EFFECTS OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON TOURISTS' CHOICE OF MAASAI MARA NATIONAL RESERVE, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university or institution. No part of this project may be reproduced without prior permission of the author and/or Moi University.

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Declaration by the Supervisor

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors. It represents the work carried out by the candidate under our supervision.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, brothers and my family for their love, support and encouragement during the entire preparation period.

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ABSTRACT

Managing and marketing destinations is challenging because of the variety of stakeholders involved in the development and production of tourism products. Marketing should ensure alignment of aims of various stakeholders on tourist destination on its long-term attraction and competitiveness. The Kenyan tourist destinations have become less competitive due to improper marketing strategies. However, understating how different marketing strategies affect tourist destinations choice is still limited. Moreover, many researchers argue that management in the tourist industry are not aware of the various marketing strategies provided by various tourist firms to enable them select their destinations. Therefore, the study investigated the effects of marketing strategies on tourists' choice on Maasai Mara National Reserve Kenya. It was specifically aimed at establishing the effect of destination marketing organizations, tourism promotion campaigns, tourism information centers and web based technologies on tourist destination choice. The study was informed by the classic line of thought and the alternative line of thought models. The research design used was descriptive survey and explanatory which enabled the researcher to gather data from the population. The target population was tourists visiting Maasai Mara National Reserve for the first six months of 2015. The simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 224 tourists. Questionnaires were used to collect the relevant quantitative data, with crobanch alpha being used to determine the reliability of the scales used. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviation and presented using tables and charts. The researcher also used inferential statistics (t-test) and employed Pearson correlation to show the relationships that exist between the variables. Multiple regressions analysis was also performed to show the causal effect. Findings showed that destination marketing organizations ($\beta_1 = 0.317$), tourism promotion campaign ($\beta_2 = 0.242$) and web based technology ($\beta_3 = 0.436$) all with a p-value $= 0.000$ had a significant and positive effect on tourist destination choice. However, tourism information centers had a negative and significant effect on destination choice ($\beta_4 = -0.237$, p-value $= 0.000$). This infers that the use of destination marketing organizations, tourism promotion campaign and web based technology enhances the destination choice while use of tourism information centers reduce destination choice. In multiple regression model, the results showed that all the four predictors; information centers, Web based technologies, Tourism promotion campaign and Destination Marketing Organizations explained 50.5 percent variation of destination choice. The study therefore concludes that the findings provided enough evidence that marketing strategies are important direct factors of influence on destination choice. Recommends to the management of tourism sites to develop an image and engage in marketing strategies in order to create a positive attitude on its customers/tourists to ensure that their destinations are chosen.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CGM	Consumer General Media
DMO	Destination Marketing Organizations
IPS	Internet Presence Sites
NACOSTI	National Council of Science and Technology
NTA	National Tourism Administration
NTO	National Tourism Office
SPSS	Statistical package of social sciences
TIC	Tourist Information Centres
UGC	User Generated Content
WOM	Word-of-mouth

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Destination choice: It is made by alternative evaluation based on individual preferences and goals; the evaluation of tourist product is based on individual evaluative criteria.

Destination marketing organization: it is an organization that promotes a town, city, region or country in order to increase the number of visitors.

Destination: It is a place worthy of travel or an extended visit often used attributively.

Marketing mix: Is a business tool used in marketing and by marketers. The marketing mix is often crucial when determining a product or brand's offer, and is often associated with the 7 P's: price, product, promotion, place, people, process and physical evidence.

Marketing strategy: It is the process that can allow an organization to concentrate its resources on the optimal opportunities with the goals of increasing sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

Marketing: The management process through which goods and services move from concept to the customer. It includes the coordination of four elements called the 7p's of marketing that is the product, price, place, promotional strategy, people, process and physical evidence.

Tourist destination: It is a city, town, or other area that is dependent to a significant extent on the revenues accruing from tourism, or a country, state, region, city or town which is marketed or markets itself as a place for tourists to visit.

Tourist information Centers: Is a physical location that provides tourist information to the visitors who tour the place or area locally.

Tourist: Is a person(s) travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for a minimum of 24 hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes, they may be international or within the traveler's country.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter outlines the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research hypothesis, significance of the study, limitation of the study and scope of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Tourism and hospitality sector is the fastest growing sector of global economic. This claim is supported by statistical data from regional, national, and international studies (WTO, 2000; WWTC, 2005). Globalization of the tourism market has made tourism business environment more complex. This is because tourists whether inbound or out bound are in search of places and attractions that will optimally satisfy their touristic desires. The global choice of destination according to Henderson (2007) is growing and certain of these destinations have similar characteristics. This gives rise to a situation where one can be replaced by another as the notion of destination choice set implies. Destination is commonly referred to as place in tourism parlance.

A destination must possess attributes that matches the tourist's needs before the tourist would respond positively to the promotional strategy. The attributes that show significant relationship with market segment are those ones that are conceptualized as destination drivers. Czech tourism (2004) suggests that a Destination Marketing Organization should

produce one strong association with which tourists can connect the destination. This idea is supported by the following assumptions: perception is more important than reality and that success is not in the product, but in the minds of clients. The destination's significant associations are personified to give the destination's brand personality. Marketing strategy is the outcome of a firm's segmentation, targeting and positioning choices (STP process) at the level of the Strategic Business Unit (Webster, 2005). This philosophy is supported by marketing textbooks (for example, Kotler, 2003), where this process is enforced as the core of marketing strategy. In other words, the main concept of marketing strategy involves the tasks of identifying and choosing the target segments in where the actual and potential customers are living and desired to purchase the product.

Tourism is a highly competitive industry; the traveler has a wide range of choices and looks for good value for money. The lack of quality infrastructure, uncompetitive rates, indifferent or poor product quality, difficulty in getting access to information on travel and tourist destinations, untrained service providers have an enormously negative effect on the competitiveness of the tourism product. For all these it is necessary for tourism industry to formulate marketing strategies which should include the overall business objectives, destination marketing is designed to identify the target market by the way to collect information about its visitor as well as to audit the destination attractions and select segment that might logically have an interest in them (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). Martin (2004) defines a promotional strategy as the activity of communication with the target audience in a market or multiple different markets. Various modes of promotional strategies and tools exist, including sales promotions, direct selling, advertising, public relations, and personal selling

There are critical issues and challenges affecting Kenya's competitiveness and sustainability as tourist destination. Tourism in Kenya has had difficult times over the years, particularly a prolonged period of lackluster performance in the 1990s (Ikiara, 2001). Ikiara, for example, describes performance in the 1990s as "erratic" (Ikiara, 2001). A post-election period of civil unrest in 2008 and the global economic crisis in 2009 only made inbound international tourism business more challenging. Despite periods of recovery such as 2004–2007 and 2010, prolonged poor performance has characterized the last two decades, raising the concern of key stakeholders. There appears to be systemic and strategic issues and challenges that may be undermining the competitiveness and sustainability of Kenya's tourism industry. Therefore, this study seeks to establish the effect of marketing strategies and how it impacts tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Marketing strategy consists of an internationally integrated but externally focused set of choices about how organization addresses its customers in the context of a competitive environment (Bradley, 2003). Marketing of tourist destinations is different from marketing of any other destination, because of varying conditions, and this influences on the strategy development process. Many tourist planners in Kenya and throughout East Africa establish circuits of tourist destinations that are close to each other and can be marketed together to provide a diversity of experiences. Marketing of such destinations, when planned well, can strengthen tourism activities over large areas (Okello *et al.*, 2005) and become a reason for tourists to prefer such destinations. In order for that to be

successful, it is important to know what marketing strategies are best that can be effective. A quote by Steuart Britt in Esu (2003) buttresses the importance of establishing marketing strategies that are efficient in marketing a tourism destination. The quote says: Doing business without marketing strategies is like winking at a girl in the dark. You know what you are doing. But nobody else does.

Therefore, it was important to establish how the following strategies influenced choice of tourist destination. Destination marketing organizations, tourism promotion campaign, Tourism information centers and Web based technologies. The Kenyan tourist destinations had become dramatically less competitive due to improper marketing strategies and strategic constrains. However, understanding how different marketing strategies affect tourist destinations choice is still limited (Kahyarara & Mchallo, 2008). Moreover, many researchers had been assuming that tourists are aware of the various marketing strategies provided by various tourist firms to enable them to select their destinations. Therefore, this study was intended to bridge the gap that exists in tourist destinations by evaluating the effects of marketing strategies and was aimed to examine the various marketing strategies used by the tourist firms in order to create tourist destination choice. This was used to understand the various marketing strategies a tourist firm was to employ.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General objectives

The main objective of the study was to assess the effects of marketing strategies on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

i.   To establish the contribution of destination marketing organizations on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

ii. To ascertain the influence of tourism promotion campaigns on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

iii. To determine the contribution of tourist information centers on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

iv. To ascertain the influence of Web based technologies on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H_{o1}:   Destination marketing organizations have no significant effect on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

H_{o2}:   Tourism promotion campaigns have no significant effect on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

H_{o3}:   Tourism information centers have no significant effect on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

H_{o4}:   Web based technologies have no significant effect on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was of great significance to the tourism destination marketing organizations in seeking to establish what strategies work and is responsible attraction of tourism in Kenya as a tourism destination. As African nations continually place more gravity in tourism as a source of economic growth, it's evident that tourism industry is becoming really competitive (Harley, 2009). For this reason, effective strategies must be developed and policies be formulated to ensure the acquisition of the largest share of total number of tourist in the tourism industry.

If a tourist destination engages in marketing strategies, it expanded its customer base by retaining their existing customers. Though the effects of marketing strategies are not experienced in the short run but they are felt in the long run. These effects may be seen in the context of increased number of tourists and also tourists passed kind words about the destinations. This helped in designing marketing strategies that enabled tourist destinations to come up with better destinations that helped in retaining tourists and expanding its market share. This study was also of importance to the scholars studying various tourism destinations and how these destinations can offer satisfaction to the tourist all over the world, and most importantly the Kenyan tourism market. It helped to provide insights to support future research regarding strategic guidance for tourist destinations in engaging in marketing strategies.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Some respondents refused to answer questions and others gave exaggerated information on tourist choice of destination and marketing strategies. Researcher convinced them with a promise to keep all information confidential. The researcher took time to persuade them and clarified that the exercise was mainly for academic purposes. The other limitation of the study was dealing with the busy tourist, some of whom did not have time to fill questionnaires. It was difficult to obtain sufficient information from such people. However, most of the tourists who were busy or could not fill the questionnaire; they requested their representatives to fill the questionnaires on their behalf. The questionnaires were filled by respondents who were above fifteen years old.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research was carried out in Maasai Mara National Reserve. The study analyzed the effect of marketing strategies on tourist destination choice. The study focused on the selected strategies this including: Destination marketing organizations (Destination information, accessibility of information, DMOs staff, online manual room and advanced technology); Tourism promotion campaign (images in destination, personal interactions, picture/reality of destinations and promotional programs); Tourism information centers (physical location of destinations, direct interactions with tour guide and relevant information on destination) and Web based technologies (online booking option, destination photos, sharing of files online and price rates and review) in Kenya's tourism market. The researcher also highlighted the parameters of tourist destination choice as follows: easy choice of destination, destination satisfaction and intention to repeat visit.

The study was carried out between the months of March, 2016 to May, 2016 and the targeted population was the tourists (both internal and foreign). The research instrument for this study was the questionnaires.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is intended to acquaint the reader with existing studies carried out in the area of marketing strategies and its effect on tourist destination choice. It will also entail theories of the study and the conceptual framework.

2.1 Concept of Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategy is defined by David A. (2008) as a process that allows an organization to concentrate its resources on the optimal opportunities with the goals of increasing sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. Baker (2008) argues that marketing strategies serve as the fundamental underpinning of marketing plans designed to fill market needs and reach marketing objectives. Plans and objectives are generally tested for measurable results. Commonly, marketing strategies are developed as multi-year plans, with a tactical plan detailing specific actions to be accomplished in the current year. Time horizons covered by the marketing plan vary by company, by industry, and by nation. However, time horizons are becoming shorter as the speed of change in the environment increases. Marketing strategies are dynamic and interactive. They are partially planned and partially unplanned. Marketing strategy needs to take a long term view, and tools such as customer lifetime value models can be very powerful in helping to simulate the effects of strategy on acquisition, revenue per customer and churn rate.

Marketing strategy involves careful and precise scanning of the internal and external environments. Internal environmental factors include the marketing mix and marketing mix modeling, plus performance analysis and strategic constraints. External environmental factors include customer analysis, competitor analysis, target market analysis, as well as evaluation of any elements of the technological, economic, cultural or political/legal environment likely to impact success. A key component of marketing strategy is often to keep marketing in line with a company's overarching mission statement (Homburg, 2009).

Once a thorough environmental scan is complete, a strategic plan can be constructed to identify business alternatives, establish challenging goals, determine the optimal marketing mix to attain these goals, and detail implementation. A final step in developing a marketing strategy is to create a plan to monitor progress and a set of contingencies if problems arise in the implementation of the plan (Harley, 2009).

Marketing Mix Modeling is often used to help determine the optimal marketing budget and how to allocate across the marketing mix to achieve these strategic goals. Moreover, such models can help allocate spend across a portfolio of brands and manage brands to create value (Shaw, 2012). Jain (2000) argues that strategic marketing means looking at the whole of a company's portfolio of products and markets, and managing the portfolio to achieve the company's overall goals. Bradley (2003) that argues marketing strategy consists of an internationally integrated but externally focused set of choices about the organization addresses its customers in the context of a competitive environment.

It is really important to follow some key aspects or elements expressed like having a deep understanding of the market and its environment. (Drummond, Graeme, Ensor, John, & Marketing, 2001). In this case, the marketing manager will have to delimitate the relevant market, to develop market segmentation, to evaluate segments: size, growth of demand and to develop a competition analysis based in the competitive positioning.

Also it is important in strategic marketing to follow a deep internal analysis in order to see tangibles and intangible factors and resources. Both resources are really important to take into account in marketing strategies; some aspects are related to evaluating the importance of the intellectual capital, for example. The distinctive capacities and skills and organization routines (Prahalad *et al.,* 2004) are also crucial in order to determine future strengths key term in marketing strategy or weaknesses very widely used term too and their impact on future business success.

The formulation of objectives and strategies oriented to market thinking in customers and competitors instead in manufacturing capacities, or in what the company can do are also important and are help to define competitive advantage (Kotler, 2000). A marketing strategy is made of several interrelated elements. The first and most important is market choice which is directly related to choosing the markets to be served. Product planning includes the specific products the company sells. The makeup of the product line, and the design of individual offerings in the line. Another element is the distribution system: the wholesale and retail channels through which the product moves to the people who ultimately buy it and use it.

The overall communications strategy employs advertising to tell potential customers about the product trough radio, television, direct mail, and public print and personal selling to deploy a sales force to call on potential customers, urge them to buy, and take orders. Finally, pricing, is an important element of any marketing program and is one of the most directed marketing elements in the creation of value for shareholders (Doyle, 2000). The company must set the product prices that different classes of customers will pay and determine the margins or commissions to compensate agents, wholesalers, and retailers for moving to product to ultimate users.

2.2 Concept of Tourist Destination Choice

Tourist destination choice has been defined as a transformation of motivation in purchasing action (Buhalis, 2000). The destination choice is made by alternative evaluation based on individual preferences and goals, while evaluation of tourist product is based on individual evaluative criteria. Factors that influence consumer behavior can be internal and external to the individual. Among the internal determinants are social and personal, while the external ones include confidence in the travel agency, the overall image of alternatives, previous travel experience, travel constraints (time, cost, etc.), degree of perceived risk, etc. Among the major influences of individual travel behavior are family, reference groups, social classes, culture and subculture that determine individual's personality, learning, motivation, perception (of alternatives) and attitudes.

Eilat and Einav (2004) add marketing strategy to be one of the factors that influence destination choice, which, according to him, is important for both developed and less-

developed countries, while fashion, common border, common language, and distance are also important determinants especially in less-developed countries (Eilat & Einav, 2004).

To understand consumer behavior, it is necessary to examine the complex interaction of many influencing internal and external factors. Moutinho's (1987) study deals with determinants of behaviour, culture and reference group influences, the relationships between individuals and their environments, perceived risks, and family decision processes (Eliat, 2004). Numerous literature studies identify social, cultural, personal, and psychological factors that influence destination choice.

Among the social factors are reference groups, family, roles and status. Reference groups - family, religion, ethnic groups, trade union, neighborhood etc. - can be classified by primary personal contact with a group and secondary occasionally, formal trade union and informal neighborhood. Personal factors include age, life cycle stage, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle and personality (Bonn *et al.*, 2005).

Psychological factors are perhaps the most complex and difficult to understand and consist of motivation (theories of human motivation: Marshall, Freud, Veblen, Herzberg, Maslow), perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes. Another important determinant of tourist's behaviour towards destinations and services is the tourist's self-image – what a person thinks he or she is and what a person wants to be. There is a relationship between self-image and product image that determines tourist's behavior towards destinations and services. Perception and cognition influence the evaluation and judgmental process. Attitude and intention, created by learning and experience are other important concepts in tourists' behavior discussions (Bonn *et al.*, 2005).

The importance of previous travel experience in the destination choice has got wide discussions between the researchers. Many of them consider previous experience on the destination to be a significant factor in the destination choice process. The relationship between tourists' choice behavioral attributes and destination loyalty has been investigated by a more recent study of Chen and Gursoy (2001). According to them the influence of past travel behaviour on destination choice and destination loyalty are not significant, however tourists with more travel experiences tend to be more confident about the destination they selected (Ghen & Gursoy, 2001).

2.3 Theoretical Framework.

2.3.1 The classic approach

The study will use the classic line of thought (Druker, 1973; Bradley, 1991). The classic line part is relative to the planning and the execution of the plans looking for, as a primary target, satisfying the needs of the individuals and the organizations clients such as marketing strategies (Bennet, 1995). Strategic marketing has direct relationship with the management of Strategic Business Units, (Baker, 1984), that is managed at a level of business, (non-corporate) and it communicates directly with the functional strategy of marketing, being defined by a set of basic principles which explain the main decisions and directives of performance of the company, it manages the cost level and budgets for marketing actions and it's in charge to allocate resources on the basis of needs, as well as to integrate the strategy of marketing within the set of the marketing plan (Camera, 1995).

Strategic Marketing also should define subjects related to the coordination of the marketing resources, as well as to the allocation of such referring to the importance of the competitive advantage (Walter, Boyd and Larreché, 1992). The term includes a set of principles which would have to be appropriate and to be oriented to the long term (Harper & Baugh, 1990), in this appropriate case is understood to make decisions guessed "right and coherent" for the attainment of given marketing objectives. This classic approach also makes reference to the opportunities (Lambin, 1977), these opportunities are those potential possibilities at which the company arrives at through an external analysis. Strategic Marketing should be centered in the integral management of products and markets with the aim to reach the objectives previously set (Jain, 2000).

The choice of the objective markets as well as a plan generally in the long term to arrive at the corporative objectives, allocating resources efficiently, without forgetting to consider detecting business opportunities and satisfying the customer needs (Kotler, 1997).

This approach presents a clear direction towards the planning systems. Strategic marketing separates and differentiates mainly from operative marketing in the related management with time, since the strategic one is oriented to the attainment of long term objectives, the possible evolution of the markets and oriented to detected opportunities (Aramario & Lambin, 1991). The term is also clearly associated to the objectives, related to the processes of strategic marketing (Bradley, 1991).

2.3.2 Alternative approach

The alternative line of thought is based on the analysis of the definitions founded. This approach tries to place strategic marketing also in other variables. Strategic marketing is related to knowing as it is the best opinion of the company to know, how to apply to the abilities and the resources in a given market, relating this to 4p' s of marketing mix and interrelating it with the attainment of objectives (McDonald, 1999). Other approaches talk about methodologies of analysis which are used to be able to anticipate future potentialities, (Prahalad *et al.*, 2004) as much in our company as well as in our competitors with the purpose of gaining a competitive advantage which is defensible in the long term (Munuera & Rodriguez, 1998).

Statement and the importance to clarify systems to reach goals, being strategic marketing the base of the marketing plan, that is to say, of the planning of the marketing activities (Hart & Stapleton, 1977). The term is associated to new and innovating concepts such as the approach of 3 c's (Jain, 1993) since they affect consumers, corporations and competition. How to compete, where a clear link to the actions of marketing (or operative marketing) and integrating this with the marketing strategy, and when to compete, giving to understand that the moment also must be analyzed, being key at the time of obtaining the best results in the attainment of objectives related to 3 Cs' (Jain, 1993).

In this line approach also the possibility although usually it is not very common which considers that strategic marketing does not have a unified definition (Schaars, 1991) neither authors nor the professional community, since to a great extent of the cases the words cannot agree with the uses that occur them in professional approaches. Strategic

Marketing helps the company to orient itself thinking about ways that lead us to a wished future (Sudharsan, 1995).

2.4 Destination Marketing Organizations on Tourist Destination Choice

A destination marketing organization is charged with the task of convincingly appealing to potential visitors and so attracting them to their destination. Destination image plays a central role in this process and the effect of destination image on destination choice decisions has been well established in the tourism literature (Tapachai & Waryzcak, 2000). It is also known that visitors generally do not constitute one homogenous group. Another key challenge of a destination marketing organization, consequently, is to identify sub-markets of visitors.

The uncovering of separate target markets, captured by the concept of market segmentation, is well recognized by practitioners and researchers in the fields of marketing, and in applications related to tourist destination choices (Dolnicar, 2004). Tourism marketing and promotion organizations are established for the specific purpose of marketing destinations. In most cases they are governmental or nonprofit private organizations which bring together local political, civic, business, and visitor industry representatives with the knowledge, skills and leadership abilities. The National Tourism Administration (NTA), National Tourism Office (NTO), other governmental bodies at different political or administrative levels, and other public/private organizations are responsible for developing an image that will position their destination in the marketplace as an attractive site for vacation, recreation, and business. They must coordinate these

different elements, in order to attain a desired single image, to be presented to the prospective visitors (Barret, 2007).

Tourism organizations usually work within a political structure. It is important that the organization develop a leadership role within the community in order to be effective in the coordination and execution of its programs. Tourism organizations should be visible entities within a destination, drawing attention to what they are doing so that the community understands the significance of the visitor industry (Kenneth, 2002).

Tourism organizations have other important responsibilities including working with meeting and group planners and providing key resources, information. The tourism organization can provide vital contact names and local information, locate necessary facilities, and act as a convention management consultant to planners. The tourism organization also recommends reliable sources for services and supplies, information on facilities and prices, assist planners with the securing of meeting rooms and hotel room commitments, and serves as the broker or liaison between the planner and the host destination and its resources (Cravens, 2000).

Tourism organizations also help visitors to their destinations through information centers and by responding to visitor inquiries. Tourism organizations can provide visitors with an array of information regarding hotels, restaurants, attractions, shopping, recreation, and entertainment opportunities, and essentially serves as a visitor's one-stop shopping center for ideas and information (Gillan, 2003).

2.5 Tourism Promotion Campaign on Tourist Destination Choice

The promotional activity and campaign that an organization adopts to promote its tourism industry is intended to introduce the country's image to international visitors. Robin *et al.* (2002) observe that the marketing of tourism destinations has traditionally been heavily oriented toward promotional activity. He demonstrates that destination marketing may achieve greater success by focusing on improving destination competitiveness, which implies that the needs of both destinations and stakeholders should occupy a more strategic perspective in tourism planning, development and marketing.

At present, the marketing campaigns conducted by destination marketing organizations are centered mainly on the promotion of the destination as a whole (Gomezlj and Mihalic, 2008). The method of promotion refers to the means used to implement promotional activities and includes promotional tools, information channels and promotional programs.

Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001) note that the main information sources used in executing promotional activities include formal interpersonal sources, external formal sources, commercial sources, and professional sources. They point out the importance of internet as a source of information for consumers to become familiar with this emerging world of information. Thus, the term information source refers to the channel for providing information regarding the destination attributes.

Truong and King (2009) demonstrate that the tourism attributes defined as the key characteristics of a given holiday destination may be conveniently grouped under the

heading. Thus, analytically, and often both logically and temporally, push factors precede pull factors. Tourists are pushed by their need to decide whether to go, and then the tourists are pulled by destinations' attributes to decide where to go. Therefore, promotional activities are very important for a destination to be successful in attracting more tourists.

Bologlu and Mangalolu (2001) note that tour operators and travel agents have multiple and critical functions in the tourism market because they provide information and influence on tourism expectations and perceptions. Within the tourism marketing context, the destination perception is considered to be a major influential predictor in directing decision-making and consumer behaviors.

Destination attributes are commonly used in the empirical research to measure tourists' expectations of a destination (Truong and King, 2009; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Žabka *et al.*, 2010). Of such empirical studies, the majority have examined the expectations of particular places, such as countries or cities. Destination attributes are the main factors formulated by researchers for the purpose of describing the various aspects of a country's image, which predominantly influences a person's expectation of that destination. This expectation cannot be easily altered or manipulated by any other aspect of the destination choice process (Beerli and Martin, 2004).

Although there are many attributes associated with a destination, the fast growth of cultural tourism has been on the forefront for some researchers, and the cultural attractions have become the most important attribute (Smith, 2003; Esu and Arrey, 2009) during the past decade. Due to an increase in the percentage of people who enjoy

traveling, the tourism industry has become a massive market and can now be defined as a landscape industry, which is fully integrated into the destinations' environments (Formica, 2000; Martin, 2005).

Tourists' destination choices are often influenced by convenience. Thus, destinations in closer proximity to one's home would be more likely chosen over destinations offering similar products but located at a greater distance (Esu and Arrey, 2009). In addition, Dwyer and Kim (2003) state that local people's attitudes toward tourists are a major social factor in the formation of the macro-environment of a destination, which may influence tourists' satisfaction with their trip and is, therefore, vital to the success of the destination (Andriotis and Vaughan, 2003).

Lai and Vinh (2012) note that the services of a destination are the most important factor in tourists' destination choices. Thus, the prosperity of a destination's tourism is highly related to its provision of numerous ancillary services (Dwyer and Kim, 2003). The above analysis clearly indicates that price, culture, entertainment, relaxation, landscape, weather, accessibility, safety, local people's attitudes toward tourists, and service are commonly used as attractive attributes for a destination to attract tourists. However, each destination will be visited for its own unique set of destination attributes.

To execute a successful promotional strategy, it is important to understand the expectations of tourists by analyzing the effects that such expectations have on tourists' destination choices, consumption of goods and services and choosing to revisit. It is generally accepted that tourists have expectations after selecting a destination for a

holiday and that their satisfaction levels during and after their holiday period are functions of their expectations (Truong and Foster, 2006).

Zahra (2012) indicates that the creation of an image in consumer mind depends on the degree of familiarity obtained from all social and cultural sources and most importantly for destination marketing organizations the ability to understand consumer expectation and offer tourism product accordingly. In fact, this understanding of destination imagery and visitor perception is critical to a destination and provides the basis for more effective and efficient future strategic planning for the destination.

In practical terms, this implies that destination image studies are a prerequisite to a successful marketing strategy. A successful promotional strategy necessitates the understanding of when the image of the destination forms and at what point the image influences a consumer's choice of a particular destination (Sirakaya *et al.*, 2004).

A major objective of any destination positioning strategy should be to reinforce the positive images already held by the target audience, to correct any negative images, and to create a new image (Pike and Ryan, 2004). On the other hand, destination images influence tourists' decisions and behaviors towards the destination as well as their satisfaction levels and recollections of the experience through the destination loyalty. Therefore, perceived images through promotional activity should be the basis of the evaluation or choice process and, thus, provide the link between motivations and destination choice (O'Leary & Deegan, 2003).

After reviewing 142 papers of destination image from 1973 to 2000, Pike (2004) found that the brand identity of a destination is the image recognition of a destination, and the brand image refers to how consumers perceive both the brand identity and brand positioning to enhance the resemblance between brand identity and image. However, there are gaps in the literatures as well as lack of examining the links among promotional activities, tourist expectation, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

2.6 Tourism Information Centers on Tourist Destination Choice

Tourist Information Centers (TICs) have long been recognized as an efficient way for providing travel information to visitors. Most of the research on TICs has focused on developing profiles of TIC users, assessing differences between users and nonusers, and identifying the reasons for stopping. More recently, TIC research has examined the impact of the information provided by TIC on travel behavior. For example, Brettel (2011) reported that travelers who obtain information from TICs are highly likely to use it during their current and future trips. This research has suggested that information obtained at TICs positively influences length of stay and spending in the area.

To date, however, little research has examined the effects of information distributed at tourist information center on the decision-making process of travelers. Fesenmaier and Jeng (2000) suggested that travel decision-making can be described as a decision net, composed of bundles of sub-decisions which may vary in terms of decision timing and flexibility. These sub-decisions can be categorized into three basic levels: Core decisions which are planned in detail well in advance of the trip and are less of flexibility, which

may include primary destination, length of stay, travel party/members, lodging /accommodation, travel route and travel budget.

Secondary decisions are considered before the trip but remain largely flexible to accommodate the possibility of change and which may include secondary destinations, activities and attractions. En route decisions are, in the main, not considered before the trip and actively seeking for alternatives, which may include rest stops on the road, restaurants, where to go shopping, items to purchase and budget for gifts and souvenirs. Both secondary and en route decisions are contingent in nature, compared with core decisions that are planed well prior to the trip. Thus, the information distributed at TICs is expected to impact differently the different aspects of decision-making process (Jang & Feng, 2007).

This study focused on assessing the extent to which the effect of information obtained from TIC has on actual travel behavior. More specifically, the differences in the information use between those travelers who has visited TIC for the purpose of obtaining travel information and those who stopped by a TIC for any other reasons are main interest of this study. In the next section, previous research on TIC user and their information use are reviewed. Data and methods used for this study are then described, followed by empirical results. The implications of the results are addressed in the last section (Klenosky, 2002).

Understanding who stops at welcome centers has been an on-going interest of tourism researchers. Previous research on the differences between users and nonusers of TIC shows somewhat inconsistent results. There are no significant differences exist between

welcome center users and nonusers on a number of demographic variables including family income, age, and the number of children in the household, as well as trip characteristics such as prior experience, primary destination, accommodation type, travel party size, and nights spent. (Kuusik, 2011).

Pike (2004) also indicated that with the exception of income levels, no significant differences in socio-demographic characteristics were found across the respective levels of influence. Welcome center visitors and non-visitors differed significantly in terms of demographic and trip characteristics. Significant differences in expenditures between the two types of travel groups were also indicated in their study. Truong (2005) also reported that non-stoppers tended to be younger and long-distance traveler. Stoppers reported a longer trip planning horizon, and were more likely to be on a vacation or leisure trip than a work or business trip.

Another issue that has drawn broad attention of researchers is the motivation for stopping at a tourist information center. Some studies reported that the use of restrooms is the most popular reason for stopping. Foster (2006) found that the majority of welcome center visitors stopped to use restrooms (62% of those surveyed); beyond this, approximately 25 percent of the respondents indicated they stopped at the welcome centers to stretch/exercise/sleep or to obtain sightseeing information.

About 10 percent of those surveyed in their study indicated that they stopped specially to obtain information about travel routes. Results of other research (Muha, 1977; Tierney and Hass, 1988; Gitelson and Purdue, 1987; Fesenmaier, Vogt and Stewart, 1993), on the

other hand, have shown that obtaining travel information was the major reason for stopping at TICs (Zahra, 2012).

As a further step to understand the behavior of TIC users, a substantial number of studies have been conducted to evaluate the level of information use, types of information obtained, and the effect of information on travel behavior. According to previous research, most of travelers have been reported to use information obtained from TIC, and the types of information obtained at the welcome center are centered to new areas, attractions, and special events (Jeng, 2000).

Information provided at TICs also known to have effects on the length of stay at the destination and spending. Holman (2011) for example, found that one third of respondents spent additional money, 21 percent stayed longer than originally planned, and 29 percent visited places not planned prior to visiting the welcome center as the result of the information obtained at TIC.

2.7 Web Based Technologies on Tourist Destination Choice

The internet contains market data in the form of advertising messages associated with search, entertainment, and general information sites and Internet Presence Sites (IPS) also called home pages. A home page is a Web site created and maintained by organizations (enterprises, government agencies, altruist organizations, cultural organizations, etc.) or individuals that provide detailed product and organizational data. The presence of a Web address in an advertisement enhances a variety of aspects of the firm's image, including

being customer-oriented, responsive, sophisticated, and successful (Mothersbaugh & Best, 2010).

Also, into the Web pages, banner ads are a very important promotion tool. Banner ads represent today a powerful mean to lead consumers to the company or product home page. In tourism industry, the banners ads play a very important role connecting travelers with thousands of websites of travel agencies, hotels, transportation companies, restaurants, car rental companies, etc. and, maybe more important, with thousands of tourist destination sites available to be chosen (Hawkins, 2010).

In this context, tourist destination managers must visualize major decisions concerning the use of internet. In effect, they must decide to create or not a Web site to promote their travel destination. Having a destination Web site, they need to decide if the site should be active or passive. A passive Web site focused on providing only specific information about a tourist destination whereas an active Web site allows the destination managers to develop a relationship with visitors over time and provide them with additional information related to the site facilities and other tourist attractions and services. However, no matter if a Web site is active or passive; it needs to be easy to access, up-to-date, logical and oriented to travel needs. The more complete and interactive the Web site, the more effective and useful it will be for marketing and commercial purposes (Choi, 2007).

The term Web 2.0 refers to a second generation of web-based services that allow people to collaborate and share information online in previously unavailable ways. Thus, Web 2.0 enables any traveler to post their own content, opinions, videos, audio, or imagery to

the web for other travelers to see and respond to. Web 2.0 includes the ability to integrate information in new forms, the desire to harness distributed knowledge, and the need to engage users as co-developers (Cox, Burges, Sellitto & Buultjens, 2009).

In a study realized by Gretzel (2007) about the impact of on-line travel reviews on consumers, results reveal that looking at other consumers comments/materials on online travel review sites' was the most frequently used source of information. Indeed, Hyung-Park, Lee & Hang (2007) establish that online consumer reviews are often considered more trustworthy and credible than information which is provided by suppliers of products and services, presumably because consumers provide more trustworthy information.

As potential travelers increasingly visit tourist websites, their expectations for easily accessed and useful information shown in an entertaining format will increase. Consumer characteristics of travelers affect perceptions about benefits and search costs of use websites. A satisfying experience with a particular destination increases the probability of a repeat choice of this destination. In contrast, a negative travel experience decreases the likelihood of travel to the same place and/or choice a similar destination. Travelers who are highly involved with a destination category normally seek information relevant to the destination category on an ongoing basis. This ongoing search reduces the need for another kind of search before a choice. Research has demonstrated that tourists use different types of online information sources depending on where they are at in the travel planning process—that is the pre-trip, during trip and post-trip stages (Choi, Letho & O'Leary, 2007; Seabra, Abrantes & Lages, 2007).

However, other studies have found that consumer purchase behavior is occasionally impulsive. Regarding how travelers make destinations choices, they can follow sequential process based on attributes or on attitudes about alternative places to be considered. Attribute-based choice required the knowledge of specific and distinctive attributes of each place and attribute-by-attribute comparison across places. On the other hand, attitude-based choice involves only the use of general attitudes, impressions and intuitions about places without making comparisons.

In the field of tourism, it is extremely important for destination managers to understand how travelers search for and review information at the various stages of their travel decision making process (Letho & O'Leary, 2007). Research has demonstrated that the meaning of the product is one of the variables that predict searching and buying behavior. Meaning is derived from the practical utility of the product and is intrinsically linked to its convenience, efficiency, and the exchange value perse (Vaz & Pérez-Nebra, 2007).

The symbolic meaning is the result of social experiences, which lead to the subjective categorization of the product, by means of social institutions, communication systems, and the culture of a society. Basic human values have a direct influence on consumer choice when individuals evaluate the symbolic meaning of a service, and therefore make an affective judgment about it. In the field of tourism, research has found that tangible and abstract attributes of tourist sites influence destination choice behavior. These attributes can be considered by tourists as symbolic meanings of places affecting their destination choice process (Klenoski, 2002).

Jeng and Fesenmaier (2002) note that travelers generally collect and review various forms of travel information early in the travel decision making process in order to minimize the risk of making a poor destination decision. Pan and Fesenmaier (2006) note that travel consumers tend to seek information related to10 key sub decisions regarding the trip-travel partners: the destination; expenditure required; activities; travel dates; attractions to visit; transportation providers; length of trip; rest stops; and food stops. The central role that individual consumers have in submitting, reviewing, and responding to online content is reflected in terms such as user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media (CGM) that are commonly used for Web 2.0 (Gretzel, 2006, 2007). In marketing terms, UGC sites are effectively a form of consumer to consumer e-marketing. They equate to electronic word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, whereby somebody who has an opinion about a product or service shares their views, beliefs, and experiences with other people (Ahuja, Michels, Walker & Weissbuch, 2007).

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework demonstrates the assumed link between the study independent variables namely; destination marketing organizations, Tourism promotion campaign, Tourism information centers and Web based technologies. Based on the studies the four variables are most used marketing strategies used by firms to lure tourist in any tourist destinations. Therefore the studies assume the use of the four independent variables might have either a positive or negative effect on the study dependent variables (tourist destination) as shown below.

Independent Variables   **Dependent Variable**
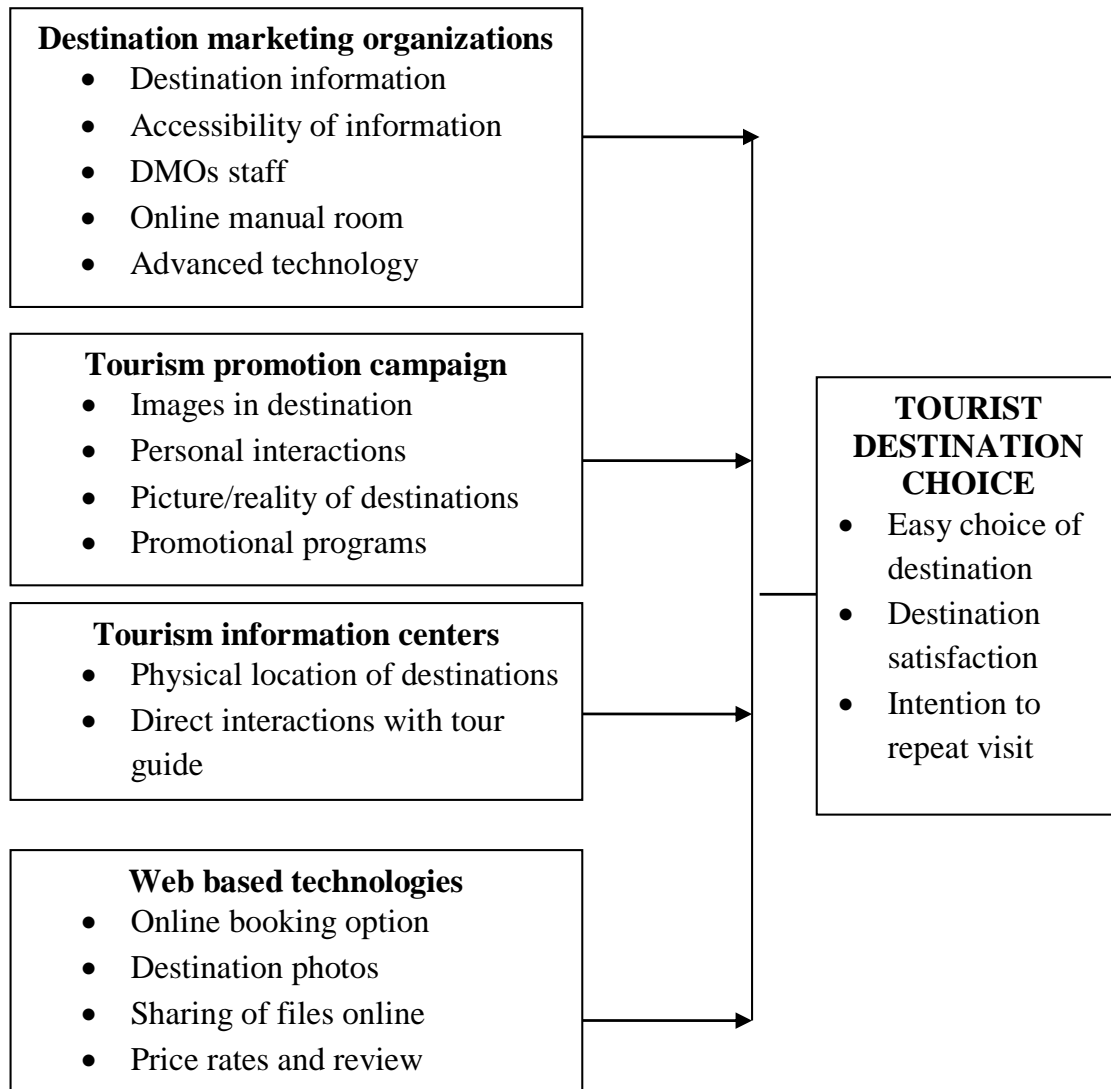
Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source; **Author (2016)**

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter gives information concerning how the researcher obtained data and analysed it. They consist of; research design, area of study, the target population, the sampling procedures that was adopted, and the sample design and sample size selected for the study. It also includes the data collection method which was employed. A discussion of the validity and reliability of research instruments was included in this chapter as well as data analysis techniques that was used and ethical consideration.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a combination of descriptive survey and explanatory research design. A descriptive research gives a thorough and accurate description survey by determining the "how" or "why" the phenomena came into being, and also what is involved in the situation. This was achieved by portraying an accurate profile of the events and situations (Robson, 2002), which Sunders *et al.* (2007) considered as an extension of, or forerunner to an explanatory research.

On the other hand, an explanatory study goes beyond description and attempts to explain the reasons for the phenomena that the descriptive study only observed (Cooper and Schindler, 2003) by seeking to establish a casual relationship between variables (Sunders *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, a descriptive study would look at what was going on, while an explanatory study seeks to explain why it was going on (Sekaran, 2003). The population

of interest was thoroughly investigated in their places of operation so as to freely give more information without the manipulation of unfamiliar environments in order to understand the marketing strategies on tourist destination.

3.3 Description of the Study Area

The Maasai Mara is not a National Park, but rather a National Reserve belonging to the Maasai people and administered by the local county councils. It is one of the best known and most popular reserves in Africa. The Maasai Mara National Reserve is each year visited by thousands of tourists, who come and go there to watch the many different wildlife and birdlife species. It is globally famous for its exceptional population of Maasai lions, African leopards and Tanzanian cheetahs, and the annual migration of zebra, Thomson's gazelle and wildebeest to and from the Serengeti every year from July to October, known as the Great Migration.

Plate: 3.1 Map of Maasai Mara
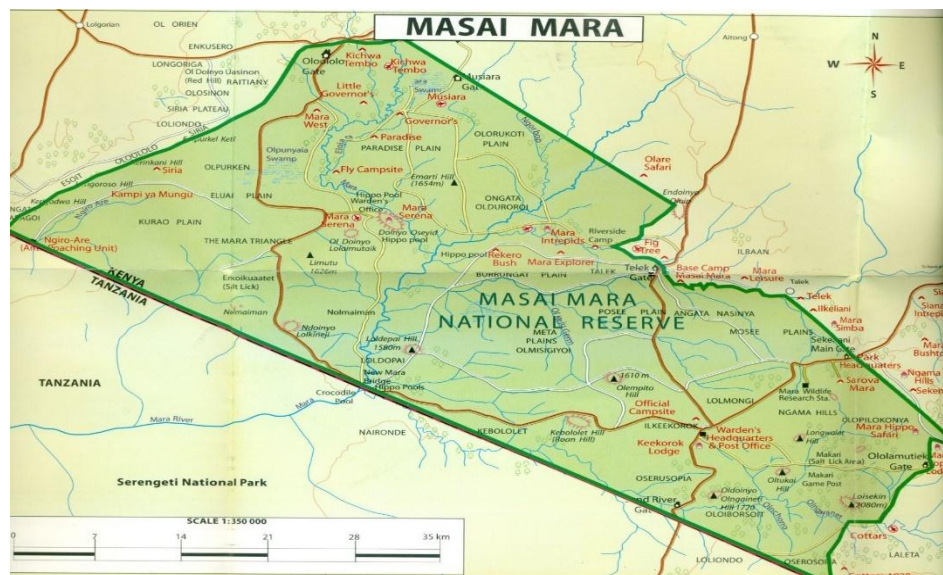
Source; **Google maps (2015)**

3.4 Target Population

A population is the whole group of individuals, events or objects having common evident features. A target population is that population to which a researcher wants to take a broad view of the results of a study (Coolican, 2013). In this study, the target population comprised of tourists visiting Maasai Mara National reserve. Approximately 549,083 tourists visited Maasai Mara National Reserve in the first six months of 2015. Maasai Mara National Reserve is located in the south west of Kenya and west of the capital Nairobi.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Orodho, 2005). The simple random sampling technique was used to sample 224 tourists (both internal and foreign). Sample size formula was used to calculate a sample size of 224 tourists as shown below. The sample will be obtained using Nassiuma, (2000) sample size formula. Nassiuma (2000), gives the formula as follows:-

$$\text{n} = \frac{Nc^2}{c^2 + (N-1)e^2} = \frac{549083(0.3)^2}{0.3^2 + (549083-1)0.02^2} = 224$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

c = Coefficient of variation which is $\leq 30\%$

e = Margin of error which is fixed between 2-5%

Since, it was difficult to gather the tourists at a time, and the researcher stood at strategic positions and entrances as well as exits from the sites and administered the questionnaire to individuals who came in contact with. The researcher with the help of two field assistants stood at strategic points to administer the questionnaire. Copies of a structured questionnaire was administered to tourists who visited Maasai Mara National reserve, cites where local crafts are displayed as well as at selected hotels within the best attraction spot at the time of data collection.

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Data types and sources

The research utilized both primary and secondary data. The secondary data was obtained from textbooks related to the study, magazines, journals, presented conferences and previous reports as well as the internet. The primary data on the other hand was obtained from questionnaires adopted for the study.

3.6.2 Data collection instruments

A questionnaire refers to a collection of items to which a respondent is expected to react usually in written (Kothari, 2008). Sekaran (2013) suggests that questionnaires are resourceful data collection instruments which would make the researcher know what would be required and how to measure the variables of concern. Questionnaires are easy to be administered and analyzed. The questionnaires are advantageous because they cover a large population within a short time and minimal cost on the part of the researcher and intensify independence and accuracy of responses from the respondents (Sekaran, 2013).

Structured questionnaires were administered to sampled tourists. Questionnaires were used for collection of primary data from tourists. The researcher employed a 5 likert scale in rating the various responses. The respondents were required to read, understand and tick an appropriate choice.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

In this study, two types of validity were tested; face validity and content validity. Face validity refers to the likelihood that questions in an instrument were understood. To improve on the face validity, a pilot study was conducted after which responses to each item was scrutinized to identify any misunderstandings and ambiguity. Items found to be unclear or ambiguous were modified thereby improving face validity. Content validity, refers to whether an instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic. Expert Opinions Literature searches and pre-testing of open-ended questions was to improve the content validity used. The questions in the questionnaire were brainstormed with colleagues and there after necessary corrections made. Consequently, the instruments with guidance from the university supervisors and the results of pilot study on open-ended questions helped in the improvement of the content validity.

To determine the content validity of a questionnaire items, expert's from Moi University examined them. Suggestion and advice offered was used as a basis to modify the research items and made them more adaptable to the study. Their feedback was used to revise the instrument. In addition, the researcher conducted all the study in person in order to ensure systematic validity

3.7.1 Reliability of the research instruments

Reliability refers to the degree to which the instrument yields the same results on replicated trials (Orodho, 2009). It is therefore the degree of consistency or whether it can be relied upon to produce the same results when used in two or more attempts to measure theoretical concepts. Reliable measuring tool need not be applicable (Kothari, 2008). To ensure reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was carried out in neighbouring national reserve. This area was used for piloting because the two counties share similar conditions. Crobanch alpha was used to determine a reliability of the questionnaires. The piloting of the questionnaire was to identify faults hence improve its reliability. The SPSS computer software aided in working out this Crobanch alpha coefficient. According to Oluwatayo (2012), a reliability index of 0.7 was considered ideal for the study.

3.7.2 Piloting of research instrument

Instrument piloting is a crucial element of a good study design. Conducting a pre-test study will not guarantee success in the main study but it does increase its chance (Madsen, 2012). The questionnaire used in this study was pre- tested through a pilot study before actual data collection. This enabled the revision of the questionnaires before actual data collection in terms of their content.

This was carried out in 10 tourists who were selected purposively to ensure that they bear the same characteristics as the tourists in the study area. The tests were done so as to find out whether the terms used resonate with head of departments. The feedback obtained from the piloted pre-tourists who helped the researcher in revising the questionnaire to ensure that they covered the objectives of the study adequately.

Piloting ensures as much as possible that the items would elicit and gave the kind of responses the researcher intends to get and that they were acceptable in terms of their content. The researcher also verified their content for accuracy, consistency and ensures that unclear information is removed while deficiencies and weakness are noted and corrected in the final instruments (Creswell, 2008). This ensures simplicity and suitability of the items.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

To collect primary data, questionnaires were used. Sekaran (2013) suggests that questionnaires are efficient data collection apparatus which provide the researcher to know exactly what is necessary and how to measure the variables of interest. After approval of the research proposal and an introductory letter from Moi University, the researcher secured a permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) for the purpose of conducting research. In addition the researcher sort appointment and consult with the management of the national reserve, after which appointments were booked.

The researcher then visited the respective selected sites to obtain samples of tourist. Tourists were given questionnaires and the instructions on how to fill it were carefully explained to the respondents. They further assured that the information they were giving was confidential and would be used for the purpose of the study. After responding to the questionnaires, the researcher then collected them for data analysis.

3.8.1 Data analysis

This refers to the important assessment of the coded data and making inferences (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). Once the questionnaires were collected by the researchers, they were coded and fed into the SPSS computer software and analysed. Initially screening of data was done using sort functions. Data was based on the objectives and research question of the study. From the results, the researcher made a sense data. Quantitative data collected was analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistical techniques. The findings were presented by use of frequency distribution tables that gave record of a number of times a score or a response occurs. The researcher used inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation to show the relationships that existed between the variables and multiple regression to show casual effect.

Multiple regressions model was used to test the study hypothesis. Regression equation is a function of variables x and β

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where $\beta 0$ is the intercept, $\beta 1$ measures change in Y with respect to X_1, holding other factors constant, β_2 measures the change in Y with respect to X_2 holding other factors constant, $\beta 3$ measures the change in Y with respect to X_3 holding other factors constant and β_4 measures the change in Y with respect to X_4 holding other factors constant

Where;

Y represents tourists' choice

X_1 represents Destination marketing organization

X_2 represent Tourism promotion campaign

X_3 represents Wed based technologies

X_4 represents Tourism information centers

ε error term

3.8.2 Assumptions of Regression Model

William *et al.* (2013) Variables are normally distributed; Regression assumes that variables have normal distribution; none normally distributed variables can distort relationships and significance tests. Linearity of the relationship between dependent and independent variables; Standard multiple regressions can only accurately estimate the relationship between dependent and independent variable if the relationships are linear in nature. In case of non-linear relationships, it is essential to examine analysis for non-linearity. If relationships between dependent and independent variable are not linear, the results of the regression analysis was underestimate the true relationships.

Independence of the errors; most authors estimate (Cronbachs alpha) of 0.7 to 0.8 are acceptable (Nunnually, 1978). Hence, a test of instrument reliability must be carried out for reliability tests; if it's low then correction should be done.

Homoscedasticity (constant of variance) of the errors; Variance of errors is the same across all levels of the independent variables, when variance of errors differ at different values of the independent variables, heteroscedacity is indicated. According to (Berry and Feldman, 1985) and (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996) slight heteroscedacity has little effect on significance tests; however when heteroscedacity is marked it can lead to serious

distortions of findings and seriously weaken the analysis thus increasing the possibility of Type I error.

Normality of the error distribution; Regression assumes that variables have normal distribution; none-normally distributed variables (highly skewed, or variables with substantial outliers) can distort relationships and significance tests. To ascertain normality of data in this study, there was visual inspection of data to identify outliers.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Permission to carry out the study was sought from the relevant authority and from the tourists who participated in the study (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). The researcher took into account the effects of the research on tourists and heads of departments, and acted in a way that protected their decorum. In this study, the researcher assured the entire tourists that the information given was used for academic purposes only. This was done to ensure honest information was given and also to enhance the process of data collection. The researcher assured the participants that nobody would be questioned about any information they gave, moreover, no names or personal identification numbers was reflected in the questionnaire, the numbering of the questionnaires was for ordering purpose only.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents results of this study based on the formulated objectives and hypotheses as presented in chapter one. The chapter analyzes the variables involved in the study and estimate the conceptual model described in chapter two. In the first two sections data description and analysis is presented. The model estimation and the analysis of the results are then interpreted. Finally, concluding remarks are made. Data collected was quantitatively analyzed and presented in charts and tables. Hypothesis are also tested with the study accepting or failing to accept them depending to the p values and t test value.

4.2 Demographic Information

The background information of the respondents was considered necessary because the ability of the respondents to give satisfactory information on the study variables may be affected by their background. This information is about the respondents' age bracket, marital status, gender and educational level.

4.2.1 Age bracket

The study settled on four age groups, from which, respondents were asked to identify their group. The groups were: - less than to 25 years old, 25 to 30 years, 31 to 40 years and 41 to 50 years old. The data collected revealed that 6.3% of the respondents were less than 25, years old, 13.6% were between 25 to 30 years, 44.7% were between 31 to 40

years old and 35.4% of the respondents are between 41 to 50 years old. These findings suggest that, the study was dominated by people aged between 31 to 40 years old, as this class appears to be the model class of the age groups.
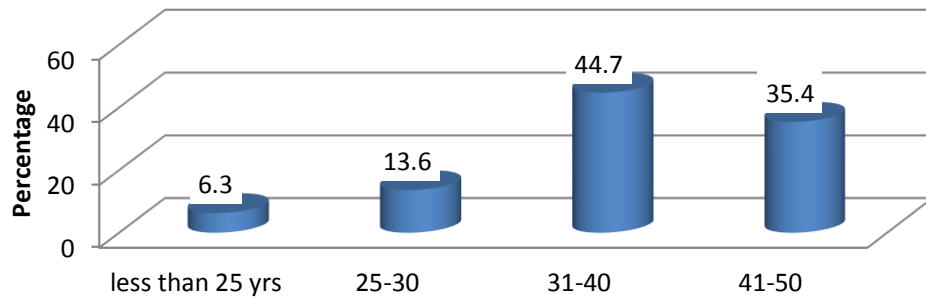
Figure 4.1: Age bracket

4.2.2 Marital status

The study sought to establish the marital status of the respondents. Based on the results in figure 4.2, 6.8% are married, 6.8% separated, 18.9% of the respondents are single, 26.2% of them are divorced and 41.3% widowed. The results indicate that most of the respondents were widowed.
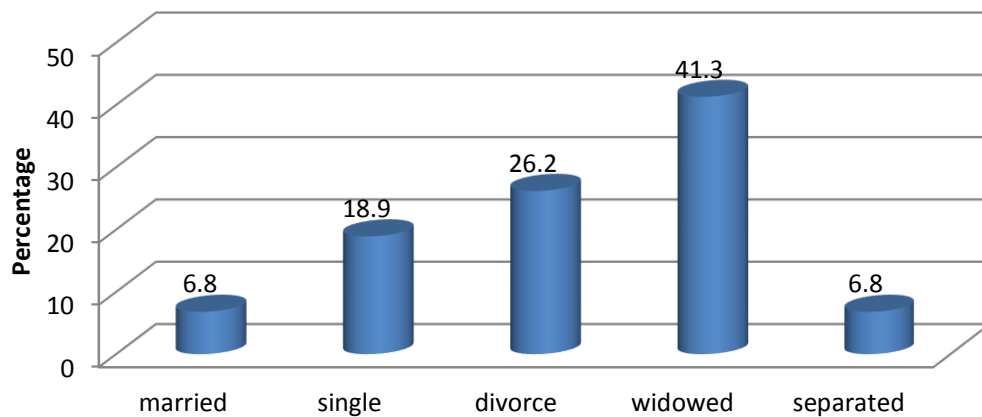
Figure 4.2: Marital status

4.2.3 Gender

The study put into account the gender of the respondents. From figure 4.3, 44% (91) of the respondents were female while 56% (115) are male. This is an indication that male individuals comprise the majority of those visiting Maasai Mara national reserve.
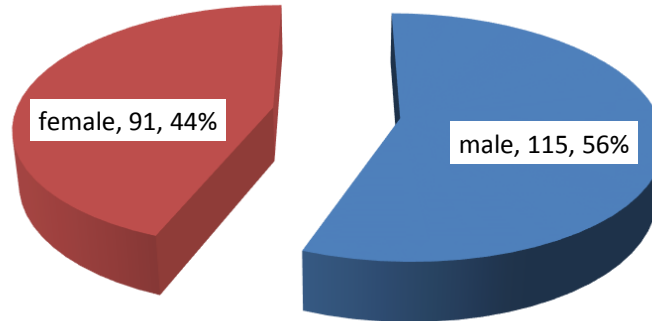
Figure 4.3: Gender

4.2.4 Education level

The study also sought to establish the education level of the respondents. Based on the findings in figure 4.4, 11.2% of the respondents had high school as their highest level of education, 27.7% Diploma, 27.7% Postgraduate and 33.5% of them have Undergraduate as their academic qualification. These findings implied that most of the respondents were qualified to understand the nature of the study problem.
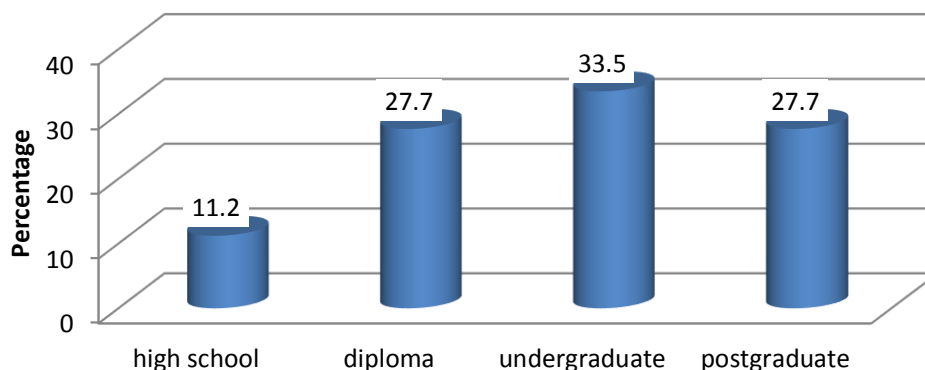
Figure 4.4: Education level

4.3 Destination Marketing Organizations on Tourist Destination Choice

The first objective of this study was to establish the contribution of destination marketing organizations on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination. To achieve this objective, the respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement on the contributions of destination marketing organizations on tourists' choice. The results are presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Destination Marketing Organizations

		SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I get most of my destination information from destination marketing organizations	Freq.	5	2	10	91	98	4.33	0.82
	%	2.4	1	4.9	44.2	47.6		
I find it easy to access information	Freq.	1	15	61	75	54	3.81	0.927
	%	0.5	7.3	29.6	36.4	26.2		
I prefer destination marketing organizations due to their high familiarity with new technology	Freq.	5	1	85	77	38	3.69	0.861
	%	2.4	0.5	41.3	37.4	18.4		
Staff in destination marketing organizations are very supportive and helpful	Freq.	12	6	49	71	68	3.86	1.093
	%	5.8	2.9	23.8	34.5	33		
I can access online manual room destination marketing organizations	Freq.	1	8	72	59	66	3.88	0.926
	%	0.5	3.9	35	28.6	32		
Destination marketing organizations							3.9136	0.59699

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

The respondents were asked whether they get most of their destination information from destination marketing organizations. The results from the study revealed that, of the total respondents, 47.6% (98) strongly agreed that they get most of their information from destination marketing organizations, 44.2% (91) of them agreed, 1% (2) disagreed, 2.4% (5) strongly disagreed while 4.9% (10) of the respondents were neutral. The mean value was 4.33 and the standard deviation was 0.82. The mean value indicates that majority of the respondents were in agreement that destination marketing organizations are their main source of destination choice. On the other hand, the standard deviation shows less variation in the responses.

In determining whether the tourists find it easy to access information, the study revealed that; 26.2% (54) of the respondents strongly agreed, 36.4% (75) of them agreed, 7.3% (15) disagreed, 0.5% (1) strongly disagreed while 29.6% (61) of the respondents were undecided. The results summed up to a mean of 3.81 and standard deviation of 0.927. On the whole, most of the tourists find it easy to access information. It can therefore be inferred that destination marketing organizations have made it easier for tourists to have easy access to information about their destination choice.

In a related question of whether the tourists prefer destination marketing organizations due to their high familiarity with new technology, results from the study revealed that, the question had a mean of 3.69 and standard deviation of 0.861. The mean value indicates that majority of the respondents were in agreement that tourists prefer destination marketing organizations due to their high familiarity with new technology and the standard deviation shows less variations in the responses. This was as a result of

18.4% (38) of the respondents strongly agreeing, 37.4% (77) agreeing, 0.5% (1) disagreeing, 2.4% (5) strongly disagreeing and 41.3% (85) being uncertain.

In order to find out whether, the staff in destination marketing organizations are very supportive and helpful; respondents were asked to state the degree to which they concurred with the above. Of the total respondents, 33% (68) of the respondents strongly agreed, 34.5% (71) of them agreed, 2.9% (6) disagreed, 5.8% (12) strongly disagreed while 23.8% (49) of them were neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 3.86 and standard deviation of 1.093 meaning that majority of the respondents were in agreement that the staff in destination marketing organizations are very supportive and helpful.

In relation to whether the tourists could access online manual room destination marketing organizations, the results were positive with 32% (66) of the respondents in strong agreement, 28.6% (59) in agreement, 3.9% (8) disagreement, 0.5% (1) strong disagreement while 35% (72) of them were neutral. The item realized a mean of 3.88 and standard deviation of 0.926.

Generally, the results on destination marketing organizations revealed a mean of 3.9136 and standard deviation of 0.59699 which implies that on average the respondents were in agreement. There also less variations in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation.

4.4 Tourism Promotion Campaign on Tourist Destination Choice

The second objective of this study was toascertain the influence of tourism promotion campaigns on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination.To achieve the

objective the respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement on a five-point likert scale in the questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Tourism promotion campaign

		SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I was able to view the images of the destination through promotion campaigns	Freq.	5	32	105	55	9	3.15	0.821
	%	24	15.5	51	26.7	44		
I was able to have personal interaction on tourist sites in Kenya through promotion campaigns	Freq.	1	25	98	61	21	3.37	0.844
	%	0.5	12.1	47.6	29.6	10.2		
I prefer promotion campaigns because they saw actual picture/reality on the tourism sites	Freq.	19	106	81	0	0	4.3	0.63
	%	9.2	51.5	39.3	0	0		
I get most of my destination information through promotional programs	Freq.	0	0	46	100	60	4.07	0.716
	%	0	0	22.3	48.5	29.1		
Tourism promotion campaigns							3.722	0.379

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

In regards to whether the respondents were able to view the images of the destination through promotion campaigns, 4.4% (9) of the respondents strongly agreed, 26.7% (55) agreed, 15.5% (32) disagreed, 2.4% (5) strongly disagreed while 51% (105) were neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 3.15 and standard deviation of 0.821 meaning that majority of the tourists were unaware if images of the destination were displayed in promotions campaign.

The study further enquired from the respondents whether they were able to have personal interaction on tourist sites in Kenya through promotion campaigns. The results revealed that 10.2% (21) of the respondents strongly agreed 29.6% (61) of them agreed, 12.1% (25) disagreed, 0.5% (1) strongly disagreed while 47.6% (98) of the respondents were

neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 3.37 and standard deviation of 0.844. On the whole, most (47.6%) of the respondents were not sure if the promotion campaigns made them have a personal interaction on tourist sites in Kenya. It could therefore be deduced that the tourists have not fully utilized promotion campaigns or the promotion campaigns have not been effective in enhancing personal interaction on the tourism sites.

In order to ascertain whether the tourists prefer promotion campaigns because they saw actual picture/reality on the tourism sites, the results revealed that 9.2% (19) of the respondents strongly disagreed, 51.5% (106) disagreed while 39.3% (81) of them were undecided. This infers that the tourists had no preference towards the promotion campaigns since they saw actual picture/reality on the tourism sites.

Further, respondents were also asked whether they get most of their destination information through promotional programs. The results showed that 29.1% (60) of the respondents strongly agreed, 48.5% (100) of the respondents agreed while 22.3% (46) of the respondents were neutral. The item realized a mean of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.716. This is an indication that promotional programs are a source of information on the destination.

In general, results on tourism promotion campaign summed up to a mean of 3.722 and standard deviation of 0.379. This is an indication that the respondents were generally agreeable. Also, there were less variations in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation.

4.5 Web Based Technologies on Tourist Destination Choice

The third objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of Web based technologies on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination. The findings on the influence of web based technologies on tourist choice are illustrated in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Web based technologies

		SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I use web based tourism marketing because of its online booking options	Freq.	0	1	17	109	79	4.29	0.634
	%	0	0.5	8.3	52.9	38.3		
I use we based technologies because it displays destination photos on the web	Freq.	7	9	126	28	36	3.37	0.938
	%	3.4	4.4	61.2	13.6	17.5		
I prefer web based tourism marketing since they are able to share files with others online	Freq.	0	1	79	95	31	3.76	0.705
	%	0	0.5	38.3	46.1	15		
I search tourism sites using web based technology because they provide price ratings and reviews	Freq.	4	0	116	39	47	3.61	0.903
	%	1.9	0	56.3	18.9	22.8		
Web based technologies							3.76	0.526

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

In relation to whether the tourists use web based tourism marketing because of its online booking options, the results were positive with 38.3% (79) of the respondents in strong agreement, 52.9% (109) in agreement, 0.5% (1) disagreement while 8.3% (17) of them were neutral. The item realized a mean of 4.29 and standard deviation of 0.634. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that tourists use web based tourism marketing because of its online booking options.

In a bid to establish if the respondents use web based technologies because it displays destination photos on the web, the respondents were asked to respond accordingly and the results were such that 17.5% (36) of the respondents strongly agreed, 13.6% (28) agreed, 4.4% (9) disagreed, 3.4% (7) strongly disagreed and 61.2% (126) of the respondents were

neutral. The item realized a mean of 3.37 and standard deviation of 0.938. The results indicate that the respondents are not sure whether the presence of destination photos on the web is the reason as to why they use web based technologies.

To establish whether the respondents prefer web based tourism marketing since they are able to share files with others online, respondents were requested for their opinion and the results were such that, 15% (31) of the respondents strongly agreed, 46.1% (95) agreed, 0.5% (1) disagreed while 38.3% (79) of the respondents were neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.705 meaning that there is a preference towards web based tourism marketing because of the ability to share files with others online.

In order to ascertain whether the respondents search tourism sites using web based technology because they provide price ratings and reviews, results revealed that, 22.8% (47) of them strongly agreed, 18.9% (39) of them agreed, 1.9% (4) of them strongly disagreed and 56.3% (116) of the respondents were neutral. This summed up to a mean of 3.61 and standard deviation of 0.903. However, majority of the respondents were not sure if they use web based technologies since it gives them a platform whereby they can check price ratings and reviews. This indicates that the tourists have not fully utilized web based technologies.

The results on web based technologies summed up to a mean of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 0.526. This infers that the respondents were agreeable on the items in web based technologies. Besides, the standard deviation was indicative of less variation in the responses.

4.6 Tourism Information Centers on Tourist Destination Choice

The fourth objective of this study sought to determine the contribution of tourist information centers on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination. To achieve the objective the respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement on a five-point likert scale in the questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Tourism information centers

		SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev
I use tourism information center because they provide physical location that provides tourist information to visitors who tour the place or area locally	Freq.	29	5	82	60	30	3.28	1.18
	%	14.1	2.4	39.8	29.1	14.6		
I use tourism information center because they provide direct interaction with their tour guide	Freq.	1	25	116	31	33	3.34	0.906
	%	0.5	12.1	56.3	15	16		
I use tourism information center because they provide relevant information on the national reserve	Freq.	4	15	100	55	32	3.47	0.909
	%	1.9	7.3	48.5	26.7	15.5		
Tourism information centers							3.39	0.767

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

In order to find out if the respondents use tourism information center because they provide physical location that provides tourist information to the visitors who tour the place or area locally, the respondents were asked for their views on this and the results showed that 14.6% (30) of the respondents strongly agreed, 29.1% (60) of them agreed, 2.4% (5) disagreed, 14.1% (29) of them strongly disagreed while 39.8% (82) of the respondents were neutral. The item realized a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of

1.18. Consequently, it is undefined whether the respondents use tourism information center because it provides physical location of the destination choice.

In regards to whether the respondents use tourism information center because they provide direct interaction with their tour guide. Of the total respondents, 16% (33) of the respondents strongly agreed, 15% (31) of them agreed, 12.1% (25) disagreed, 0.5% (1) strongly disagreed and 56.3% (116) of the respondents were neutral. This position was further confirmed by the 3.34 mean and standard deviation of 0.906.

In relation to whether the respondents use tourism information center because they provide relevant information on the national reserve, the results indicated that 15.5% (32) of the respondents strongly agreed, 26.7% (55) agreed, 7.3% (15) disagreed, 1.9% (4) strongly disagreed while 48.5% (100) were neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 3.47 and standard deviation of 0.909. The results imply that the tourism information center is used by most of the respondents because it provides relevant information on the national reserve. However, there is still a significant percentage (48.5%) of tourists that doubt whether it is used because it provides relevant information on the national reserve. There is thus need to raise awareness among the tourists on how they can make use of tourism information centers.

Generally, the results on the tourism information centers summed up to a mean of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 0.767. The mean indicates that the respondents were undecided on most items with respect to the tourism information centers. On the other hand, the standard deviation indicated that there were fewer variations in the responses.

4.7 Tourist Destination Choice

The dependent variable of this study was destination choice. The responses on the destination choice are presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Tourist destination choice

		SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
It was easier for me to	Freq.	1	1	55	79	70	4.05	0.819
choose Maasai Mara	%	0.5	0.5	26.7	38.3	34		
Am satisfied with the choice	Freq.	0	2	102	54	48	3.72	0.831
I made to come here	%	0	1	49.5	26.2	23.3		
I intend to visit the national	Freq.	6	109	91			4.41	0.55
reserve again	%	2.9	52.9	44.2				
Tourist destination choice							4.0599	0.56662

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

The study sought to find out if it was easier for the tourists to choose Maasai Mara. Results indicated that 34% (70) of the respondents strongly agreed, 38.3% (79) of them agreed, 0.5% (1) disagreed, 0.5% (1) strongly disagreed while 26.7% (55) of the respondents were neutral. The results summed up to a mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.819. This means that it was easier for the tourist to choose Maasai. This could be because there was sufficient information on the destination choice in web based technologies and that the tourism marketing campaigns were also effective in marketing the destination.

In a bid to establish whether the respondents were satisfied with the choice they made on visiting Maasai Mara, the respondents were asked to respond accordingly. 23.3% (48) of the respondents strongly agreed, 26.2% (54) of them agreed, 1% (2) disagreed and 49.5% (102) of the respondents were neutral. The item realized a mean of 3.72 and standard deviation of 0.831. The results imply that most (49.5%) of the respondents were satisfied

with the choice of visiting Maasai Mara. It could be that their expectations of the destination choice were met.

In order to find out if the respondents intend to visit the national reserve again, the respondents were asked for their views on this and the results showed that the item realized a mean of 4.41 and a standard deviation of 0.55. This means that the tourists enjoy their visit of Maasai Mara and they intend to visit the national reserve again.

In general, the results on the destination choice summed up to a mean of 4.0599 and a standard deviation of 0.56662 indicating that the respondents were agreeable. The standard is less than 1 hence there were less variations in the responses.

4.8 Correlation Results

The study used Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to assess the nature of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable as well as the relationships among the independent variables. According to Wong and Hiew (2005) correlation coefficient value (r) ranging from 0.10 to 0.29 is considered weak; from 0.30 to 0.49 is considered medium, and from 0.50 to 1.0 is considered strong. There was a medium relationship between destination marketing organizations and destination choice (r = -0.458, p-value < .01). The study also exhibited a medium relationship between web based technologies and destination choice (r = 0.456, p-value < .01). There was also a medium relationship between tourism promotion campaign and destination choice (r = 0.342, p-value < .01) as well as tourism information centers and destination choice (r = -0.316, p-value < .01) (See Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Correlation results

	Tourist destination choice	Destination marketing organizations	Tourism promotion campaigns	Web based technologies	Tourism information centers
Tourist destination choice	1				
Destination marketing organizations	0.458** (0.00)	1			
Tourism promotion campaigns	0.342** (0.00)	0.309** (0.00)	1		
Web based technologies	0.456** (0.00)	-0.005 0.943	0.059 0.401	1	
Tourism information centers	-0.316** (0.00)	-0.287** (0.00)	0.101 0.15	-0.029 0.681	1

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

4.9 Model Summary

Table 4.7 illustrates the model summary of multiple regression model, the results showed that all the four predictors (Tourism information centers, Web based technologies, Tourism promotion campaign and Destination Marketing Organizations) explain 50.2 percent variation of destination choice (R squared =0.502).

Table 4.7: Model Summary

R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.708a	0.502	0.492	0.40397

A predictors: (constant), tourism information centers, web based technologies, tourism promotion campaigns and destination marketing organizations.

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

4.10 ANOVA Results

Study findings in table 4.8 indicated that the previously explained coefficient of determination was significant as evidence of F ratio of 50.576 with a p value less than 0.05. Thus, the model was fit to predict destination choice using Tourism information centers, Web based technologies, Tourism promotion campaign and Destination Marketing Organizations.

Table 4.8: ANOVA Results

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	33.015	4	8.254	50.576	.000b
Residual	32.802	201	0.163		
Total	65.817	205			

a. Dependent variable: Tourist destination choice
b. Predictors: (constant), tourism information centers, web based technologies, tourism promotion campaigns and destination marketing organizations

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

Table 4.9: Coefficient Estimates

	Un standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(constant)	0.41	0.377		1.089	0.277
Destination marketing organization	0.301	0.053	0.317	5.698	0.000
Tourism promotion campaigns	0.348	0.077	0.242	4.511	0.000
Web based technologies	0.471	0.054	0.436	8.737	0.000
Tourism information centers	-0.175	0.039	-0.237	-4.453	0.000
a Dependent Variable : Tourist destination choice					

Source: **Researcher data (2016)**

4.10.1 Developed Model

$Y = 0.410 + 0.317X_1 + 0.242X_2 + 0.436X_3 - 0.237X_4 + 0.40397$

From the model, tourism destination will be 0.410 holding another factor constant. In addition, with increase in a unit for destination market organization, Tourism promotion campaigns and web based technologies, tourist destination choice will increase by 0.317, 0.242 and 0.436 respectively. Nevertheless, with increase a unit for tourism information centers, tourist destination choice will decrease by 0.237.

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$

Where;

Y represents tourists' destination choice

X_1 represents Destination marketing organizations

X_2 represent Tourism promotion campaigns

X_3 represents Wed based technologies

X_4 represents Tourism information centers

ε error term

4.11 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 (H_{o1}) stated that destination marketing organizations have no significant effect on the destination choice

Research findings revealed that destination marketing organizations had a significant effect on the destination choice basing on $\beta_1 = 0.317$(p-value = 0.000). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. These results suggest that destination marketing organizations

make it easier for tourists to access information on their destination choice. As such, for every unit increase in destination marketing organizations, there is also an increase in the destination choice by the same unit. Furthermore, the effect of destination marketing organizations was stated by the t-test value = 5.698 which point out that the effect of destination marketing organization is over 5 times that of the error associated with it.

Hypothesis 2 (H_{o2}) stated that tourism promotion campaign has no significant effect on the destination choice

Findings showed that tourism promotion campaign had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on β_2 = 0.242 (p-value = 0.000), hence the null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that tourism promotion campaigns have a significant effect on the destination choice. This implies that for each unit increase in tourism promotion campaign, there is up to 0.242 unit increase in the destination choice. Also, the effect of tourism promotion campaign is shown by the t-test value of 4.511 which implies that the effect of tourism promotion campaign surpasses that of the error.

Hypothesis 3 (H_{o3}) postulated that web based technologies have no significant effect on the destination choice

However, study findings showed that web based technologies had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on β_3 = 0.436 (p-value = 0.000), therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that web based technologies have a significant effect on the destination choice. This indicates that for each unit increase in web based technologies, there is up to 0.436 units increase in destination choice. The effect of web

based technologies is stated by the t-test value = 8.737 which point out that the effect of web based technologies is over 8 times that of the error associated with it.

Hypothesis 4 (H_{o4}) stated that tourism information centers have no significant effect on the destination choice

Findings showed that tourism information centres had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on β_4 = -0.237 (p-value = 0.000), thus reject the null hypothesis and conclude that tourism information centers have a significant effect on the destination choice. This suggests that there is up to 0.237 unit decrease in destination choice for each unit increase in tourism information centers. The effect of tourism information centers is more than 4 times the effect attributed to the error, this is indicated by the t-test value = 4.453.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion, summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendations and areas suggested for further research.

5.1 Discussion

The main objective of this study was to examine the effects of marketing strategies on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination in Kenya. To achieve the objectives of the study primary data was collected by use of self-administered predetermined questionnaires.

Findings showed that destination marketing organizations had significant and positive effect on destination choice ($\beta_1 = 0.317$). The findings are consistent with Tapachai & Waryzcak (2000) posit that destination marketing organizations are effective in convincingly appealing to potential visitors through the use of destination image which plays a role in destination choice decisions. Also, in line with the results, Barret (2007) espoused that it is of essence for destination marketing organizations to coordinate the different elements of the destination in the market place in order to attain a desired single image that will be presented to prospective visitors. This will turn induce the prospective visitors to visit the said destinations. Further support to the study findings is by Gillan

(2003) who notes that tourism organizations provide visitors with an array of information regarding hotels, restaurants, attractions, shopping and recreation. As such, they serve as the visitors' one-stop shopping center for ideas and information thus inducing visitors to visit a given destination. From the foregoing prior studies, it is evident that the study conforms to earlier literature hence it adds sufficient knowledge to the existing body of literature.

Tourism promotion campaigns was found to have a positive and significant influence on destination choice (β_2= 0.242). In conformity with the results, Robin *et al.* (2002) observe that marketing of tourism destination achieves greater success by focusing on improving destination competitiveness. In a similar vein, Gomezlj and Mihalic (2008) echo that promotion campaigns are aimed at promoting the destination as a whole. Also, Truong and King (2009) demonstrate that promotional activities are very important for a destination to be successful in attracting more tourists. Consequently, Pike and Ryan (2004) elucidate that destination positioning strategy should aim at reinforcing the positive images already held by the target audience, to correct any negative images, and to create a new image. From the preceding results, it can be inferred that promotion campaigns have a pivotal role in destination choice among tourists.

Most findings revealed that web based technology has a positive and significant effect on destination choice (β_3 = 0.436). Consistently, Hawkins (2010) elucidated that banner ads in web pages are an important promotional tool since they connect travelers with thousands of websites of travel agencies, hotels, transportation companies among others. Also, Mothersbaugh & Best (2010) espoused that the presence of a web address in an

advertisement enhances a variety of aspects of the firm's which include being customer-oriented, responsive, sophisticated, and successful. Furthermore, Jeng & Fesenmaier (2002) note that travelers make use of web based technology to collect and review various forms of travel information early in the travel decision making process in order to reduce the risk of making poor destination choices. From the foregoing, it is evident that web based technologies are effective in relaying information on destination. From such information, tourists can make the decisions whether to visit or not visit a particular destination.

Finally, tourism information centers had a negative and significant effect on destination choice ($\beta 4$ = -0.237). Contrary to the results, Jang and Feng (2007) espoused that information distributed at TICs is expected to impact differently the different aspects of decision-making process of destination of choice. Similarly, Brettel (2011) reported that travelers who obtain information from TICs are highly likely to use it during their current and future trips. This meant that information sought from TIC positively influenced length of stay and spending in the area. Besides, Zahra (2012) notes that travelers stop at TICs mainly to obtain travel information. This infers that TICs are effective in delivering information on destinations hence they have an influence on the travelers' destination choice. Additionally, as opposed to study findings, Holman (2011) posits that 29 percent of the respondents visited places not planned prior to visiting the welcome center as the result of the information obtained at TIC. From prior studies, it can be safely concluded that TICs influences destination choice.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The main objective of this study was to examine the effects of marketing strategies on tourists' choice of Maasai Mara as a tourist destination in Kenya. Research findings revealed that hypothesis 1 (H_{o1}) stated that destination marketing organizations have no significant effect on the destination choice. The null hypothesis is rejected and hence destination marketing organizations had a significant effect on the destination choice. Hypothesis 2 (H_{o2}) stated that tourism promotion campaigns have no significant effect on the destination choice. The null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that tourism promotion campaigns have a significant effect on the destination choice. Hypothesis 3 (H_{o3}) postulated that web based technologies have no significant effect on the destination choice. The null hypothesis is rejected and therefore, the web based technologies have a significant effect on the destination choice. Hypothesis 4 (H_{o4}) stated that tourism information centers have no significant effect on the destination choice. The null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that tourism information centers have a significant effect on the destination choice.

5.3 Conclusion

Findings provided enough evidence that marketing strategies are more important as a direct factor of influence on destination choice. Essentially, destination marketing organizations have made it easier for visitors to have access to information about the destination of their choice. Tourists have a preference towards it since they are familiar with new technology. In fact, it is possible for tourists to access online manual room destination marketing organizations. The promotional programs are a source of

information on the destination. However, the tourists have not fully utilized the tourism promotion campaigns. For instance, the tourists were unaware if images of the destination were displayed in the promotion campaigns. The destination images usually have an influence on visitors' decisions and behavior towards the destination together with their satisfaction level. As such, mobilizing tourism promotion campaigns is of essence. There is therefore a gap in terms of effectively utilizing the tourism promotion campaigns to induce potential tourists to visit given destinations.

Through the websites, tourists are able to get most of their destination information. This has been made possible by web based technologies which display destination photos on the web. The web based technologies provide online booking options for the tourists. However, the web based technologies have not been fully utilized in terms of checking price ratings and reviews. In light of this, tourists need to be made aware of the array of benefits that the web technology can offer. The negative influence of TICs on destination could be as a result of uncertainty among the tourists with regard to whether the TICs provides physical location of the destination choice, if they are provided with direct interaction with their tour guide and whether TICs provide relevant information on national reserve. There is thus need for further research on the same to ascertain if the negative relation between TICs and destination choice holds. This research results indicates that there is a direct and positive relationship between marketing strategies and destination choice therefore forming a basis for other studies.

5.4 Recommendations

Marketing strategies needs to develop an image that will position their destination in the marketplace as an attractive site for vacation, recreation or even business. This can be achieved by:

i. Making it easier for potential visitors to access information. There is also need for a supportive and helpful staff that will respond to the visitors' inquiries promptly. Additionally, it should be possible for tourists to access online manual room destination marketing organizations. With the above in place, destination marketing organizations will be able to appeal to visitors.

ii. In tourism promotion campaigns, the focus needs to be on understanding the consumers' expectation and ensuring that their expectations are met once they visit their preferred destination. Most importantly, the tourism promotion campaigns need to enhance personal interaction on the tourism sites.

iii. Web based technologies are effective in providing tourists with the information they require, be it the pricing or even images of the destination. The tourists therefore need to make full use of web based technologies for booking options, price rating and reviews as well as to check the photos of the destination. Moreover, the web based technologies need to be easy to access, up-to-date, logical and oriented to travel needs.

iv. Finally, with regard to tourism information centers, there is need to sensitive potential tourist that they can make use of the centers to obtain relevant information on their destination choice. Preferably, they need to be made aware

that they can obtain information on the physical location of their destination choice as well as direct interaction with the tour guides. Taking this into consideration, travelers will be able to have ease of access to travel information in their current and future trips.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies

Although this thesis has contributed to knowledge intended for this kind of research, some limitations are worth bringing to attention in regards to the research topic, method, theory and empirical data, with an aim of pointing out further research opportunities. Whereas valuable insights from this study have been achieved, there is need for further research on the influence of tourism information centers on destination choice since there was a lot of uncertainty in the responses.

On a geographical dimension, this study was primarily limited to tourists visiting Maasai Mara national reserve, therefore generalize action might be a challenge. For this reason, further empirical investigations in different regions and countries are required. Additionally, a further study needs to be conducted using more variables that may be relevant to this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire for the Tourists (Inbound and Outbound Tourists)

The aim of this questionnaire is to collect data for purely academic purposes. The study seeks to investigate the effect of marketing strategies on tourist destination choice. Please respond to the questionnaire by ticking in the box [√].

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Indicate your response to the items below by ticking the boxes.

What is your:

Age bracket:
(01)   Less than 25 years   ☐
(02)   25–30 years   ☐
(03)   31–40 years   ☐
(04)   41–50 years   ☐
(05)   More than 51 years   ☐

Marital Status:
(01)   Married   ☐
(02)   Single   ☐
(03)   Divorce   ☐
(04)   Widowed   ☐
(05)   Separated   ☐

Gender
(01)   Male   ☐
(02)   Female   ☐

Educational Level
(01)   High school   ☐
(02)   Diploma   ☐
(03)   Undergraduate   ☐
(04)   Postgraduate   ☐
(05)   Doctorate   ☐

PART B: This section contains effects of marketing strategies on tourist's destination choice, kindly indicate your response to the items mentioned below by ticking the choice that best suits your situation from the choices provided by the likert scale.

Key
SD- Strongly Disagree, D – Disagree, U – Un decided, A- Agree, SA – Strongly Agree

1. Destination Marketing Organizations

	SD	D	U	A	SA
I get most of my destination information from destination marketing organizations.					
I find it easy to access information.					
I prefer destination marketing organizations due to their high familiarity with new technology.					
Staff in destination marketing organizations are very supportive and helpful.					
I can access on-line manual room destination marketing organization.					

2. Tourism promotion campaign

	SD	D	U	A	SA
I was able to view the images of this destination through promotion campaigns image.					
I was to have personal interaction on tourism sites in Kenya through promotion campaigns.					
I prefer promotion campaigns because they saw actual picture/reality on the tourism sites.					
I get most of my destination information through promotional programs.					

3. Web based technologies

	SD	D	U	A	SA
I use web based tourism marketing because of its online booking option.					
I use web based technologies because it displays destination photos on the web.					
I prefer web based tourism marketing since am able to share files with others online.					
I search tourism sites using web based technologies because they provide price ratings and reviews.					

4. Tourism information centers

	SD	D	U	A	SA
I use tourism information center because they provide physical location that provides tourist information to the visitors who tour the place or area locally.					
I use tourism information center because they provide direct interaction with our tour guide.					
I use tourism information center because they provide relevant information on national reserve.					

5. Tourist destination choice

	SD	D	U	A	SA
It was easier for me to choose Maasai Mara.					
Am satisfied with the choice I made to come here.					
I intend to visit the national reserve again.					