COUNTRY IMAGE AND ITS EFFECTS IN PROMOTING A TOURIST DESTINATION

Case Study: South Africa

MASTER THESIS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)

Maurice Ndalahwa Marshalls

12th April 2007

Supervisor: Dr. Anders Hederstierna
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................................... 7
   1.1 Demarcation of the Study ............................................................................................................ 12
   1.2 Research Methodology .............................................................................................................. 13
   1.3 Definitions and Concepts .......................................................................................................... 14
   1.4 Study Structure .......................................................................................................................... 17
2 COUNTRY IMAGE AND PLACE MARKETING ....................................................................... 18
   2.1 Introduction to Tourism ............................................................................................................. 18
       2.1.1 Psychology of Tourists Consumers ..................................................................................... 20
       2.1.2 South Africa and Tourism .................................................................................................. 24
   2.2 Image and Country Effects ......................................................................................................... 25
       2.2.1 Elements of Country Image ................................................................................................ 26
       2.2.2 Development of Country Image .......................................................................................... 33
       2.2.3 Effects of Country Image on Destination .............................................................................. 36
   2.3 Place Marketing ........................................................................................................................... 38
       2.3.1 Promotion ......................................................................................................................... 41
   2.4 Place Marketing Tourist Destination ......................................................................................... 44
       2.4.1 Marketing Challenging Places ............................................................................................ 49
3 METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................................................... 56
   3.1 Research Methods ...................................................................................................................... 56
   3.2 Selection of Case Study .............................................................................................................. 60
   3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Study .......................................................................................... 61
   3.4 Documentary Data ...................................................................................................................... 62
   3.5 Interview .................................................................................................................................. 63
   3.6 Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................. 64
4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ....................................................................................................................... 65
   4.1.1 International Marketing Council (IMC) ............................................................................... 65
   4.2 SA’s image and Effects ............................................................................................................... 68
   4.3 Promotion Strategy .................................................................................................................... 70
5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS ................................................................................................. 79
   5.1 The main research findings ....................................................................................................... 79
5.2 Research Contributions .............................................................. 83
5.3 Recommendation for further studies ......................................... 86

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................................. 87

APPENDICES ..................................................................................... 93
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Crime rate in SA ........................................................................................................... 11
Figure 2. The Palm Island, Dubai ............................................................................................. 16
Figure 3 Study Structure ............................................................................................................ 17
Figure 4: Tourist Arrival, 1950 - 2004 .................................................................................... 19
Figure 5: Elements of Consumer Psychology ......................................................................... 23
Figure 6: South African Map .................................................................................................. 24
Figure 7: Elements of Country Image ..................................................................................... 27
Figure 8 Development of Country Image ................................................................................ 35
Figure 9 Effects of Previous World Events on Tourism ......................................................... 38
Figure 10 Soccer city stadium in Johannesburg, SA ............................................................. 44
Figure 11 : Slogan SA it’s possible ....................................................................................... 45
Figure 12 Eiffel Tower as visual symbol ................................................................................ 46
Figure 13: The celebrity positioning map ............................................................................... 51
Figure 14: Methods employed collecting data ....................................................................... 59
Figure 15. Slogan SA it’s possible ......................................................................................... 73
Figure 16.SA Branded Taxis .................................................................................................. 75
Figure 17: SA’s Country image ............................................................................................. 84
Figure 18 Job Status ............................................................................................................... 93
Figure 19 Type of Travelers ................................................................................................. 94
Figure 20. Preferred activities for Holidays ........................................................................... 94
Figure 21. Deterrents (constructs that hampers country’s image) ......................................... 95

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Image Building Techniques ....................................................................................... 49
Table 2 A Framework for Comparing Visibility and Credibility ........................................... 55
Table 3 criteria for selecting case company ........................................................................... 61
ABSTRACT

Title: Country image and its Effects in Promoting a Tourist Destination

Author: Maurice Ndalahwa Marshalls

Supervisor: Dr. Anders Hederstierna

Department: School of Management, Blekinge Institute of Technology

Course: Master’s Thesis in Business Administration, 10 credits.

Background and Problem Discussion: The effects of country image on a tourist destination. The case in point South Africa’s image has suffered largely from its derogatory history. With an alarming increase of crime and terrorism activities, tourists are averse to travel to destinations curbed with the image problems.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to re-evaluate the existing theories on country image and contribute to the previous studies that have listed the main attributes of country image rather than “image” construct per se.

Method: Qualitative methodology has been employed in this study. Primary data is derived from literature review and substantiated by a selected case study.

Theory: This section discusses country image’s constructs. Country image encapsulate geopolitics, history, personal factors, information sources, and geographical dispensation.

Analysis: Collected data has been analyzed by means of comparing, classifying significant characters and transforming raw data to meaningful information which assisted in corroborating the selected theory against the case study.

Conclusion: Promoted image brand should always reflect the reality of a destination in question. The case in point SA has a room for a makeover of its image as a safe destination. Arguably, country’s image can be overhauled by reviewing curbing factors that were identified in this study. Notably, some of country image aspects as history and geographical dispensation can not be altered or easily manipulated. However, application of relevant marketing strategies as events and deeds were found relevant in SA context. Inevitably, successfully facilitation for the FIFA 2010 (events) could advance SA’s country profile in terms of trade, investment and tourism.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who gave me this opportunity to complete this study. Firstly, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my family members, Mrs. Marshalls, Shuli, Simon & Ms Georgia who were steadfast in providing all support during this study. A special word of appreciation goes to my mother Mrs. Victoria Ndalahwa for being a great role model in many respects.

I owe a lot of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Anders Hederstierna for his constructive suggestions and opinions which became an integral part of this study. Apparently, this success could not be possible without the generosity of Blekinge Institute of Technology and the government of Sweden for facilitating a noteworthy program (MBA) which contributes knowledge to our society irrespective of individuals racial, sex and background.

I am deeply indebted to Mr. John Battersby, a country manager at the International Marketing Council (IMC) UK, for availing his limited time and participate in depth interview session which assisted largely to draw conclusions of this study.

A special word of appreciation goes to H. E. Ambassador Dr. Bukelwa Hans of the South African Embassy, Helsinki for all support that succeeded this study. It would have not been easy without a wealth of information available at the Embassy which stimulated an inspiration to conduct this study.

Many thanks go to my colleague John Adicka who never hesitated to provide constructive critiques necessary for this paper.

Lastly and importantly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Lord Jesus Christ who has given me ability to pursue this thesis work.
Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

“Destinations need to reflect changes in the market place and increase competitiveness”

Promoting travel destination has been practised since the era of the Athenians and Romans antecedence, whereas cities strived to promote their respectful countries in winning a bid for hosting international sports (Olympics). In today’s context competition has transcend to an international level encompassing other economic areas such as tourism sector, which has received a due recognition. Notably, most countries compete to place market their destinations in attracting trade, investment and tourism. For instance, the city of Atlanta, Georgia in the US benefited approximately three billion dollars from the Olympic Games (sports tourism) hosted in 1996 Kotler et al (1993, pg 21).

Notably, there is an increasing involvement of countries in marketing their destinations as, as economic importance of country image is plausible for most countries. Hence, research suggests that the trend is shifting, and understanding consumer’s psychology and perception (image) towards the destination is significant in marketing strategy.

Gert (2005, 23) holds that “Just like companies, marketing places are increasing in the hands of discipline of the market”.

However, the notion that countries need to brand their images is not welcomed by all marketers. There are some misconceptions that branding is ascribed only for corporations. For instance Girald (1999), argues that “In France the idea of re-branding the country would be widely unaccepted because the popular feeling is that France is something that has nature and substance other than of a corporation. A corporation can be re-branded, not a state. One can take a product, a washing powder for instance, and change the name which is actually done very regularly. Regularly re-branding is normal, particularly in the life of consumer products, but this actually can’t be the case for
countries. A country carries specific dignity unlike a marketed product…. In France it is unimaginable for Chirac to attempt to re-brand France”.

In practice France’s image has transformed sporadically through years, in respect of political, cultural, sociological and economics. History shows that most countries have re-branded their images through time and space for set of reasons. To mention few, Ghana was previously named as the “Gold Coast”, Rhodesia was re-branded to Zimbabwe, Ceylon was renamed Sri-lanka. All above mentioned countries endeavoured to transform their images in order to alienate from past allegiances in respect of political, economical and colonial past. Moreover, re-branding and managing the existing brand image is paramount to cope with the changing market structures Morgan and Pritchard (2002). Whether for an individual, a corporate or a country; branding image is imperative in marketing strategy. A positive image - brand is a competitive advantage for products of all nature Eugene et al. (2001, pg 1).

In instance of global brands as Sony, Volvo, Nokia and Nike all these well known brands derives from a “place” with a positive image. There is a strong relation between provenance and products.

Some countries are perceived benevolent while others oppressive. Whatever the image people hold on a country, country image can influence a marketing strategy. In instance, the United States, the nation has long been perceived as a superpower attributed by its wealth and military advancement etc. Apparently, American image as a brand has long benefited its products. In instance, Hollywood in the US has significantly assisted in painting US facade with the attributes perceived today. The image builders attach attributes as wealth, power and prestige as the “American dream” in promotion activity.

Taking another case, Malaysia has invested heavily in promotion activities to build its image as a truly “Asian” Destination. Finland’s victory at the Eurovision 2006 is widely argued to have been orchestrated by the “band’s image”.

In light of globalization, brand-less activists argue that developing countries could take advantage of transition towards global brand export. Globalization effects compel
countries with the weaker image to be able to sell their products beyond the detriment of country of origin effects. It is argued that globalization might dilute the effects of country of origin and establish what is coined as hybrid products. Hybrid products are products whose components are outsourced from different countries. Naturally the questions arise whether country of origin variable is still a factor whereas some products bear multifaceted features Eugene and Israel (2001, Pg 99). In stance of car manufactures, most of car components are outsourced from different sources (countries). Research postulates that due to the ever increasing of the globalization force which is resulting in dwindling of brands effects, countries like China have become beneficiary of the changing market structures Tukler (2006, P1). However, this paper focus is on country image and its relation with tourism. Notably, country image cue is an area of research that has not received much attention in respect of developing countries.

With regard to service industry particular tourism, most studies show that country image is a factor. Consumer's decision to a destination is made based on the image of a destination and not the effects of globalizations. However, one can argue that the increased activities on terrorism have triggered for an international collaboration on all travel destinations. Moreover, countries are now taking advantage of their heritage and natural resources by place marketing their destination to attract tourism, investors and retain its inhabitants. In instance in Europe, there is an increasing of similarities in countries aspects due to European integration which has triggered to territorial competition to differentiate and brand destinations.

According to Perner, (2005), despite of competitive advantage of a given competitor, studies shows that country image plays a great role in promotion. There is a need to conduct further research in understanding the perception of the consumers toward market offering and erode or rectify negative perceptions that hinder the development of promotion strategy. Hence, the focus of this study is to explore the image creation and its effects in promoting country destination.
Research Problem

South Africa’s’ image has suffered from its derogatory history (*apartheid era*), current pandemics as HIV/Aids, crime and parallel economies. According to *all-Africa* (2007), tourism in SA is beginning to suffer from the increasing crime activities. In respond to this strident pressure, President Mbeki of SA promulgated his plans in curbing crime problem. Further, in his 2007 State of the Nation, he added “Nobody can show that the majority of the overwhelming majority of the 40 - 50 million South Africans think that crime is out of the control”. www.bbc.com

It is argued that post apartheid still prevails in SA. This problem curbs prospects for promotion of trade, investment and tourism DTI (2006). In instance, Eitien and Binns (2002) initiated a study on “post- apartheid SA”. The author conducted a study on a small Still Bay town in SA. This study unveiled that some communities’ particular of the disadvantaged have embarked to re-imaging their communities (*townships*) so as to improve their livelihood, Eitien & Binns (2002). In this paper we address image building at a countrywide scale. Notably, SA has institutionalized credible organizations as the International Marketing Council (IMC) so as to assist in branding SA image in assisting on promoting trade, investment & tourism. Negative images are inclined significant in hampering tourism industry at large, as a travel destination is not favored merely by renowned attributes as parks etc but with aspects that are discussed herein.
Instance, with an alarming increase of terrorism activities in many places, today tourists are averse to travel to places which are frequently reported with these activities WTO (2006). Figure 1 shows crime rates in SA between years 1995-2006

![Crime rate in SA](http://news.bbc.com)

**Figure 1 Crime rate in SA**

*Source: http://news.bbc.com*

In light of tourism, most studies have shifted from individual tourism (travel agents, tour operators) to place marketing or interchangeably referred as destination marketing which is carried at a national level. It should be noted that this study adopts the two terms mentioned above, which will be used interchangeably. In respect of marketing destination which is traditionally undertaken by tourism authorities, the topic has received a due attention globally. Apparently, most countries have realized the potential of tourism industry to their economies which have grown substantially in the last decades. However, apart from the rising body of research on the mentioned subject Anholt (*ibid*) express his concerns about the gap in the research area. In his findings he express his concerns of lack of destination promoters who make pragmatic policies that not only promote the country image but also constitute policies that facilitate reality by creating the right image Anholt (2002a, 230). Rainisto (2003, 13) supports Anholt’s notion on lack of profound research in place marketing and effects of country’ image in promotion strategy (Rainisto 2003).

It is argued that country of origin effects and its impact on retail products has been researched extensively in the past decades. This makes sense during the era of
industrialization, however with the shifting market structure and increasing of service industries, sectors as tourism calls for further research in areas as place marketing and image building. Therefore it is argued that despite of the increase of studies in destination marketing there is lack of profound theoretical framework on the subject. Thus, this paper’s focus will be placed on examining how country image is formulated, and how that image eventually affect tourism destination.

Thus, the research problem leads to subsequent question that will guide this thesis.

**Research Question**

*How does Country Image affect Promotional Strategy and a Tourist Destination?*

Thus, the core objective of this study is to answer the above research question. Secondly, this paper objective is to contribute to previous studies that has listed the main attributes rather than “image” which has been used in image studies by including recent studies, few of which are South Africa as a tourist destination. According to (Sonmez & Sirakaya 2002), “most studies on country image concentrate only on few countries specially the US and Europe, neglecting most emerging tourist destinations particularly in the developing countries”. The approach will be taken by reviewing available theoretical framework based on the secondary data and incorporate data based on the premises of a single case study that was found unique on this event. The findings will contribute further understanding on the phenomena of country image cues in promoting of tourist destinations.

### 1.1 Demarcation of the Study

It should be noted that research question has been condensed to a specific question so as to focus on how the image cue affects promotion activities.

As explained above the research area will focus on the core objectives and the role of image in international promotion strategy. Therefore, focus of this study rests on how to
link the impact of image towards promoting a tourist destination. There are similar theories to country image as branding (conventional products) and country of origin effects (COO). In essence the term image is interchangeably used with branding. However, this study adopts the term “country image” to ease any possible confusion with brand as a topic. Notably, branding for retail products shares the same analogy with branding country image. However, for simplicity most studies on country image adopt the term “image” in lieu of “branding”.

It should be noted that, this study approach the problem from the marketer point of view. Hence, the research question will be partially derived from the literature review (secondary data) to supplement the empirical data. Thus, an interview was arranged with prospective organizations from SA for this study. The International Marketing Council (IMC) which is institutionalized to enhance SA’ image, was among other organizations which were solicited to participate in this study. Arguably, other prospective organization(s) could have been involved in this study. However, due to limitation of time and research design parameters are set to the above-mentioned organization for this event. Whereas a need arise for further data, supplementation of other prestigious group(s) will be considered in areas that will be felt to lack information.

1.2 Research Methodology

This section address the methods employed in the empirical study and the areas of study. Qualitative approach with the open-ended survey is adopted in this study since it best captures more holistic components of the image constructs. Jenkins (1999) argues that in order to furnish valid image research, an approach of qualitative research is significant to filter other constructs relevant to the population being studied. Hence, open ended questions as “how” and “why” are adapted in this study as the method is rather recommended by various studies. Hence, this approach is congruent with the nature of the problem. It is inclined that free structure of the questionnaire encourages respondent(s) to unleash opinions freely. Apparently, nature of the study is sensitive whereas the case study in point addresses sensitive issues which are based on historical and political
situation of a country. The empirical section articulates analysis of selected case study. It should be noted that the case study included in this paper, is not intended in any way to compare or contrast the difference between the respondent(s), but to examine notions and opinions which will assist in substantiating whether the case in point supports the argumentation. According to Gummesson (1991, 75), case studies are significant when examining the situation of the organization or environment in question. Further, a single case study is plausible as the case study represents the significant situation in testing a well-formulated theory. As the key objective of this study is to explore how well the theoretical framework develops. Further, to examine how the process is actually carried out in practice, a single case is thus justified. However, limitation of single case study is acknowledged by incorporating substantial documentary data as discussed vigorously in section 3.1.

1.3 Definitions and Concepts

Image

The term “image” has a handful definitions and it all depends with the researcher’s point of view. Notably, most studies avoid precise definitions and not explicitly express this term to facilitate the concept depending with nature of the situation Echtner and Ritchie (1991).

William (1976) adds that the term image has been defined in various connotations to suit the description of a given purpose. Generally, image would refer to artificial construction of an object or scene. However, the term image is widely inclined as a reputation of a place or product. Mayo and Jarvis (1981) added that image is regarded perpetual when it comes to place marketing.

According to Jenkins (1999), a destination image is the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts and individual

---

1 * It should be noted; there other studies as country of origin effects (C00), Country of Origin Image (COI) The Hallow Effects etc which share same analogy with country image. However, country image is an unique term when place marketing is under discussion
or group that might have of a particular place. According to Nagashima (1970,1), “The picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers at the products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and tradition”

However for the purpose of this study we adopt the definition by Kotler et al (1993), “place image is a sum of belief and impressions that people have of place. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place”

Naturally image develops from experience, orientation or knowledge and endorsements of stereotypical experience on an event. Further, image conceived by an individual can be positive or negative depending with the experience of information that an individual has received Kotler and Barich (1991, 251)

**Promotion**

According to Wells and Wint (2000), promotion involves advertising, direct marketing, participation in trade shows and exhibitions and etc.

Promotion strategy refers to the activity of marketers communicating with the target audience in the various or selected market Kotler et al, (1993). In light of promotion there are various types of promotion strategies and tools which includes sales promotion, direct selling, advertising, public relation and personal selling

**Place Marketing**

According to Etienne and Binns (2002), place marketing is referred to a locality based strategy devised to re-image and restructure the local economies. Further, due to state of global economic crisis, the trend has triggered a search for locality economic development (LED).

**Tourism activities**

Tourism activities encapsulate all activities rendered in tourism industry. Notably, tourism activities have increased and shaped substantially in recent years. Traditionally,
tourism was limited to holiday and leisure. Today tourism activities encompasses, place tourism, culture tourism, ecotourism, sport tourism, business tourism (conference & exhibitions), wine, agro-tourism, heritage-tourism, farm-tourism etc. Notably, industrialized countries, endowed with cutting edge technology, have taken an advantage of technology and augment their destination(s) by introducing new features as an artificial lakes etc. In instance, the Emirates (Dubai) have embarked in overwhelming projects as the “Palm Island” which has transformed part of the sea front to a palm-shaped island.

Not surprising today there are prospects of sending tourists above “space” or beneath “underwater”, as place makers are becoming more sophisticated stretching ideas as far as technology transcends. Figure 2 depicts Palm Island in Dubai.

Figure 2. The Palm Island, Dubai

Source: www. dubaicityguide.com
1.4 **Study Structure**

This paper is outlined mainly in five sections. Chapter one commences with an introduction to the study and the research problem. The subsequent chapter discusses literature review which in this context, image cues and its role in an international promotion dominates the discussions.

Chapter three and four presents the empirical findings whereas the selected case company is analyzed and findings are concluded therein. The summary and conclusions are located in chapter five. The subsequent figure no. 3 was formulated by the current author for ease of reference.

![Figure 3 Study Structure](image-url)
Section 2.1 presents introduction to tourism industry and articulates the increasing importance of tourism sector in the global economy to postulate the potential of tourism industry. Psychology of tourist consumers is discussed to provide understanding why tourist selects a destination among others. Hence, literature review is formulated to foster a theoretical framework for the premises of answering the research question.

2.1 Introduction to Tourism

According to World Tourism Organization (WTO 2006) substantial increase of tourism activities indicates the potential of the industry. Tourism industry depends largely on the economy of a given market. According to Etienne and Binns (2002), service sectors have received a considerable impetus from distinguished consumers preference, choice and wealth. Tourism is one of the emerging sectors that have taken a lead. The growth of other sectors in the economy complements tourism industry at large. Statistically the increase of consumer’s income fuels expenditure patterns in many economic sectors particularly tourism activities. Tourism has been identified as one of the economy drivers for most countries. This emerging sector is currently comparable to other competitive economic sectors as telecommunication industry etc. Apparently, most countries are striving to promote their destinations abroad. International promotion is carried through different media vehicles depending with image situation. Figure 4 depicts the increase of the global visitors from year 1950s - 2000.
The WTO has a vision that captures most of place marketer’s attention. According to the WTO by the year 2020 international arrival will reach to approximately 1.56 billion. Out of the projected number, intraregional number is expected to increase to 1.2 billion. Hence, long haul travellers alone is projected to reach 0.4 billion. Notably, statistics shows that long haul travellers will grow at the rate of 5.4 percent per year, between the years 1995 – 2020. This forecast for growth of long haul opens an avenue for distant destinations as South Africa and others WTO (2006).

Among other regions that are projected to become beneficiaries of this the trend with annual growth of 5 %, includes Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, East Asia and the Pacific.

**Tourism Market**
This section, addresses the tourist market structure and its key characteristics to foster understanding of the essence of tourist market and its product characteristics in comparison to retailed products. According to Hollow & Plant (1989, P 86) “In general a market can be described as defined group of consumers for a particular product or range of products”

Generally speaking, tourists are consumers who purchase a set of tourism services and products that are available at the market. Understanding consumer’s needs and wants (psychology) is fundamental. Studies conducted in exploring the premise why tourism
consumers prefer one destination against another cites that the finding might ease promotion strategy Hollow & Plant (1989). Please note in further section(s), we discuss the elements of image and its effects. Thus, consumer’s perception and cognitive towards a product (destination) is further elaborated to understand the effects of country image.

Instance, a place marketer in a destination curbed with low visibility needs to consider raising awareness of its destination to the target market. Apparently the image(s) that people hold on product or region are basically based on the premises of their cognitive, psychological or previous experience towards a destination.

2.1.1 Psychology of Tourists Consumers

This section briefly explores tourist’s purchasing behaviours and their evaluation of product and service. Hence, the consumer psychology of tourism is explored to foster understanding how does image or perceptions of given destinations affects consumer’s evaluation process.

We start by defining consumer psychology concept; According to Muller and Johnson (1990) consumer psychology is a scientific study of consumer’s behaviour in evaluation of products prior the purchasing process. We take another point of view to foster further understanding. Foxall and Goldsmith (1994) hold that “consumer choice is portrayed as an ego – involving sequence of cognitive, affective, and cognitive changes which precede and predetermines the purchases outcome”

A set of consumers models have been developed in examining the complexity nature of consumer reaction to a given stimuli. Consumers can be categorized into three behaviour stages. Stage one is a “problem solving”, whereas consumers have little or limited knowledge about product or destination. It is cited that, at initial stage consumer’s decisions are shallow where buying decision is anchored on the current knowledge or

---

For simplicity, the term “destination” is hereto referred as a general product. Notably, other studies on tourism, infer each tourism service as a specific product.
previous experience of the product Hollow & Plant (1989, 96). Please see, section addressing “image experience” for further elaboration.

A natural question arises, when consumers search for new product(s), for instance a new pair of shoes or holiday package, do consumers really need these products or a desire arousal from stimuli?

Notably, the interaction of stimulus and exogenous factors fuels consumers responding in set of directions. In first instance, the author suggests attention to new products or service must take place. Second phase, consumers are made aware or get acquainted with the product so that they can acknowledge an image brand of a product. The third stage is where consumers, develop intention to acquire or purchase a product. Lastly, consumers engage in purchase activity. These stages can be well summarized by AIDA model which is abbreviated as (attention, interest, desire and action) Holloway & Plant (1989, 99).

In view of Foxall & Goldsmith (1994), the three phases include, pre- purchase, purchase and post purchase. Remarkably all purchasing stages are unique in respect of tourism, hospitality and leisure (THL). It is argued that THL pre- purchase stage starts a bit in advance in comparison to traditional products. The pre-purchase process commence by making purchasing decisions which are out of reach (distance destination) and taking to consideration of sensitivity of purchasing intangible products based on “image”.

It is rather challenging for THL consumers to make purchasing decision that requires a considerable duration of time, taking into account selecting set of choices and activities during the vacation. Naturally, most of tourist consumers make their decision based on past experiences. The second phase, purchase & acquisition stage encompasses the travel itself which is the main or core benefit of a tourist product. At this stage a travel consumer must travel to a destination and consume a product. Post – purchase phase is also significant aspect of THL marketers as most tourists’ consumers make post-purchases based on the experiences (satisfied or dissatisfied) phase “purchase and consumption stage”. Naturally satisfied tourists might collect artefacts or “souvenirs” from a place visited to exhibit to friends and family regarding the image and experience
of the destination. In other words the process of tourist sharing with colleagues and family members is referred as “word of mouth” which is significant in influencing positive or negative recommendation of a destination Geoffrey et al (2003, P.5).

Kotler et al (1993, 56), shares same view by asserting that, post-purchase behaviour, depends with the past experiences (satisfaction or dissatisfaction) of the purchased product(s). In light of consumers buying behaviour, there are sets of models related to our argument.

Consumer buying behaviour is influenced by many other elements which entail cultural, sociological, personal, and psychological factors. Further it is imperative for a marketer to understand the process of the buyer’s consciousness between the arrival of external stimuli and the buyers purchase decision Kotler (2000, P, 160). In view of Kotler et al. (1993, 46) consumer’s evaluation phase articulates that, consumer forms preference among a given choice of destinations. Two other factors are hereto presented. The first is attitudes to others. Based on the word of mouth attribute, in instance of close friends or a trusted tour operator informs a loyal customer who is about to make travel decision that a given destination is unsafe. As a result, the probability to make decision to a given destination is thus shifted or dwindles to a certain degree. A buyer’s preference for a place increases if a potential traveller is well recommended by a close friend or trustful informant of a destination Kotler et al (1993, 57).

In view of Gee et al. (1997, 44) motivation to a travel to destination derives from two significant premises, “psychologically and “sociological factors”. With regard to leisure travel Gee et al (ibid) hold that modern science still lacks ability to analyze the comprehensive human’s choices and emotions in making decisions on travel destinations. Further, Gee categorized psychological factors that trigger decisional choice.
This includes cultural aspect (experiences during the travel), leisure from a person’s usual environments, personal factors and social contacts. The following figure illustrates the process of consumer’s psychology when making evaluation of issues.

**The Elements and Process of Consumer’s Psychology**

![Diagram showing the elements and process of consumer psychology](image)

*Adapted from Crouch et al (ibid) (2003, P.4)*

For further discussions on the influences of psychological attributes to consumer’s evaluation on products, please see section 2.22.
2.1.2 South Africa and Tourism

We start by mapping South Africa from other respective “Southern African” destinations (countries). Notably, there is a misconception between South Africa as a country and other “Southern African countries”, which are located in the southern parts of the continent. Among the southern countries sharing same connotation of “Southern African” includes; Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia. Apparently, due to geographical proximity, these countries have some similar features in respect of cultural, landscape, topographical and tourism activities (adventures, national parks etc) Sanet (2006).

![South African Map]

Figure 6: South African Map
Source: www.googleimage.com

South Africa is renowned as one of the most diversified destinations in terms of nature, exotic, topographic, people, history and culture. The country is located in the southern part of the African continent boarded with the northern countries mentioned above. SA is
a large country, stretching approximately 1221040 Sq. km which claims approximately 4% of the entire African continent. SA has nine provinces bestowed with contrasting topography, climate, nature and vibrant scenery. This part of the world is a melting pot of diversified cultures from all walks of life. Arguably, SA people are constituted of the Africans majority, followed by the Caucasians, Asian origins and other minority groups. This is the reason that SA has been coined as the “Rainbow Country”.

SA is a young democracy, received its independency in 1994 from the white minority (apartheid regime). Despite of the potential of natural resources and exotic attributes, place marketers in this region still has to promote this great country above the cloud of political distortion. South Africa has identified tourism sector as one of economic drivers for its economy. According to WTO (2006), the role of tourism in developing countries is very important and crucial economic sector. In initiating this emerging market, SA has institutionalized credible organizations to promote the country. To mention few, International Marketing Council (IMC) and South African Tourism Authority (SAT) are few of the well known marketing organizations dedicated in promoting SA brand locally and abroad. It must be noted that there are other affiliates partners that operate under the umbrella organization for the benefit of the industry and the nation at large.

Among set of activities (products) that are available in SA tourism includes; adventure, urban buzz, business tourism, agro tourism, discovery, pamper, back-paper, culture and heritage, conferencing and eco-tourism etc.

### 2.2 Image and Country Effects

This section addresses country image cues and its role in promoting tourism activities. The section commences with an introduction of significant elements of image. Subsequently, the causes of image and tourist destination are discussed.

---

5 The term branding is used in this study solely to support the concept how country image develops. It should be noted that focus of this study is country image which shares similar concept with branding corporations
2.2.1 Elements of Country Image

In order to understand country image, we revisit the definitions of the country image and its components. “Country image is a set of beliefs and perceptions that people have about a given country. Further, country image is constituted of history, geography, art, music, citizens, and attributes.” Arguably, media and entertainment industry are cited to be significant vehicles in constructing cues of a country image Kotler, (2000). In instance, entertainment industry (Hollywood) in the US has significantly assisted in painting US image with the nation’s image as being perceived today. Noteworthy, most of movies or media messages, assisted by well organized campaigns substantially enhance American brand. The image builders attach, wealth, power and prestige “American dream” in promotion activity. In practise some of these “messages” are reflection of the reality that suffices in the US, orchestrated by media. All these messages are significant aspects in showcasing a country internationally. Mismanaging image branding can hamper this process Kim et al (2003, 216).

Notably, image is confused with stereotype, according to Kotler et al (1993, P.141) stereotype is broad image that is held by group of people that is considerably distorted with simplicity and that interpreted with either positive or negative attitude toward the place. Moreover, it is argued that image process is more on individual point of view and not from a group of people Kotler et al. (1993). According to Balogu & McClear (1999), country image is composition of cognitive and affective evaluation of a given country, the total package of variables constitute the general impression that a person hold on a country. These cognitive evaluations are brought about by auxiliary factors, influencing factors as symbolic stimuli (country attributes) and social stimuli (word of mouth from friends)

The current author has graphically summarized country elements on the subsequent figure 7, based on discussions from various studies (please see discussion, Kotler et al (1993, P.141), Nagashima (1970, 1), Jenkins (1999). National image is a versatile composition of a set of such constructs as music, geographical location, people, and other respectful variables. Cognitive evaluations are brought about by a variety of
information sources as symbolic stimuli (promotional efforts of a destination) and social stimuli (word of mouth from close friends and relatives).

Figure 7: Elements of Country Image

*Source: Formulated by the current author*

In other words, cognitive evaluation refers to beliefs and knowledge about an object (ibid, 87). Affective image, on the other hand, implies to an individual sentiment about an object. Weaver & Oppermann (2000) hold same view however instead of cognitive and affective, they use the terms “descriptive” and “evaluative”. In view of Balogu & McCleary (1999, 87) many findings in environmental psychology support the view that

---

6 Arguably, other country image elements could be added on figure 7. It all depends with the researcher’s point of view. However, the main attributes listed hereto remain analogous in most studies.
cognitive element of image is the knowledge about the place’ objective attributes whereas the affective counterpart is knowledge about its affective value.

A body of research have developed to find out the relationship between cognitive and affective image. Balogu & McCleary (1999) concluded that some of these studies that suggest an amount of external stimuli received influence the cognitive component of image but not affective one. Therefore, the cognitive component of image holds an intervening role between information source and affective component. With regard to tourism and from tourist marketer point of view, this implies that using proper information sources, a destination and indirectly influence the generic image perceived by potential tourist (Beerli & Martin 2004)

**Country main factors**

Country main factors is a definition formulated by the current author for the purpose of describing various attributes of country image, which are predominant and which are cited to influence a person’s perception of a country image that cannot be altered or manipulated for the purpose of place marketing. The components within the concept are adopted from different sources such as Beerli & Martin (2004), Kotler & Gerner (2002) Kotler et al. 1993, 121 – 135). Country – specific factors and their image meanings are quite apparent, due to limitation of this study only few aspects of the country specific are addressed in this paper. We explore the significant factors that directly influence country image.

**Personal factors**

Notably, some of the attribute(s) of the personal factors are discussed under section of consumer psychology and behaviour. However, for the purpose of country image cues, personal factors re-surface to support the discussion.

Arguably, country image develops from the stereotypes that persons hold on a place. Stereotypes of an image or place, develops over time and space and extend from the premises of the familiarity with images of instance of famous people and knowledge with products of a given country etc. However, it widely argued that that images held by
a group of people might differ from stereotypes, as an image is more of a personal interpretation. Thus, the image(s) held by different group of people about the exact same place can differ depending on the person’s own, needs, motivation, prior knowledge and preference (Beerli & Martin 2004, 653).

Personal factors can be divided into two sections, psychological and social. Psychological factors as discussed in consumer behaviour include all of the discussion above. Personal individual motivations, values and personality, social factors include person, background, education, age and other social factors (Balogu & McCleary 1999, 870). Thus, the attributes listed above, are argued to affect an individual’s evaluation on an object, product and in this context destination.

**Geographical Location**

Geographical location of a given country is highly significant when country image is under discussion. Geographical location implies to the accessibility of the place, and thereby impacts on the travelling costs to a given location (country). This aspect is imperative as it significantly influence consumer’s decision-making to a long haul destination (Vuoristo 2003, 55; Oppermann 2000, 99). Notably, in the recent years, most tourists in European region have been attracted to travel to closer destinations that meet their needs as “sun and beaches” as Spain and Asia rather than distance destination(s). In respond to the demand, Asian countries have orchestrated their destinations due to proximity to Europe and therefore compete with cheap packages compared to long distance locations as Australia and South Africa.

As result of country location destination that are not easily accessible due their geographical distance are not necessary listed in the consideration travel list by tourist consumers. According to Kotler et al. (1993), when considering time factor to travel to a distant destination and the cost of travelling as criteria, South Africa in this instance can be considered a distant location from the point of view of consumers residing from the other side of the continent.
Hence, the image of country is highly related to the tourist values delivered due to the location of the country. These value added motivations which constitute the image of a country prior and post visit. In instance, if a tourist is looking for given product (e.g. adventure or sun), then the images of countries which does not meet these expectation can either consciously or unconsciously lead into more or less negative image of a given country Baloglu & McCleary (1999).

With regard to geopolitical atmosphere, local politics can influence the accessibility of the country and the general image of the given country. For instance, during the era of Mao of China, his politics and views discouraged visitors to the destination. According to WTO, China has been projected to lead the world by being the first world class destination that will attract most visitors by the year 2020. In order to cater for this market new China is striving in transforming its geopolitics, regulations and advancing infrastructures which now attract international investors, and tourists into its destination (Weaver & Oppermann 2000). Political accessibility refers to the policies particular in respect of immigration conditions under which foreigner (tourists) are regulated to visit the country. Complicated country accessibility in terms of tourist visas procedures, levying costly visas, complicated procedures contributes largely leads in demoralizing a destination image.

**Climate and Culture**

In light of climate and nature, this attributes influence the creation of country image, to a large extent depending on the background of the person in question. Moreover, the need and desire for a change is one of the most influential factors in tourism decision-making. In instance people from very cold climate are prone to travel to warmer and sunny destinations. Individuals from developed and urban background might be fascinated by nature and adventure (Vuoristo 2003, 29). In instance, this has been a case for holiday seekers from the West venturing safari adventuring to Africa to explore sites that are not common in the western part. Instance, due to the increasing globalization which is
argued to fuel homogenous culture, for some there is increasing interest of tourist revisiting remarkable heritage sites to re-capture of the lost culture and practises. For instance, Egypt and Italy are well respected by their profound heritage sites and wealthy history.

**Distance – Decay**

Distance decay as the word implies is the tendency of inbound tourism flows to decline as default regions become further distant from the destination (Weaver & Oppermann 2000, 98). According to Gallarza et al (2002, 61), it is inclined that distance has a role in the formation process. In addition, it is cited that the country’s size and international power in the respect of economy and politics fundamentally influence the distance – decay effects. This view is also supported by Luostarinen (2002) who in his study found out that the distance between home and the target market has an effect on the international market strategy. Although these studies have focused on corporation, however the same rules are basically applicable with regard of tourist destination.

**Travel Intermediaries**

Travel intermediaries implies to tour operators and travel agents. These travel agents are inclined to be fundamental information facilitators. Intermediaries are positioned at the frontier meeting face to face with the tourist consumers. Hence, it is widely argued that travel intermediaries are in strong position to impose destination images to travellers based on information at their disposal. According to Andreu et al. (2002) travel intermediaries are significant “protagonist” who disseminate information to the potential tourists and thereby influence, image and decisions of travel destination. In this respect tour operator are more involved in painting the picture of a tourist destination based on how they want to sell a tourist destination.

Naturally, travel operators market a respective destination with basic information retrieved from the countries they represent. The marketing material (brochures, internet links, personal experience and other materials) at disposal of these intermediaries are significant in drawing an imaginary destination to the potential consumers. Generally
speaking most travellers might have prior experience or receive second hand information prior of making plans of a holiday destination. However, studies show that most of travellers rely heavily on information furnished by the travel intermediaries whose business deals directly on travel destinations. The advent of information technology has empowered travellers with a wealth of information at their disposals. With click of a mouse tourists can retrieve necessary information of a respective destination.

According to Balogu & Mangaloglu (2001, in Konecnick 2002) have fostered that images held by travel intermediaries of a destination are just as significant as those held by individual travellers. According to Konecnik (ibid) “particularly for international destinations, the role of travel intermediaries in promoting and formulating images of the destination is boosted, due to international travellers are more inclined to use travel intermediaries in their destination selections”

Further, it can be concluded that travel intermediaries play significant role in image creation of a destination. (Ashwoth & Voogd (1994, 49)

**Stimulus Factors**

When it comes to information source, Balogu and Mac Cleary (1999, 892) concluded that the variety and the amount of information sources contributes positively to a cognitive evaluation of a destination. Therefore, destinations should find means to make tourists use multiple information sources available. In instance, the US has significantly been assisted by various media vehicles as entertainment industry (Hollywood) to further its campaigns. Media has mainly orchestrated in painting US facade with image attributes perceived today (*super power, wealth*). Thus common media vehicles includes, television, radio, movie to internet has proved significant in dissemination of information to the general public. On the other hand, media from the west have been criticised by manipulating developing countries through media by holding at least few positive news from developing countries, and in lieu fascinated of reports on war, hunger, crime which keep spoiling the image of the areas concerned. According to WTO (2006) “it is
significant for marketers to tracking of new stories for necessary action. Instance, rapid response to erroneous information news stories affecting the tourism industry.” This practise is much observed by the world media champions as BBC, CNN and Al-Jazeera as they acknowledge the role of media and its effects.

Balogu (2000) agrees with the above notion that tourist’s images of destination in question are of great extent influenced by the information sources (1972; Bologlu 2000, 68) which emphasized two major sources of information that which an image of destination is developed, namely “organic” and “induced”.

To conclude the discussion about the elements of a country image, it can be argued that there are several components, which apparently cannot be changed by any place markets efforts. However, various elements remain of significant importance when making decisions about proper destinations marketing practices.

2.2.2 Development of Country Image

This section briefly outlines the process of how image develops. Naturally questions arise, where does a country image develop from? Who institutionalize country image? There could be further questions posed in this regard to elicit the phenomena. However, in this study we examine the foundation of image and its development during time and space.

According to Eugene and Israel (2001,) the halo theory holds that a person or group of individuals might have no knowledge or neither previous experience of a given country. However, there is a degree of an imagination towards a country where product is manufactured. This conceived image plays a great role when making buying decision. The model can be illustrated by Han (1989) hypothesis, MCI = beliefs about attribute = image attitude. Roth and Romeo, 1992; Parameswarana and Pisharodi, 1994) argue that image of a given country is influenced by individuals cognitive, affective, and conative
responses to persons and products of a country in question. There is a substantial relation between provenance and country of origin.

According to Johansson, Ronkainen and Czinkota (1994) exemplify that products from less developed countries receive less attention than products from developed countries. This has been a case for less developed countries. In response to the situation, industrialized countries have been taking advantage of outsourcing raw materials from less developed countries and process products to final stage and re-brand them with a new brand (image). For instance, a product processed in the developing countries on cheap labour, branded with an image of industrialized country and traded at a premium price.

In another view, image is constituted by well known organizations and international institutions. Take for instance, the United Nations, World Bank & World Trade Organization. The above-mentioned institutions are accredited to evaluate and classify countries based on the set of indicators as economy performance and so forth. For instance, the terms as the third world countries, developing countries and industrialized countries are such categories that are largely ascribed by above named institutions.

This classification can hamper country prospects when judgement is biased. For instance, the study of “made in” effects shows “made from syndrome” has strong effects in consumer’s decision-making. For instance, a cigar from Cuba will have a strong consumer’s preference as most consumers have come to experience best cigars derives from this place. Further misconceptions of country image can be drawn erroneously based on variable used by a given institution. Instance, Israel was recently labelled as a developing country while it is one of the leading countries in high-tech industry.

Further, image of a given country is ascribed to its attributes as quality, value, design, reliability and so forth. As further studies show, attitudes and perception towards country image are brought about the individual’s peers who have experienced with the country or product in question, in essence word of mouth and mass media plays a great role in dissemination of information about a country (Crawford and Garland, 1988; Hong and Wyer, 1989; Howard, 1989).
According to (William, 2005) in today’s image conscious society, consumers buying decision is much influence by the “looks”. The effects of image can be more illustrated with the automobile industry. It is widely observed that car manufactures have responded to the shift of consumer’s psychology and focus on image as an important variable on cars design. The case in point is Asian car manufactures, benchmarking and counterfeits are common in the automobile industry.

However, it should be noted that, image building program should solely assist in reflection of the value of service and products projected. In other words, the service or the branded products should meet the consumer’s expectation William (2005). In this study we underscore image as variable in consumer decision making, and thus this study does not disregard other constructs of consumers on buying decision. The focus will be centred on effects of image to better understand the role of country image in tourist destination. A number of studies show that country cues affects consumer evaluation on products. In instance “made in Switzerland or made in Japan” are strong cues attached to product that strongly affects consumer evaluation of products in question. The attributes can strongly fuel brand equity and particularly for products that are well known.
According to Papadomuous (2001), the conventional usage of “made in” has developed to next level and surpass the requirements of products labels. There is a strong products provenance and effects of its image. For instance, New York’s raisins, Russian Vodka, French style and much more are ascribed to enhance the brand of a given product.

Naturally an image emerges by developing a product into the market. With regard to creation of an image or brand of destination, research shows that a trend of heritage tourism which is by rediscovering, preserving or creating tourism sites has been much felt in new Europe. Culture is another aspect that plays great role in creation of tourism image. According to Zeyeo and Maheswaran (2000) there are two culture dimensions, collectivist and individualist. Collectivist favours more home of origin products than the individualist. In other view, culture of a given place is also part of the elements of creating image, as in essence, identified culture or created culture within society shapes how tourism and leisure can be rendered in one of geographical area (Ashworth et el, 2002,pg 69). For instance, new generation have developed culture or habits which shape our society at large.

2.2.3 Effects of Country Image on Destination

Following the discussion on image elements and its developments, this section explores the effects of image on destination. Based on the preceded figure no 8 which demonstrated the process of how image develops, the discussion shifts to effects of image.

According to WTO (2006) “the tourism sector is highly sensitive to the impacts of the natural and man made disasters” WTO have categorized the effects in the following manner:
a) Environmental
This refers to natural disasters such as tsunami which devastated the Asian nations, floods, hurricanes and etc. This force of nature has significant effects in tourism industry

b) Geopolitical
These are prevailing political or regulatory conditions in a given country. Also geopolitical refers to activities or act of terrorisms such September 11.

c) Societal
These are such effects of pandemics as HIV& AID, SARS, Avian Flu and Ebola. Significantly these pandemics can detriment the accessibility of tourists to a given destination.

d) Technological
This implies to convergence of technology and non-technology at place

According to the WTO the effects of world events has substantial impact on tourism industry. For instance, terrorist event of the September 11 devastated the United States and its allies. In respond to the event, tourism industry dwindled by 3 % reducing the industry revenue from $ 475 to $ 463 billion. Instantaneously history was changed; the US became vulnerable amidst tight security. According to the WTO “tourists avoided areas involved in the conflicts and perceived as close hand” As discussed above on the components of country image, safety in respect of destination is very important. We can explore further these phenomena of the world events that have occur recently in Asia. The proliferation acts of malicious group and political restless in the region affects the country image and consequently discouraging tourists in a given destination.
Place Marketing

This section presents the key constructs of promotion aspects under the context of place marketing. The section commence by briefly addressing the classic models of marketing mix or popular by the four Ps (promotion, price, and place & product). It should be noted that focus of this study is centred on promotion strategy significant to this study. Further, other promotion techniques relevant to tourism perspective are addressed. The central objective here is to review literature on effects on country image cues and its relation to promotion strategy. The models are further analysed in the empirical section to compare and contrast with the collected data from interview.

With regard to marketing mix concept which is the foundation of the marketing strategy the four Ps which include product, price, place and promotion are briefly discussed. Deploying any of the four techniques depends with the objective of the marketer in question.
Product

With regard to tourism, this study refers product as a tourist destination. According to Hollow & Plant (1989) “a product is as anything that is offered at market to satisfy a want or need” The author holds that tourism product is complex in comparison to conventional products. In instance a new destination can be viewed as a new product, a tour operator package etc. In respect of tourism products, the author underscore that when consumers buy tourism product they are generally buying “features” of the perceived quality, standard or general image (relaxing destination, sunny etc). Further, the product’s (place) image and its value may be further projected through the use of brand image which act as a cue (Hollow & Plant, 1989, 111). Notably, other tourism studies refer to various services and activities as product. For instance, adventure, sun and beach can be categorized as products offered in a given destination.

For the purpose of this study, we generalize place (destination) as a product for ease of reference. Naturally selling intangible product is far challenging than selling retail product as holiday package. It is obvious that more skills are needed to sell tourism products, as more effort is needed in convincing consumers based on an imaginary assumptions as the “sun and beach” available in a given destination. Decisions made on products depended on the country origin of the product as the country of origin signifies the quality of the product.

Pricing

Pricing encapsulates discounts, commissions, surcharges and extras that are employed in marketing promotion when promoting a destination in comparison to other places. It is common for the place marketers to offers intriguing trial package(s) in winning new customers. As most countries realize the potential of tourism to their economies, price wars are increasing in the market place as promoters are striving for a win - win situation.
Place

In this context, place does not necessarily refer to a tourism destination. With regard to promotion mix a place implies a unit for product distribution. In other words, the methods of promoters employ on product distribution to the market. For instance, in promoting tourism abroad, it is cited that a country engaging in promoting tourist abroad, should secure a representative (channels) abroad that will cater for target market. This is suitable for country with enough funds to establish a representative office abroad than anchoring on travel intermediaries who primary objective is maximizes their own business. Further, it is inclined that these representative offices are positioned to meet face in face with the consumers and correct immediately the distorted perception Kotler et al (1993). In respect of conventional products, place which implies to marketing channels is a significant strategy for a manufacture. Corporations exporting products abroad normally secure reliable distributors to ensure sustainability of brand, quality and service (Kotler, 2000). For countries engaging in building image in target market, it is recommended to secure reliable representatives who will maintain brand equity avoiding endangering a country profile. For instance, Nokia in Finland has exclusive distributors abroad who manufacture and distribute Nokia phones maintaining the brand equity of the principal company. These strategic partners have to meet the standards that will not harm the image of Nokia products and image.

In light of promoting a country, we adopt a concept from Wells and Wint (2000), to broaden our discussion on destination marketing. Thus, marketing a country encompasses three promotion activities: image building, investment generation and investors service. Notably, this paper focus remains on image building based on the nature of the problem. However, the author marketing monograph acknowledges combinations of the three promotion strategies depending with the objectives of a particular country Wells and Wint (2000, 159). In stance a country that have strived to change its policies in attracting foreign investors by ease “ownership regulations” should focus on image building in encouraging investors on credibility.
2.3.1 Promotion

This section addresses promotion strategy that can be used by place markers to reach its target market. After discussion on promotion strategy and its concepts, the next section discusses place marketing and the ideal tools favored in promoting tourist destination.

Promotion strategy refers to an activity of marketers communicating with the target audience in the various or selected market (Kotler et al., 1993). In light of promotion there are various modes of promotion strategies and tools which includes sales promotion, direct selling, advertising, public relation and personal selling.

Kotler et al. (1993, P 162) shares the same notion by underlining some important aspects that will ease confusion when creating a message and image of place.

In view of Ashworth & Voogd (1994, 4) “an essential part of communicating place information concerns the transmissions of place image. Transmission forms the link between images held by persons and those projected by places” It is therefore argued that place markers should understand what image people hold prior embarking on promotion strategy.

Promotion Strategies

Advertising

According to Kotler et al. (1993), advertisement is any type of paid mode of non personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor. In the context of place marketers, purchase of advertisement in form of magazine, newspaper or other forms advertising. Within the sphere of advertising, public advertising is most promising way of communication. Further, it is argued that a place and its products receive more attention as country of origin effects assists in communicating the value of a product. Among the variables of advertising vehicles include, advertising through media television, radio, magazines, newspapers, brochures, billboards (outdoor), internet, direct mails and so forth. Decision of suitable mode of advertisement, depends with the
objective and budget of the concerned marketer. Usually television is the most effective mode of advertisement despite its high cost.

Direct Marketing
This form of communication refers to marketing by focusing on individual level. Direct marketing consist of mail and telephone approach. The author cites that place marketer can use this mode to communicate to its target market than employing mass marketing. This approach is merely practiced by travel intermediaries (tour operators & travel agents) as they meet face to face with their target consumers.

Sales Promotion
As the word implies, the mode encompasses the approach of short term strategy to motivate customers to buy a product or service. It is argued that whereas advertising informs or educate the motive to buy, sales promotion encourage or motivate to buy products. Instance, an offer of attractive package holiday or even free short tour to a new destination can be offered to create awareness and stimulate more tourists in visiting a destination. Kotler et al (1993). In instance of common promotion practices with regard to conventional product in market, for instance electronic market with limited life cycle is promoted with compelling offers as free trials for some products or lengthy warranty or guarantee term (2-3 years). Also these means are devised to encourage consumers of particular new products that lack image (brand) or lack awareness in a particular market Kotler (2000).

Public Relation
According to Danny Grisword, “Public Relations is management function which evaluates public attitudes. Thus, the policies and producers of an organization with interest to earn public understanding and acceptance” We take another analogy by Scott’s to enlarge our understanding, PR is planned efforts to influence views through good character and responsible performance based on mutual basis.

In essence, PR is the practice of managing communication between a country and their key audiences so as to establish manage and sustain positive and favorable image.
Hence, the underlying activity of PR involves the following:

- Evaluation of Public attitude and opinions
- Establish communication program to manage unfavorable situations
- Organization procedure and policies helping public in mind
- Enhance communication program with the public (target market).
- Cultivate relationship between the organization, institutions and the general public.

In instance of increasing concern of activities of some corporations, there is an emergence of such activists as the “green movements” who have raised “awareness” to responsible corporation to review underlying practices by resorting into programs as corporate responsibility or philanthropy programs so as to create positive image towards the public and the target audience.

**Personal selling**

Personal selling is an approach that involves executing oral presentation to consumers to achieve sales objective. Personal selling is argued to be the most effective mode of promotion by its nature in creating buyer’s preference by expediting and stimulating necessary action. In respect of tourism, personal selling is naturally practiced by intermediaries (travel agents & tour operators) who are in the position to meet face to face with the potential travelers Middleton (1994, 150). As discussed in the roles of travel intermediaries particularly tour operators and travel agents play major role in influencing images and decisions of travelers.

According to Czerniawski and Maloney (1999), establishing a well-known brand image requires well promotion and positioning strategy. Positioning strategy encompasses six elements which are; consumer needs, target customer group, competitive framework, benefit, and the objective of brand image.
The marketer has to identify the target market and investigate consumer’s needs so as to facilitate satisfaction. Further on, value offering to consumers must be associated with the brand promotion in order to enhance brand image with positive attributes.

2.4 Place Marketing Tourist Destination

Place marketing activity has received a due attention as countries have realized the importance of locality based strategy in their respective regions. Most countries compete to attract trade, investment and tourism as the bids for international sports (the Olympics). For instance, the international Olympic Committee chose the city of Atlanta, Georgia, the winner of the international events. The financial advantage that was brought about by this event was estimated more than 3 billion dollars Kotler et al (1993, Pg 21). This practise has been observed particularly in other international events as world cup. Naturally cities or countries granted to host these international events, exploit the opportunity in re-imaging their respective destination (Andrew, 2005). A case in point South Africa won the bid for the world cup 2010, to host an historical event in SA and the whole of Africa. According to BBC sources, “South Africa’s 2010 football World Cup is set to be the most commercial successful since the first tournament was held 76 years ago” In response to this, SA is working hard to enhance its image by developing its current infrastructure and ensure that safety meets an international standard. The following figure depicts one of the current stadiums available to cater for the 2010 games.

![Figure 10 Soccer city stadium in Johannesburg, SA](https://www.bbc.co.uk)

*Source: www.bbc.co.uk*
The place promoters acknowledge that winning a bid is not enough. However, delivering the promises by ensuring safety and rendering world class services is essential to substantiate that SA is in position to render world class service significant in image building program.

**How to Promote Places**

According to Kotler et al, (1993, 151) there are several tools that can assist in promoting a country images these include, (1) slogans, themes and positions, (2) visual symbols and (3) events and deeds as which was discussed on above section in respect of international sports and games as the world cup. Each mode of promotion has its own requirements and potentials depending with the objectives of the marker in question.

**Slogans, themes and positions**

According to Kotler et al (1993), image creator should develop a slogan that links a specific campaign and theme. Normally a slogan should be short and embodies an overall vision of a place. For instance a slogan developed by Spain reads “Everything under the sun” literally there can be variable of slogans that can communicate the message. The case in point SA, has developed a compelling slogan “Alive with possibilities” signaling an appeal of reviving country image from the past struggles. The subsequent figure exhibits the theme South Africa it’s Possible.

![Slogan SA it's possible](http://www.southafrica.net)

**Figure 11 : Slogan SA it’s possible**

*Source: http://www.southafrica.net*
**Visual symbols**

Visual symbols are potential tools in place marketing. Notably, most world-renowned landmarks are predominantly imposed into consumers’ minds. Arguably, countries that have adopted visual symbols based on vibrant architecture sites or natural resource can adopt this strategy. In instance France deploys *Eiffel Tower to ease communicating country image to its target audience*. The Big Ben of London or other new locations in the UK confirms the analogy. Further, Red Square in Moscow, the US statue of freedom and so forth are few to illustrate the concept.

Hence, it is noteworthy that countries with remarkable visual symbols should include their heritages *(symbols)* in marketing activities for ease of reference. The following diagram depict Eiffel tower deployed as visual symbol in communicating France image.

![Figure 12 Eiffel Tower as visual symbol](www.Eiffeltower.com)

*Source: www.Eiffeltower.com*
**Events and Deeds**

The strategy basically involves the potential of catch events and deeds that happens in a given country. For example, Russia has been exporting its ballets and gymnasts to the US to communicate about the potential of its country. Other essence of events and deeds is countries taking an advantage of international events and use as a platform to promote their destination(s). For instance, international events held in some countries, in respect of sports or world conference are normally exploited to show case a country internationally.

It was noted in the introduction, that the city of Atlanta, in the US benefited financially and most importantly boosted its image when won the bid for hosting Olympics 1993. It is now common in the market places, during the tender of hosting of world cup most countries strive to host this milestone events. The premise is obvious; most of countries acknowledge the significant of hosting international “events” as the window of opportunity to promote self image on the international arena in terms of trade, investment and particular tourism Kotler et al (1993).

**Other promotion techniques**

For the purpose of this study we will discuss further promotion techniques to enrich literature review. Further, it can be stated that although most studies on country image involves “trade, investment and tourism however, in this context the focus of this study is tourism. The technique and models discussed herein can be manipulated to cater for the tourism sector.

Thus, Wells and Wint (2000p. 21), suggests the following promotion techniques are commended when embarking on country wide promotion activities. This includes, improving investment in concern country which will reflect the image of the country. Secondly to provide services to prospective and current investors (investment – service activities). Arguably, image building and investment (tourism) service activities are significant in attracting tourism into a given country. Remarkably, the author on recent empirical studies found that different country promoters have different objectives and appropriate measure of each technique differs. The study elicited 12 different promotion techniques apart from above mentioned above. These different techniques were derived
from case studies from respectful promotion agencies that participated in this study. The studied techniques are listed as follows

1. Advertising in general financial media
2. Advertising in industry or sector specific media
3. Participating in investment exhibitions
4. Facilitating general investment missions from source country to host nation’s promotion
5. Facilitating seminars that offers general information on investment (tourism)
6. Involvement in direct mail interchangeably with telemarketing
7. Carry out industry (tourism) missions from source country to host country vice versa.
8. Facilitating seminars on providing specific country information (image building)
9. Involving specific research accompanied “sales promotion” presentations
10. Facilitating counselling on tourism related services
11. Ease the process of application and permits (tourist visas)
12. Fostering post – investment service
13. 

The above underlined techniques were studied from some 12 respectful countries as depicted in table 1. Remarkably, most countries that participated in this study, which was conducted by Well and Wint (2000), the findings suggested that their objective was to change the image of the nation as place for business (investment, tourism and trade). It is interesting when the term “change” is used here, in essence when promoting a country, erasing negative ideas or other sum of belief that hinders business or place of business is imperative Well and Wint (2000,22).

The subsequent table below depicts other strategies that can be used or used by other countries in promoting and building image.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality Promotion agency &amp; Image building techniques</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain Invest in Britain Bureau</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Investment Canada</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica Costa Rican Investment Promotion Program</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia Investment Coordinating board</td>
<td>4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland Industrial Development Authority (IDA)</td>
<td>1,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia Malaysia Industrial Development Authority (Mida)</td>
<td>2,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland Locate in Scotland (lis)</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore Economic Development Board (Edb)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand Board of investment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Image Building Techniques
(Source: Well and Wint, 2000)

2.4.1 Marketing Challenging Places

With regard to place marketing, a well renowned image is an asset in attracting tourists (Coshall, 2000; Tapachai and Warysak, 2000) It is argued that place’s reputation is not created from abstract stance and neither left for visitors choice. Hence, challenge is shouldered on place marketers to formulate salient strategy so as to market their destination beyond detriments discussed in this paper. Naturally, most destinations have unique futures which offer a variety of choices for visitors to select. For instance, people residing in colder regions are prone to visit warm destinations for sunny holidays. Generally speaking visitors are motivated to visit destinations which are perceived exotic from their point of view.

With regard to countries diversities in terms of geography, landscapes, scenery etc this difference set a benchmark which countries are ranked based on their offering. Thus, the concept of celebrity which implies top tourists destination is plotted on a tourist map. In order to achieve celebrity status it depends with the place marketer strategy. According
to Morgan and Pritchard (2004, 66) to be positioned on celebrity map, it requires a brand winner (well known) places equipped with positive elements. These elements in this respect includes, emotional meaning, have great conversation value and hold high anticipation for potential tourists. In contracts brand losers are termed “problem areas”, these are places with negative image due to associated events, (crime, economic turmoil etc) Morgan and Pritchard 2004, p66). Second aspect of destination mapping, implies to high emotional pull however has limited celebrity attribute. This place is yet to be discovered to its full potential and could be the future celebrities. The diagrams below illustrate the destination brand positioning map. In instance of the current top world destinations or the celebrities are as the Bahamas in the Americas and Venice in Italy etc. With regard to the Bahamas, its weather, crystal waters, white beaches diversified nature have contributed much in defending its celebrity status. As depicted in the subsequent figure 10, Bahamas is depicted at left- top which refers to high emotional pull or high celebrity class.

Other countries with very low visibility in term of tourism as Afghanistan are positioned at the bottom right of the diagram. Further the mapping map demonstrate where some countries are positioned based on the attributes they offer and other aspects as geographical distance and distance decay as previously discussed in other sections of this paper.
**Managing Negative Image**

The first phase is the process of enhancing or makeover of the destination brand by implementing the core values of the destination and its brand.

The brand image should be relevant, presentable and salient to tourists. The author suggests a well research in establishing a meaningful brand image. Aspect that should be taken into consideration when creating brand to incorporate core values attributes. In creating a well image, consideration should focus color, brand identity, photography, typography and tone of voice to brand marques Morgan and Pritchard (2004, 68). Further, there should be consistency on marketing promotion underlining the core values to communicate the brand image in every promotion. For successful creating an
emotional appeal a country image has to be credible, deliverable, conveying remarkable messages, differentiating and resonating to the consumers.

Every country embarking on image creation program could hire a public relation firm or an advertising agency to develop, identify and disseminate a positive country image. This strategy is viewed as cost efficient, since the destination is not investing funds in restructuring the existing infrastructure or creating a new place but rather creating awareness of the country features that are currently in place Kotler et al, (1993, P 35).

Kotler (1993) describes the six image situations that needs be identified by place marketer’s prior developing market strategy. These situations include positive image, weak image, negative image, contradictory image, overly attractive image and mixed image. The attributes are further elaborated as follows:

1. **Positive image.** Implies some destinations have been bestowed with natural resources which inevitably fosters positive image. In instance, Venice in Italy and Serengeti in East Africa has natural heritage beauty. These instances do not need more efforts in building image as the place has already favored image. However, failure to sustain other country image elements as politics or crime can damage the overall image of a country.

2. **Weak Image.** Some destinations are less popular than others, due to the fact that some places are small, less attractive, or less promoted. Places with weak image need create vibrant campaigns in raising more visibility.

3. **Negative Image.** Many places are hampered with negative image(s) despite the positive attributes they currently possess. In instance of Columbia is coined city of drugs, SA case in point, despite endowed with natural beauty; some perceive SA as destination of violence and crime. According to Kotler, et el (1993) the city or country curbed with image stigma should consider instead to identify positive images and employ in marketing strategy.
4. **Mixed images:** This implies to destinations that simultaneously bears positive and negative image. For instance, San Francisco; the place is appealing to visitors, this destination is known for its frequent catastrophic natural disasters.

5. **Contradictory image.** This is refers to destinations that are wrongly perceived based on misconception perception received by an individual or group. For instance, some people perceive Virgin Islands as a safe tourist destination while others perceive the opposite.

6. **Overly attractive image.** Some places are thought to be exceptionally attractive and that might hinder to promote themselves. For instance the consequence of highly attractive destination as Paris, Spain are always combating with reduction of congestions, pollution, crime and other related factors brought about by overly attractiveness. In essence places in this category do not strive for promoting themselves but they try to manage their place and resources for future prospects.

**Marketing places with weak image**

Naturally a question arises how place marketers can change a negative perception of a country. To start with there are some image attributes that cannot be altered neither manipulated. This includes nature, geographical dispensation, history, etc. However, there is a room for change in respect of developments of existing infrastructures, review politics which implies regulatory affecting accessibility to a certain destination and so forth.

According to Kotler et al (1993) a country with negative image has to admit the problem as a starting point and take and advantage of situation by turn it around. In instance, most
of the regions devastated by war, now exploit the war sites to attract tourists who are interested in visiting these historical sites. Some of Eastern German sites were unpopular due to holocaust events occurred in that destination; today tourist flocks to view this country with a different perception.

Another option is icon marketing, for instance the author takes an image icon of Soviet Union which still is embodied in many peoples mind as negative place and use positively to communicate to the target market as point of reference.

A case in point, Still Bay in SA, the town had low visibility and apparently lacks tourism attraction compared to other neighboring towns as Cape Town etc. In creating a promotion strategy to position Still Bay’s on the limelight, the marketers had to firstly identify Still Bay’s competitive advantages. Still Bay was promoted as place of shear tranquility, beauty, place of total relaxation and free from crime. The town logo was renamed as “Bay of Sleeping Beauty “Nels and Binns (2000, p.18)

**Low Credibility and High Visibility**

Kosnic (1988) developed a framework in examining the interaction between visibility and credibility. He founds out that companies and countries fall into four categories as depicted in table 2.

A Country with low visibility or low credibility should first enhance it’s credibility in the selected market place; thereafter embark on high visibility activities. Further Kosnik suggests that promoters should develop from what he termed “unknown” phase to “undiscovered” phase, with the final phase of “unparallel”. Further the author suggests avoiding “undesirable state which implies the country in the state which has high visibility from negative attributes (crime, unsafe) which will hamper investors and place markers in promoting a country with such a negative image.
Thus, we adopt a framework for comparing visibility and credibility as illustrated on table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREDIBILITY</th>
<th>VISIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Undiscovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 A Framework for Comparing Visibility and Credibility

Source: Thomas J. Kosnik, “Corporate Positioning”

Notably, this study on credibility and visibility concluded that most agencies tend to use relatively general promotional techniques during their focus on image building. Remarkably, countries with low credibility particularly the developing countries have a propensity to use image-building techniques that are more specific than industrialized nations. Apparently, countries concentrates on a narrower range of prospective market or investors, they seek first to create credibility within the identified group of investors or market prior to embarking on visible image-building activities.
Chapter Three

3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methods

This paper has approached a single case study with the unit of analysis being the South Africa’s International Marketing Council (IMC). In view of Bonoma (1985) and Yin (2003), case studies are plausible when a researcher has little control over events within the real life context. Moreover, it is significant to establish clear investigative question(s), in order to answer a research question. The purpose of case study is to explore and generalize theories by a process of inferences (analytical generalizations), but not to develop frequencies in values (statistical generalizations) Yin, (1994). Moreover, according to Gummesson (1991, 75), case studies are significant when examining the situation of the organization or environment in question.

A single case study is plausible since it represents significant scenario for testing a well-formulated theory. As the key objective of this study is to validate how well theoretical framework has developed and is actually carried out in practice, a single case design is thus justified. However, limitation for a single case study is acknowledged. According to Flybjerb (ibid), the key concerns of case studies are summarized as follow:

- A single case study cannot contribute largely to scientific development as one cannot generalize on the premises of the individual case.
- A single case is more useful to formulate hypothesis which is at the initial phase of the research process, while other methods are recommended for theory formulation.
- Generally, theoretical information is literally regarded as more rewarding than concrete, practical knowledge which case study formulates.
Case study might entail bias towards verifications as a tendency to validate the researcher’s preconceived views.

It is often not easy to summarize and develop concrete and general propositions and theories on the basics of scientific case studies.

However, the author asserts that all the aforementioned thresholds are oversimplifications rather than actual limitations. Given the limitations of case studies, in order to justify the selected approach, the following set of methods is thus recommended. This includes collecting data such as; archives, interviews and observations (Patton 2002). According to Yin (2003, 83) evidence for case studies derives from six premises which includes, archives, interviews, observation, documentations, participants – observation and physical artifacts.

According to Gummesson (1991), the research question(s) can determine whether researcher should approach qualitative or quantitative methodology. Further, in respect of quantitative research most researchers agree that the methodology focus on generalization, causality and forecasting. However, qualitative methodology is cited best to elicit and interpret the phenomenon by applying results in reality. Qualitative research by nature tends to be more plausible whereas the research topic has not been investigated (Rainisto 2003, 89-90). In view of Patton (2002), the author has reduced the list to three stages by enhancing in - depth - open ended interviews, direct observation and written documents.

Therefore based on the nature of this study, qualitative study is employed to explore the research question. To remind readers, the central focus of this study is to elicit the role of the country’ image in tourist destination. In this respect the unit of analysis is South Africa. As briefly discussed in the introduction, SA is a young democracy striving to promote its destination internationally. It was noted that, country image has been widely researched in other countries particularly the US and Europe, developing countries and particularly Africa has not received much attention.
The research purpose of a case study can differ from exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory Yin (1994). Thus, by nature this study pertains to exploratory method, as the purpose of the empirical study is to explore if there is relevancy of the presented theory in the South African context. Secondly, the study determines whether country image is a factor in international promotion. Furthermore, this study has adapted qualitative method for two fundamental reasons. Firstly, the approach is best to investigate opinions from SA brand promoters. Second, qualitative method can allow the respondent(s) freedom of expressing opinions, views, and argumentation that might not have risen explicitly through other approaches.

With regard to the findings that will be presented in the subsequent sections the research question has partially been answered in the literature review. To begin with, research question refers: "How does Country Image affect Promotional Strategy and Tourist Destinations?"

With regard to the research question, literally the overall objective is to explore how does the country image cues affects in the international promotion. To further elaborate the research question, how the image does shapes activities of tourist destination. Hence, in reviewing available literature on the topic focus was placed whether available models and theories coincide with the postulated hypotheses. Nevertheless, nature of the question and topic discussed derives from the theoretical part. This will assist to verify theoretical review against a case study. Moreover, investigation questions were generated by reviewing relevant literature(s) and nature of the problem. It was taken into consideration that, the researcher should create conducive atmosphere as this study topic is sensitive by nature. In addition, the questions were designed to cover the background information of the organization in question, consequently in order to meet study eligibility.

Elements such as branding, promotion strategies, image cues, communication style and significance of awareness are discussed at large.
The following figure is formulated by current author to summarize methods employed in collecting relevant data.

Figure 14: Methods employed collecting data

Some of the above-mentioned themes were not necessarily discussed in pre-established order. Given the freedom of oral interview, other significant issues that surfaced out of the prepared questions were taken in account (additional information). The respondent to this study was South African national holding senior position at the (IMC). Moreover, it was imperative that the respondent(s) should bear sufficient experience in branding management.
It should be noted that due to the fact that “most” findings were retrieved from the literature review. However arrangements were made for an interview so as to validate and test theory. The interview was conducted with director of the (IMC) to find whether SA as country fits itself in this phenomena. The interview was conducted as planned although the initial schedule was postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. Prior to the interview, the researcher solicited the respondent(s) to participate in the study. Among other invitees, Mr. Battersby of the International Marketing Council accepted the invitation. It should be noted, IMC has its headquarters in SA and represented in the UK and the US.

3.2 Selection of Case Study

Selection of this case study was based on the knowledge of the researcher’s current working environment. Hence, with regard to the selected organization the IMC, it was ascertained that the organization meets the criterion set by the researcher. An invitation to the prospective organization(s) was send randomly to at least three respective organizations in SA. Fortunately, IMC a renowned organization in branding SA responded. The decision to limit the case study to one organization was reached during the course of the literature review. It was noted that most of the research question was answered in theoretical section. However, in order to validate this study, a case study was conducted to elicit opinion from the respondent.

Further data was collected from similar studies done on SA, including the recent study initiated by the SA embassy, Helsinki (Please see annex 1). Arguably, the selected case company in point is cited sufficient to represents other well known organizations in SA based on its direct involvement on country branding activities. The informant (IMC) furnished relevant information, based on vast experience, recent research and promotion activities that are frequently conducted in consolidating SA brand abroad. Table 1 illustrates the criterion set in selecting suitable candidate(s) for this study.
Organization characteristics

(R) **Capacity**: The level of activities and engagement in international promotions

(R) **Awareness**: level of awareness in promotion activities

(R) **Skills**: Determines capacity for branding

(O) **Organization location**: London UK, to promote SA in the European region

(B) **Branding**: Experience in branding or image building management.

(B) **Internationalization**

(B) **Partner’s willingness to share expertise**: The degree to which a partner is willing to acquire know how from this arrangements

(R) **Theme and purpose of an Image/ branding**

Notes: (R) = requirements criteria, (B) brand image -related selection criteria. (O) Other factors

Table 3 criteria for selecting case company

3.3 **Validity and Reliability of the Study**

According to (McNeill 1990), if a researcher in question applies a reliable methodology, other researcher(s) approaching similar study should have similar results.

Interview was carried at arranged manner and time frame whereas the availed respondent had freedom to select venue and time for the interview. A voice recorder was arranged to ensure reliability and validity. However, due to technical difficulties the device was not used. Nevertheless, data was transcribed and transferred immediately on the word perfect in order to avoid omitting or adding unnecessary data. Multiple archives as documentary data were consulted to enrich the findings whereas respondents fall short from the ideas to support the research paradigm. Respondent(s) were contacted telephonically and through email so as to solicit participation in the study. This also enabled to familiarize the respondents with the research questions and to allow enough time for respondent. The findings for the study will be made available to the participants of this study, particularly the Embassy and its strategic partners.
In order to ensure that right information was retrieved during the process, the respondent was encouraged to send a copy of their answers/opinions as an email attachment or hard copy after the interview. The preliminary questionnaire was sent in advance to acquaint the respondent on the research topic. Prior to the interview, informal conversation was established covering the major areas of the research topic. Before, during and after the personal interviews, various documentations were used. Documentation consisted of organization website pertaining background information, brochures and other relevant materials.

3.4 Documentary Data

In view of Yin (2003) secondary data is recommended when cases studies are employed. A range of documentary data can be adopted as data for case study. For instance, presentations, speeches, previous studies, articles, news and magazines so forth. Hence, information collected for this research encapsulates data from different archives that will assist in completing this study. In this respect, findings from one of SA’s embassy was included in this study to facilitate an argumentation of the discussion (please see annex. no. 1). Likewise, the focus interview is derived from SA organization that will be discussed in subsequent section which was literally in a single case discussion as introduced in the beginning of the study. Therefore, all secondary data that is collected in this study is classified as documentary data.

According to Yin (2003) the significance of documentary data with regard to case studies is to substantiate assumptions by supplementing documentary data contrasting with the case study (interview). In view of Patton, documentary data has significant stimulus for the purpose of inquiry than interviews.

Hence, it can be stated that, the study in question has massive discussions and theories (documentaries) that was devised to ease retrieving of relevant information that was adopted in this paper. The documents establish the foundation for empirical research and which the evidence retrieved from documentary was confirmed in the focal interview. However, Yin (2003) disapproval to depend solely on documents as it could lead to bias
based on the objectivity of information provided. The author adds every available
document is tailored made for a specific objective, which can be argued that is not
necessary, designed specific for all studies. In other words, a researcher in question needs
to analysis and combine information from different archives rather than relying on a
single argumentation for sake of reliability. Further, documentary data is argued to have
limitation of accessibility, prejudice, nature of selectivity and reporting.

Hence, interview in this scenario is commended to surmount the above mention
limitations. Nevertheless, documentary data is plausible due to state of being reviewed
timeless, unobtrusive, exact, and with a versatile coverage (Yin 2003).

3.5 Interview

The reliability of interviews depends, on quality which is justified by how the session is
carried and how the data is been handed (stored). Further, focal interview is argued to be
the most effective means of approaching case studies. With this justification focal
interview was adopted in this study. The main purpose of focal interview as discussed in
the documentary data is to substantiate theory and hypothesis in a given study. Further,
the objective of an interview is to confirm the validity of the information that was
retrieved from secondary data and other sources employed in a study (Yin 2003, 89).

A range of questions are developed from a case and theory protocol so as to explicitly
answer the research question. Notably, interview might not necessarily be carried in an
orderly manner, however based on the experience of the researcher and how the
individual manages to control the unforeseen circumstances that might occur during the
interview. Therefore, focused interview allows freedom and flexibility to elicit
information that can be difficult to retrieve from other means as quantitative
methodology. Further, focal interview unveils more value to the concepts that has been
adopted by the interviewee in the study in question. With regard to this study, the
interview was formulated focusing mainly image cues and its effects in promotion of SA
as a destination. Since, the case in point is a sensitive topic given a political and
historical difficulties in the region, some questions were approached indirectly however, manipulated during the session to lead the respond to the objective. Thus, interview approach is applauded in its nature of retrieving data promptly.

3.6 Data Analysis

Notably, analysing of qualitative data is complex, given large amount of data which is not compatible in statistical manipulation, analysis and data reduction. Remarkably, qualitative data demands skills in analysing mass of information, establish order and structure which will enable to interpret the collected data into meaningful information. According to Patton, (2002, 400), qualitative analysis refers of transforming raw data into meaningful information. Analyzing of qualitative data can be approached by means of comparing, classifying, summarizing, grouping, testing negative evidence and argumentation. Hence, with regard to this study, data is classified and “summarised” in the subsequent chapter. During the analysis processes, significant characters are sought from the cases. Organisation is noted by classes of given criteria for further interpretation. In other words, these aspects mentioned here, are the key elements of investigative question that needs to be answered from this respectful organisation. It should be noted that the purpose of this study is not to compare the cases study which is single in this instance, however the method was taken in order to identify characters or significant opinions in order to answer the research question.
Chapter Four

4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The purpose of this section is to present the findings based on the premises of the research question. It should be noted that the main causes of country image cues as the “effects” and “promotion strategy” are re-addressed. The section commences with addressing data collected from the interview which was conducted with the director of the IMC, supplemented with relevant documentary data. The findings are contrasted with the secondary data to corroborate and substantiate whether theory on this case study suffices.

Hence, the research question is revisited:

“How does Country Image affect Promotional Strategy and activities of a Tourist Destination?”

4.1.1 International Marketing Council (IMC)

This section presents background information of the International Marketing Council of SA, and addresses information derived from the interview with the senior official of the IMC. It should be noted that some aspects like promotional strategy & country images will be discussed independently for simplification. However, general information with regard to the case company is addressed in this section and summarized in the subsequent sections. The interview was carried on 12th June 2006 with Mr. John Battersby who is a country manager at the UK representative office.

International marketing council (IMC) was established in August 2000 solely to promote and consolidate a positive South African brand image. It was noted that IMC and SA at large are combing efforts to create a consolidated SA image, due to the co-existing distorting images projecting SA from different points of views.

The organization has its main Headquarters in SA. However, IMC is represented abroad with two chief offices, one in the US and in the UK. It can be stated that, IMC’s main
objective besides tourism, is to brand SA as a prospective destination in trade and investment. During the interview, it was noted that in order to build a positive image, place marketers should ensure that the promoted image reflects the reality. In other words, destination curbed with weaker or fabricated image; could instead take an advantage of the situation and promote positive attributes that are available in a destination Kotler et al (1993). In instance, the most resented holocaust sites in the former Eastern German, Rwanda etc, are now positioned as historical sites attracting new hybrid of tourists in the region. The case in point SA could employ this strategy in the areas which has suffered much misery during the difficult days. Further. Proper management of public relation and media was stressed significant in managing prejudice and unfair practise perpetuated by “information sources” as media etc.

Therefore, IMC finds promoting investment and trade is necessary to cultivate a fertile ground that will encourage visitors, investors and other prospective business in SA. According to the informant, a country with advanced trade & investment will obviously have favourable infrastructures (modern amenities) necessary for a tourist destination. Notably, world tourism committee maintains high standards in accrediting destinations with decent facilities as hotels and necessary infrastructures. As a result, most countries are striving to earn accreditation which inevitably has an effect on the destination image. In instance, today tourism has shaped and advent new activities as business tourism which makes necessary to render quality services. Studies show that consumers have comprehensive “wants and needs”, understanding consumer’s behaviour is of advantage. Notably, visitor’s itinerary or consumers behaviours is complex than before. For successful marketers, would consider blending set of activities as business and leisure. In this regard it is then noted that despite SA’s boast for its eloquent nature and scenery, however there is a need for transforming traditional market structure to world class economy.
Challenges that detriment SA’s Image

According to the informant, parallel economies still suffice in SA. Literally, the prevailing economic structure is blended of the traditional and industrial economy. As mentioned above SA, is striving to transform completely to an industrial world. On the same note, the distribution of economy is cited not favouring the majority of the population. There is still a wide gap between the rich and poor. Arguably, the division between whites and blacks has led to projects like Black Empowerment (BEE) in efforts of empowering the disadvantaged group mainly of the black majority. This division of economic structure has been coined as parallel economies in post- apartheid. According to the informant, BEE project pause concern to the international community fabricating SA image with different views. IMC acknowledges that the advantages of the consolidated brand image will enhance SA brand. According to IMC, “A consistent Brand South Africa Image will create a strategic advantage for a country in an increasing competitive market place”

In response to the challenges, respective organizations in SA are in lieu striving to alleviate SA to the target markets with campaigns as “Alive with Possibilities” devised to revive the image of the country. According to Mr. Battersby, some of the significant issues that IMC is currently combating are with the prevailing negative image of SA perplexed by some factors as the misconceptions of (BEE). According to Kotler, et al (1993), the author presented six image situations. SA fits in one the context of image situations as “mixed images” which basically implies a place prejudiced wrongly due to lack of information or perception developed by certain individuals. However, there are some other undeniable issues that contribute to SA’s image problem.

According to the IMC, BEE is about empowering the majority of the disadvantaged black population who were marginalized during the apartheid era. “The accumulation process under Apartheid confined the creation of wealth to a racial minority and imposed under-development on black communities. The result is an economic structure that today in
essence, still excludes the vast majority of South Africans” (DTI 2006). Despite government’s efforts in alleviating poverty through pilot projects as BEE and tourism, appallingly the idea is not accepted by all. There has been concern, from international community particularly potential investors fearing about political instability through this process. Given case of Zimbabwe, whereas land distribution to the African majority caused political turmoil and which hampered Zimbabwe’s image at large. Hence, IMC with other prestige bodies are striving to communicate to the international community to secure credibility which will promote trade, investment and tourism.

Another major concern is the sense of insecurity from frequent violence during the struggles towards freedom which has distorted the motive. Notably, SA has been projected with violence and crime particularly during the era of apartheid and during the later administration. According to the informant, with the upcoming world cup event which calls for a tight security and safety, SA is striving to ensure safety and security meets the standard requirements. Nevertheless, SA is renowned for its diverse and enchanting tourisms attributes. It is significant that the board of SA tourism with other prestigious bodies in place, make efforts in building an image which will encourages potential investors and visitors to the region.

4.2 **SA’s image and Effects**

According to the informant South Africa as travel destination is geographically confused with other countries which are located in the Southern Africa. The fact these countries shares same connotation of “South African”, in essence South Africa has its own image and sovereignty.

As discussed in the literature review with regard to elements of country image, this study has identified some characteristics which directly or indirectly influence promotion strategy and destination at large.

With regard to country specific factors that were discussed in detail in section (2.21), the issue of accessibility under geopolitics was referred by Weave & Oppermann (2000). The
author unleashed the significance of infrastructure accessibility which implies the availability and the standards of transports and logistics networks as air flights routes, train, buses, ferry and highways. In this regard, SA accessibility and infrastructure is ranked advanced in comparison to other African countries. However, with the upcoming World Cup 2010, SA is still working hard to introduce some of the modern facilities as subways that will ease mobility for mass visitors who will attend the World Cup in 2010. According to the statistics the numbers vary considerably from market to market particular in the Europe and America with approximately 90% of travelers arriving in SA during all seasons, as around the year the region is bestowed with a favorable weather.

According to the informant, information sources which in this study refer to media and word of mouth remain significant in creation of country image (Please see figure 17, pg 82 for ease of reference). Further, the informant confirmed that these, information sources as media can seriously damage country image if not managed. Following the media concern, the Diaspora of African renaissance, held in SA largely discussed how information sources, in particular how media harms the African image. According to Boateng 1998, “given the dominating culture of news processing in the Western media, in which good news has very little commercial value, only negative images of Africa are ever reported. Inevitably, the news which makes major headlines in Africa and elsewhere is that of famine, hunger, tribal wars, corruption, epidemics and military dictatorships” Malegapuru et al (1999). Hence, proper management of public relation and media was corroborated by the informant to be important in managing preconceived ideas that develops in particular market.

It has been underscored in this study that due to unique differences of country image and its attributes this facts call for alternate or suitable promotion strategy that should be adopted in the respective target market. In instance if destination’s image is negative as in the context of SA’s past history (apartheid) and fabricated with crime and violence it somehow needs positive message. The subsequent section 4.1 discusses the findings of promotional strategies that are found relevant in the context of SA image.
Geopolitics can affect the accessibility to a specific destination and thus impact an image of that given country as illustrated in the discussion. In instance, during the era of Mao who limited accessibility to the mainland China as result hampered the prospects of the destination. Generally speaking, political accessibility implies the conditions which travelers are regulated into the country. For instance the stipulated complicated visa procedures and exorbitant fees. In respect of trade and investment, regulation for investing and trade in a given country can largely determine investment prospects of a given country. According to the informant, SA’s policymakers need to ease visas process in boosting tourism. Alternatively, establish bilateral agreement with the partner countries (markets) to ease or lift visas requirements for tourism purposes. Notably, some tourists will avoid all together destinations with complicated visas requirements and instead visit destinations with favorable arrangements. For instance, the integration of the EU countries which led to ease of mobility within the EU citizens has substantial increased inbound tourism within the EU (UNWTO 2006). This act has significantly boosted tourism in the region and yet enhanced the images of some countries as Estonia and other, which were not easily accessible due to politics and other issues discussed in this paper.

4.3 Promotion Strategy

This section reviews how country image impact on promotion activities and particularly the modes of promotion tools that are based on the premises of the prevailing situation. Since much of the research question has been answered in the literature review, the aim of this section is to summarize and contrast the characteristics that are retrieved from the literature review which suffice in the real life context of the selected case study.

According to Kotler (1993), his analogy on place marketing, states that any country embarking on international promotion should establish representative offices abroad to ensure promotion activity meets the expectations of the marketer. According to the informant, IMC has established two strategic offices abroad, one in the London, UK and other in the US tailored to cater for these markets. The informant asserted that these offices are vital in strategizing promotion strategies relevant to the target markets. In
instance a destination with weak image, is an advantage for place promoters to be closer to the target markets so as to establish rapport and lobby public interest (please see public relations). Further organization should conduct frequent research in understanding the current country image prior creation of promotion strategies. In instance, the destination curbed with low visibility, need to enhance “visibility” in the targeted market (please see AIDA model) Kotler (2000). According to the informant, place marketers in SA are developing South African image that is perceived as “a destination with highly non-traditional markets in terms of international trade, investment and tourism by the year 2010”. Notably, the furnished statement coincides with world cup 2010. IMC insisted that successful image promotion calls for promotion strategy that encapsulates all aspects necessary in forming country image. In this regard, trade, investment and tourism were referred. It should be noted that not all elements of country image presented in the literature review were confirmed in respect of the SA case. However, aspects like negative image contributed by crime, apartheid and geopolitical situation confirmed Kotler’ notion of effects of specific factors.

**Events and Deeds**

Today sports events are significant promotion vehicles employed by most countries in promoting destinations. SA acknowledges the potential of the world cup 2010 which already has attracted international community to SA at large. Currently, SA is applying necessary efforts to advance the existing infrastructures and facilities to render a world class service during the World Cup 2010. In combating the current stigmas and threshold IMC goals are summarized hereunder:

- To establish a brand for SA (Brand South Africa), which positions the country in terms of investments and credit worthiness, exports, tourism and international relations objectives. To establish an integrated approach within government and the private sector towards the international marketing of South Africa
To construct national support for the brand within SA itself, in order to deliver this, the IMC’s establish partnerships with governments departments, public entities, private sectors and non-governmental organizations.

Delivering one image of South Africa through clear, co-ordinated efforts.

**Slogans**

According to Kotler et al (1993), place marketer should develop a slogan that complements with a specific theme. Notably, a slogan should be brief, concise and which communicates an overall picture of a place. For instance a slogan developed by Malaysian tourist board “Malaysia truly Asia” is argued that the message was developed in efforts of positioning or distinguished this nation from other Asian destinations.

In creating a slogan that will communicate the positive message of the brand creation, IMC developed a slogan that is becoming popular, “*alive with possibilities*” notably, this slogan has been deployed in varies marketing campaigns within the country and abroad. Generally speaking the slogan was devised to communicate that SA is revived from the threshold of the past. Furthermore, promotion campaign largely incorporates trade, investments and tourism. Ironically, there are other co-existing slogans as “Proudly South African” and so forth. According to Mr. Battersby of the IMC, the slogan “Alive with Possibilities” is a promotion slogan designed to establish a nation image. Other co-existing slogans as mentioned are employed in national level campaigns whereas national pride is created to enhance national products. (*See country of origin effects*)

The figure below adopted from SA tourism site illustrates the efforts of SAT in developing slogans that will revive the image which communicates positively to the international community of the possibilities that were curbed under the previous regime.
IMC was institutionalized following acknowledgment of image significance and its effects. Further in order for a country to promote a positive image there is a need for a committed organ as tourism authority that is dedicated to create and manage country image. “It was evident that a great need existed for a body able to co-ordinate the marketing initiatives in order to maximize their efficiency” (www.imc.2002)

Public Relations

According to the informant, PR is cited to be the most effective method in lobbying the public interests. Thus, IMC employs this method to educate the target markets in responds to the stigmas that are cited common threshold for potential investors and visitors. According to (Grisword, 2003) “in essence PR is the practice of managing communication between a country and its key publics to create and manage a positive image”

Therefore, the underlying activity of PR involves the following:

- Evaluation of Public attitudes and opinions of the country
- Communication program to manage the current situation
- Organization procedures and policies assisting public in mind
- Communication program to update the public of developments improving the hindering issues.

In response to problems discussed, IMC directs its efforts to lobby prospective organizations as the UN and other institutions in order to educate the public and potential
investors how and what SA is working to resolve the identified problems by facilitating salient environment that will encourage investors and general visitors to SA.

Sales Promotion

With regard to tourism, sale promotion is mainly carried by the travel intermediaries (travel agent & tour operators) who have direct access to travel consumers. Kotler (2000, 456) holds that the role of advertising is to create awareness “image” of a new product or inform developments of the existing products and service. In essence, advertising in context of tourism is devised to stimulate imagination and arouse the interest of prospective visitors to the destination. As advertising was to remind potential consumers about the destination and enhance their images, “sales promotion” is employed to stimulate potential visitors on the destination. Thus, the objective of sales promotion is to persuade customers to purchase tourism product (destination) by offering applicable incentives as trial trips during trade fairs and close a sale in short space of time.

According to the informant, a promotion activity is carried by selected intermediaries and representative offices abroad as the IMC at large. It was further noted, the frequency of the promotion activities is determined by the corresponding trade events in the target market and plans of the marketer. In instance, IMC in Europe and Americas supported with the respectful embassies have taken opportunity of the travel exhibitions which occurs frequently in these regions to promote SA to the general public. According to the informant, apart from these international events, IMC has tailor-made specific promotion events as the “SA branded taxis” depending with the current situation of market demand or introducing new product(s) into the market.

With regard to SA, the representative office in the UK (IMC) partnered with the local authorities and launched a catching outdoor activity by showcasing SA through branded taxis in London.
The approach was a success in creating image of SA abroad. The following figure 16 exhibit the London branded taxi campaign.

![Figure 16. SA Branded Taxis](Source: imc.org.za)

Further, sales promotion is inevitably successful in markets whereas image is dwindling. It is argued that sales promotions foster an incentive than a reason for buying products and service.

**Advertising**

According to Kotler (2000) advertising is “any paid form of non personal presentation and promotion of ideas, good or service by an identified sponsor” With reference to the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), it was noted that advertising emulates this models by following the sequence of the model principles.
Advertising is to create awareness “image” of a new product or inform progress of the products and service. With regard to tourism, advertisement is devised to stimulate an imagination and fuel interest of prospective visitors to a destination. According to the informant, IMC has adopted conventional advertising methods as radio magazine to reach the majority of the population. Notably, advertising tourist places is mostly about reinforcing positive images, but not about correcting the prevailing situation however creating a favourable sentiment about the place. The current approach is aimed directly to the target market. According to Weaver Oppermann (ibid), most destinations usually employ list means of advertisement due to limitations of budget constrains. In context of South Africa the target groups are often specific, due to high cost of transportation and geographical distance of SA as compared to Asians competitors who are competitive due to proximity to Europe and other related regions.

According to Kotler et al (1993) the objective of advertising is to inform consumers about the product developments, new product, new locations or augmented products in order to shift negative prevailing attitudes toward a destination. Further, to encourage tourist consumers to try new products by offering incentives for those who inquire about the travel products and services (Burke & Resbick 1991). Further, the informer confirmed what literature holds on the importance of travel intermediaries in tourists’ arena. It is important to collaborate with the strategic partners who are in the position to educate tourism developments, by providing sufficient information with positive developments that will assist in persuading consumers. With regard to advertising tools there are an array of media vehicles which give choices for place promoters to employ based on the budget and the choice of strategy. This includes newspaper, television, magazines, internet, brochures and outdoor advertising etc.

**Personal Selling**

It is argued that personal selling is the most effective promotion tool. Personal selling is inclined paramount in shifting demand of tourism products and services into actual purchases as personal selling as the word implies can be personalized to meet individual needs, and yet provide prompt feedback (Burke & Resnick 1991). IMC facilitates
personal sales events in the selected regions (Europe & Americas) to stimulate preference towards SA destination. Obviously, IMC acts as the facilitator coordinating between the intermediaries who invite their potential customers to trade & travel exhibitions.

Personal selling provides a means of evaluating the level of customer’s perception and knowledge about the products and country of the origin. Thus, this approach is argued to be suitable in enlightening individuals with negative or mixed feelings (images) about a destination. Prevailing misconceptions and prejudices can be rectified immediately whereas a promoter and consumer collaborate at close hand. In instance of travel fairs, normally potential travellers visit exhibitions stands showcasing products from different countries and respective business. These events facilitate an opportunity for place marketers and travellers to evaluate perceptions that are currently held by the target group. This is the prime opportunity whereas place marketers exhibit their products by educating and encouraging potential consumers to try products (new destination) that has weak image or lack awareness.

According to the informant, IMC’s promotion activity is tied to trade, investment and tourism. In his view, IMC has found out that promoting country image is imperative when all these three aspects are promoted simultaneously as today’s potential visitors are more complex in their needs. In other words, a destination with strong economy is in good position to create and image necessary for tourism and investment. Today business travellers have complex needs, and might prefer to engage in multiple activities as leisure and business. Other aspect some of the tourists are interests to travel to destination which has modern amenities, as visiting modern cities, modern activities rather than travelling for adventure which, now is becoming a conventional tourism.

**Effects of Image to Destination**

For ease of reference country image is re-defined as “*set of beliefs and perceptions that people hold about a given country. Moreover, country image is constituted of history, geographical dispensation, art, music, citizens and attributes.*” Further we explored the
constructs and elements that constitutes country image. We found that destination (country) has key attributes that contribute in creating image.

Firstly, we found country specific factors encapsulate (geographic location, climate, culture nature & etc). Secondly, distance decay is other the aspect discussed which is the evaluation of the destination distance.

Thirdly, personal factor was found significant in image creation. Fourth, travel intermediaries and information sources are inclined as the protagonist in building image of given destination. Lastly, stimulus and cognitive affection are also significant in this respect. For simplicity, we discuss the key factors in this case.

With reference to literature review from section 4.1.2, discussion resurfaced on how to market a challenging place.

In respect of promotion activity, destination with negative image will inevitably discourage tourists visiting this place (Coshall, 2000; Tapachai and Warysak, 2000) It is argued that a place reputation is not created from abstract stance and neither left for visitor’s preference. Therefore, a challenge is shouldered on place marketers to facilitate what they want their destination to be positioned and differentiated from other places.

With regard to SA, the problems discussed above confirm the challenges as the BEE project in the international community. With regard to safety, this factor has been addressed extensively as an important attribute when image building is under discussion.
Chapter Five

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The main research findings

The objective of this paper was to explore the role of country image in promoting a tourism destination. As discussed in the literature review, this study has concluded that “image” is effective construct at least in the context of SA destination whereas the prevailing images elements as post apartheid, crime & BEE are cited to influence travellers and investors when evaluating South Africa as a destination.

Notably, SA president promulgated in 2007 state of the nation that the proliferation of crime activities in SA poses a threat to tourism industry. However, it is argued that tourists keep arriving in SA irrespective of the prevailing image. This does not contradicts the findings of this study, however it is noteworthy that other variables than image which were not discussed in this study remains significant in influencing customers behaviour on product and service. The research question was mostly answered in literature review and supplemented by the focal interview which substantiated some sections of the theoretical frame work.

According to the findings, it can be stated that some of the image cues presented in this study are factor in SA context. According to the image situation that was discussed in theory, SA has been found to bear mixed image. It was addressed in depth that some countries might have a problem of mixed images. Mixed image implies a country being perceived with positive and negative image which might derive through two or more contradicting factors, mainly positive and negative Kotler (ibid). Despite the fact that SA is renowned for its tourism attractions however the aspects as crime is argued to have perplex the SA’s image. Notably, with the alarming increase of terrorism activities in most parts of the world, the issue of safety is ranked important when tourism is under discussion. With the upcoming 2010 World Cup in SA, safety is voted equally significant
when preparing for this historical event. Further, this study elicited that SA promoters acknowledge the importance of this international event as an opportunity in reimagining the country image. Please note, SA’s country elements are generally derived from the collected data pertaining to SA as a destination. For instance, geopolitics, BEE, crime, culture diversity and history (apartheid) were found as the most factors that constitute the South African image.

During the beginning of this study it was pointed out that this study will focus on the influence of image cues on tourism destination. However, the findings elicited that successful tourism promotion need be integral with trade and investment. The informant underscored that today tourism has developed from traditional activities to more sophisticated activities. Hence, tourists are now prone to travel to destinations that have more to offer beyond natural heritage as scenery etc. Destinations with creative investments as the Palm Island in Dubai, inevitable enjoy the fruits of the booming of trade and investments. Notably, new hybrid of tourists tends to combine business and leisure (tourism). Further, destinations that once were not listed in the travel plans are now gain popularity. For instance Finland as travel destination was one of the locations with considerable low visibility. Arguably, Finland’s image has been much orchestrated by the enhancement of trade and investment (IT technology).

It was found that South Africa conducts aggressive studies on its destination abroad; the results from these studies are used in planning promotional activities. Hence, the image studies conducted do not deal with the relevance of other attributes than “image” which would have become unambiguously clear whether these attributes are positive by nature and meaningful to the decision makers when deciding on a holiday destination. Generally speaking, it can be concluded that SA image as travel destination is relatively corroborating with the theory discussed hereto.

With regard to promotional activities, at least some events in real life were found relevant within the SA context. For instance the upcoming FIFA 2010 in SA
substantiated the significance of “events and deeds” as purported by Kotler et al (1993). According to the informant SA’s marketers have undertaken advantage of this opportunity to rebuild the country image. The current established South African’s slogans as “alive with possibilities” supported the discussions of the importance of themes and slogans in image creation.

At this point it should be observed that the some of the images categorization presented by Kotler et al and reviewed in this study do suffice and are supported in the empirical findings. Furthermore, justification of the image situations presented by Kotler et al (1993) surface in some real life context. Among these aspects, the aspect of mixed feelings on SA as destination, are fabricated by crime activities amidst the beauty scenery. According to the informant, the issue of geographical distance is somewhat of challenging imaginary factors that promoters should deal in persuading consumers with other values offers that will compensate the disadvantages such as long haul destination which can not be altered. Apparently, a country can not be re-located from its geographical location. However, promoters can offer compelling packages that will make consumers feel distance is not a factor. For instance, today some tourists are convinced to travel to space and experience breathtaking features despite of the exorbitant fees and infinity distance. Hence, promoters should offer products or services that are not available at competitors markets. The country geopolitics was found significant in this instance. The complicated visa regulations and registration of new business were found ambiguous contradicting the “promises” and the reality of some promotion campaigns. Nevertheless, it is argued that marketers and policy makers should reflect the reality of their promotion strategies.

With regard to promotion activities, it can be stated that the (IMC) of South African possess adept knowledge on promotion practices. With regard to promotional tools, advertising, personal selling, public relations and sales promotion were found more common in SA’s context. In cases where an image is relatively weak, personal selling and public relation are plausible in building rapport and enhancing “country’s image”. Among the above listed, personal selling was found relevant complemented by public
relation. Arguably, personal selling and PR, establishes a network between marketers and consumers which might avail an opportunity to expedite of ratifying misconceptions that might arise through means that were discussed in information sources.

In conclusions the major findings of this study are listed as follows:

- County image develops partially from natural elements that cannot be altered or easily manipulated as history, natural, geographical, people etc. However, place promoters & policy makers can review geopolitics; regulations etc and manage the information sources (media) which could significantly improve the image of a given destination.

- It is significant to develop promotion strategies that reflect the real situation of a destination irrespective of the established preconceptions and take advantage of the situation. In instance, the most avoided holocausts sites in German are now promoted as historical site(s) attracting new hybrid of tourists. The case in point SA could employ this strategy in areas that suffered much misery during the difficult days.

- Country “image” substantially influences consumer’s evaluation of a tourist destination. The prevailing country image determines the promotion strategy that will be suitable in the target market.

- The creation of positive SA image in promotion activities can be effective in promoting a country. This is justified by the initiated efforts of the (IMC) and other relevant organizations which are established solely to promote SA.

- Effective tourism promotion should be complemented by trade and investments projects which will assist in paving way for a favourable environment particularly by enhancing the existing infrastructures and introducing modern amenities which are fundamental in today’s tourism.
• Effective image building should reflect the reality as promotion campaign should not be used solely as the activity of painting abstract picture but portray the reality and meet expectation of tourist consumers.

5.2 Research Contributions

As explained in the beginning of this study, one of the premises for conducting this study was due to the identified research gap on image cues studies.

Firstly, with regard to country image elements, it can be stated that each country has unique features which portrays its image. Notably, most studies on country image do not explicitly agree on the fixed list of country image elements. Hence, according to this empirical findings, this study concludes that country image elements might differ from country to country depending on the factors that are cited influential on a country image. For instance, some countries are perceived unsafe mainly from one aspect as crime. Further, other country’s images are largely brought about an extensive list of the situations that are found in that relative country in discussion. Hence, the following figure 17 is formulated by the current author so as to summarize the main elements of country image that were found into the context of SA as an illustration on the above stated analogy.
Secondly, this study has found that, combination of tourism, trade and investment is becoming significant on destination promotion. This means, enhancing trade and investment will pave way for the destination’s image. For instance in the former days some destinations as Finland suffered largely from very low visibility. However, with the advent of the information technology (Nokia), the changing landscape has assisted in plotting Finland on a tourism map. Arguably, investment advancement is inclined to propel unpopular destination to the limelight. Notably, conventional tourism was limited to natural reserves and adventure. Apparently, today tourism has transcended to a different dimension encompassing a set of activities. For instance, well known companies as Nokia, Sony and other have established strong brands which largely have assisted in
promoting country’ image. In other words, there is provenance of strong brands with the country of origin. For instance, some tourists (car fans) are prone to travel solely to Detroit in the US to witness the world famous destinations in automobile industry.

Further, with the shifting market structure, today tourists prefer more complex tourism products than traditional activities (adventure). This might mean sending frequently tourists beyond geographical boundaries (space) or visiting the former avoided destinations. Inevitably, the changes of tourism activities call for more creativity so as to cope with the consumers changing behaviour. Further, today most countries have realized the importance of tourism economy. In response to the trend, some countries with the cutting edge technology are in position to manipulate landscapes by introducing artificial sceneries in boosting tourism. For instance the Dubai palm projects exemplify one of the creativity projects.

Thirdly, as mentioned in the study demarcation, most studies on image are concentrated on the industrialized countries excluding the developing countries in particular Sub Saharan Africa. Thus, one of the objectives of this study is to contribute on few studies that have been conducted on Sub Saharan Africa with regard to promote country image. Notably, when African countries are under discussions, most featured aspects are of the disadvantaging rather than promotional. It has been point out in this study, that countries with negative images could instead identify unique features in veiling its disadvantages for promotion purposes.

Lastly, most countries are awaking in realizing the importance of reimaging their national identities (images) in response to the increasing similarities fuelled by exogenous factors as globalization and immigration. For instance, the European integration poses a concern for its member countries on measures of preserving the national identities (image). The case in point South Africa is normally confused with other Southern African countries which are located in the Southern Africa. Hence, this issue prompts for destinations to enhance unique brand images significant for place marketing. Notably, tourists are prone
to visit destinations which are perceived unique and exotic. In other words, tourists are attracted with the features that are not common or available in their backyard.

Having said that promoters need to conduct further research to identify the possible available gaps and create unique features through means that were discussed in this study. Further, consumers are becoming more sophisticated in their requirements. This is due to the increasing complexity of consumers changing behaviour in response to the changes of the exogenous factors discussed herein. Hence, promoters should consistently study consumers’ behaviour so as to timely formulate unique products and services.

5.3 Recommendation for further studies

In study demarcation it was stated that, this paper was conducted from the perceptive of the marketer point of view which in this instance the (IMC) of SA. Therefore, further studies could be carried from the perceptive of consumers at a defined target market, so as to investigate what or how South African image is perceived in the target market. A large sample of data, by incorporating opinions from different consumers is thus commended to justify opinions of the majority in the selected market. Further, other areas of trade & investment could be also included in depth study to find what and how SA’s products are perceived abroad. This refers to the inclusion of conventional paradigms on conventional products known as “country of origin effects”.

Despite of the current number of studies conducted in respect of African renaissance as poverty alleviation and debt cancellation, it is argued that most studies on country image are concentrated to the industrialized nations. Specific studies for re-branding African countries could be carried in assisting African nations on how to re-brand their images destroyed by war, hunger, media prejudice etc.

“It is such ways that these ideological premises produce a false and derogatory image of Africa together with a false and glamorous image of industrialized world” Makgoba et el (1999 pg, 368)
BIBLIOGRAPHY


88


Papadopoulos, Nicolas; Neolouis Heslop (2000), Countries As Brands; Ives Business Journal


Wells T Louis, and Alvin G. Wint (2000), Marketing a Country: (Promotion as a Tool for Attracting Foreign Investment): Revised Edition


INTERNET SOURCES


WTO (2006) Projection Tourism 2020 ( online) available at ( WTO)

Simpson, J British Broadcasting Corporation (online) available from: (BBC)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa ((accessed 10.02.2007)

Lonely World: www.lonelyplanet.com
(Accessed 18 September 2006)
APPENDICES

APPENDICES A: Analysis of research project done by the Embassy

*Please note:* Only part of the study findings conducted by the embassy are included in this study to support relevant discussion in this study

**Questionnaires distributed:** 186

**Selection:** Random

The project was conducted during the MATKA Travel fair held in Helsinki, Finland on 20 – 23 January 2005 (Appendix C). The Embassy used the opportunity of people visiting the stand to distribute the questionnaire randomly. The results are depicted graphically below.

**Figure 18 Job Status**
The analysis of these graphs gives us in brief the range of the people that responded to our questionnaire. The results then facilitate an indication of the segment of the market which was analyzed. Many respondents were holding administrative posts and most were couples. There were a significant number of families that filled in the questionnaire.

Figure 19 Type of Travelers

![Type of Travelers Chart]

Figure 20. Preferred activities for Holidays

![Preferred activities for Holidays Chart]
Preference is being given to visiting national parks, beaches and museums and historical sites preferred activities are varied from beach activities to cultural activities.

Figure 21. Deterrents (constructs that hampers country’s image)

It became clear from the deterrents that crime is not a only issue per se but concerns of crime and safety were raised. One other encouraging factor that has been mentioned is that the time-zone is the same and therefore there is no problem in traveling, it was also encouraging to note that many people who visited our stand had visited South Africa previously and has no hesitation in visiting South Africa again. They can even recommend South Africa to the others. Under these circumstances the Embassy has collected a database of these “tourist ambassadors” who will be useful in the Embassy’s Tourism Strategy. The Embassy had an opportunity to meet with a young Finnish girl who has toured South Africa alone, enjoyed it and came back to share that experience with her colleagues.
APPENDICES B

ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDs</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEE</td>
<td>Black Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COO</td>
<td>Country of Origin (effects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COI</td>
<td>Country of Origin Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTI</td>
<td>Department of Trade and Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LED</td>
<td>Locality Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immune Deficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>