study of how the above socio-political factors, that is, ethnic and tribal clashes affect the destination image would shed more light on how the socio-political factors affect the formation of destination image.

Secondly, the role played by the foreign travel characteristics in the formation of destination image need further research as to how they determine or stimulate the formation of new images. What exactly is the determining factor that assists in the formation of destination image? Is it the number of years a foreign travel intermediary has promoted the destination or is it the potential for making high level of profit in the destination that is the determining factor? By answering these questions, a clear picture of what is the greatest determining factor will come to light.

Still on the socio-demographic characteristics, a third factor that should be investigated is motivation. It was interesting to find out that, Kenya was still marketed by the foreign travel intermediaries despite the formation of negative images. A study on why this is so will bring to light the reasons why Kenya is still competitive among the foreign travel intermediaries. It could also be interesting to find out how the online travel intermediaries would construct the image of Kenya after exposure to terror attacks and how they reacted towards the destination. Could there be any difference between the tour operators who had offices with the online ones?

Last but not least, it would be interesting to find out how the same foreign travel intermediaries would react if it was a different country in Africa, for example Tanzania or Namibia or better still countries in other continents such as Thailand or the Philippines. This study can guide further research on how the foreign travel intermediaries interpret the images of destinations in countries prone to human-influenced and natural disasters.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Data Collection Request Letter

Dear Sir,

My name is Milka Mbiyu and I am a student at the Mittuniversitetet in Östersund pursuing a master's programme in tourism studies.

I am writing this letter to request your participation in my research project, to document the effects of terrorism on tour operator's formation of destination image in Kenya. Kenya is a country in East Africa famous for its safari tours and pristine beaches along the Indian Ocean. The main aim of this research project is to find out how terror attacks have affected the image of Kenya among tourist stakeholders such as tour operators and travel agencies promoting Kenya as a tourist destination. A good example of those terror attacks include, the Westgate mall attacks in 2013, the Paradise hotel bombing in Mombasa in 2002, USA embassy bombing in 1998 and several grenade attacks in various entertainment joints across the country. The attacks have had a negative effect in the Kenya tourist industry and destroyed the image of Kenya as a safe tourist destination.

I kindly request your participation in this research project in order to shed more light on this topic. Your opinion regarding the topic of terrorism and promoting Kenya as a tourist destination is highly valued and will help answer my research question which is "How do continuous terror attacks affect formation of a destination image among tour operators and travel agencies?"

I promise to abide by the ethical considerations in research which include, seeking informed consent from the participant before collecting data, using the collected data for the purposes of research only and giving a copy of my research project for your review before handing it over my teacher. I promise to respect the rights of the organisation and of the participant. I will attach a copy of the research questions in this letter. I will contact you via email in order to confirm your participation. Please feel free to answer the research questions via email.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Milka Mbiyu, Mittuniversitetet, Tel: 0727-753054

mimb1100@student.miun.se

Appendix 2: Request Letter –Open Ended Questionnaire

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Milka Mbiyu and I am a student at the Mittuniversitetet in Östersund, Sweden, pursuing a master's programme in tourism studies. I am writing this letter to request your participation in my research project, to document the effects of terrorism on tour operator's formation of destination image of Kenya. I kindly request you to answer the questions as per the attached questionnaire and send them back to me via email. It will take approximately 20min.

The main aim of this research project is to find out how continuous terror attacks have affected the image of Kenya among tourist stakeholders such as tour operators and travel agencies promoting Kenya as a tourist destination. A good example of those terror attacks include, the Westgate mall attacks in 2013, the Paradise hotel bombing in Mombasa in 2002, USA embassy bombing in 1998 and several grenade attacks in various entertainment joints across the country. The attacks have had a negative effect in the Kenya tourist industry and destroyed the image of Kenya as a safe tourist destination.

I kindly request your participation in this research project in order to shed more light on this topic with your opinion regarding the topic of terrorism and promoting Kenya as a tourist destination. Your opinion will be highly valued and will help answer my research question which is "How do terror attacks affect formation of a destination image among tour operators and travel agencies?"

I promise to abide by the ethical considerations in research which include, using the collected data for the purposes of research only and giving a copy of my research project for your review before handing it over my teacher. I promise to respect the rights of the organization and of the participant. I have attached a copy of the research questions in this letter.

Sincerely,

Milka Mbiyu, Mittuniversitetet,

Tel: 0727-753054

mimb1100@student.miun.se

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

THEME	QUESTIONS	KEY WORDS
INTRODUCTION	Introducing myself and my thesis, getting informed consent on recording, anonymity, confidentiality issues	
GENERAL	1. What is your general overview of Kenya as a tourist destination?	General image of Kenya,
TOUR OPERATORS	1. For how long have you promoted Kenya as a tourist destination? 2. How long have you been in operation as a tour company? 3. Why did you choose to promote Kenya? 4. How many tourists do you send to Kenya per year?	<i>years promoted Kenya, profit margin, vested interests, motivation, economic power, insurance of travellers, advice</i>
TERRORISM	1. Have you heard about terror attacks in Kenya? 2. How do you learn about events in Kenya?(Media source) 3. How do you follow up terrorism events in Kenya? -Example, Do you follow government bans? Do you provide guidelines to potential customers? (Discuss examples in 2013)	<i>west-gate mall attacks, grenade attacks, news, death tolls</i>
DESTINATION IMAGE	1. What kind of image do you have about Kenya in General? 2. Has your image changed after the occurrence of terror attacks?(Discuss how, give examples) 3. What is your first reaction when you receive news about Kenya being attacked by terrorist? 4. Do you still feel that Kenya is a safe tourist destination? 5. Do you still promote Kenya as a tourist destination?	<i>calling travellers already in Kenya, desolation, substituting destinations</i>
ENDING	1. Would you like to add something on the topics we covered? 2. May I contact you if I have further questions? 3. Would you like to receive a copy of my thesis?	<i>emails</i>