

## **Marketing Adventure Tourism in the Mt. Kenya Region by the Kenya Tourist Board: An Analysis of the Changing Roles of Destination Marketing Organizations**

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### **Abstract**

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*The purpose of the study was to investigate methods used by the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) in marketing adventure tourism in the Mount Kenya area. Random sampling was used to select campsites and campers for interviewing. Purposive sampling was used to select tour operators operating in the study area. The Resource-based theory was used as the theoretical framework and the Communications Life Cycle Model (CLC) as the conceptual framework. The study is significant because it contributes to the marketing of adventure tourism through a case study of adventure camping in one region in Kenya. Few such studies exist in tourism and recreation literature. The results indicate that KTB plays a limited role in marketing adventure tourism. It was observed that the tourist's journey begins by using social media platforms for tour firms operating in the study area. The implications of the research findings and recommendations for improvement are also discussed.*

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**Key words:** Adventure tourism, Camping, Destination marketing organization, Kenya Tourist Board, Mt. Kenya.

### **1.0 Introduction**

As Langos (2014) observes, destinations all over the world heavily compete with each other in order to maintain their attractiveness and competitiveness in the global tourist industry. But, these destinations must provide the right target market and provide an appropriate combination of local tourism products and services (Buhalis, 2000; Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011). Thus, as Pike (2005) and (Ning 2014) argue, a new trend is emerging where destinations are striving to brand themselves in order to increase their market share of tourists. This has been assisted by the internet which has brought about radical changes in the travel and tourism industry (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011). The Internet has radically transformed travelers' access to information. This includes among other things the way travelers plan for and book trips, and the way they share their travel experiences (Senecal & Nantel, 2004; Buhalis & Law, 2008).

Thus, the internet has revolutionised the communication and booking process with web-based content from individual businesses largely replacing the brochures from destination marketing organisations (DMOs) that used to be the primary source of information on holidays (Buhalis, 2000; Page, Kotler, et al., 2003; Bentley, & Walker, 2005). Since individual tourism businesses such as tour companies are now able to communicate with potential customers directly and cheaply on a global basis, it is debatable whether destination marketing organizations (DMOs) are still relevant today. If they are, what should be their role in the rapidly changing marketing milieu? There is lacuna in the existing literature on the role of national tourist organizations in marketing tourism which this paper intends to fill.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role of the Kenya Tourist Board, which is a destination marketing organization (DMO) in marketing adventure tourism in the Mount Kenya region. The paper advances the argument that there is still a role for DMOs such as the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) to play in the changing marketing environment. This is especially so in developing countries where the rate of adoption of Information Communication Technology (ICT) is still low and marketing by tour companies and other operators is not properly coordinated (Buhalis, 2000; Gareth, 2009).

The study can be considered significant for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the marketing of adventure tourism through a case study of adventure camping in one region in Kenya. Few such studies exist in travel, tourism and recreation literature. Secondly, the study revealed that the Kenya Tourist Board plays an important role in destination marketing but needs to collaborate with private operators such as camp site owners and tour operators for successful promotion of the region. This is important in offering suggestions to national destination marketing organisations in other parts of the world to involve other operators such as tour operators, hoteliers and travel agents in marketing tourist destinations. The paper also seeks to contribute to further knowledge about the way functions and focus of Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) such as KTB might evolve in response to both changing needs within the tourism system and external change drivers.

The study focuses on the Mount Kenya region. The region was chosen because it offers opportunities for many adventure tourism activities such as camping, mountaineering, trout fishing, and white water rafting (Footprint Adventures, 2005; Makunyi, 2010). According to Sindiga (1999), adventure tourism in the study area is not well developed and marketed. This makes it an ideal case study site given that little or no research on adventure tourism has been carried out in the region and Kenya as a whole (Makunyi, 2010).

Adventure tourism is recognized as one of the newest and fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry. Yet, our understanding of the adventure tourism sector and the broader adventure phenomenon is modest and fragmented. It has recorded immense growth at a global scale in the past two decades. Despite this popularity, researchers and adventure tourism practitioners have not been able to provide a precise and satisfactory definition of this important segment of the travel and tourism industry (Shephard & Evans, 2005; Page *et al.*, 2005; Hudson, 2003; Swarbrooke *et al.*, 2003). This could be attributed to the multitude of adventure tourism activities such as camping, canoeing, white water rafting and mountaineering among others and the overlap between adventure tourism and adventure recreation. Studies of adventure tourism have been very limited by far but it appears to be an evolving area of research (Ryan, 2003; Makunyi, 2010).

## **2.0 Theoretical Basis**

### **2.1 Defining Adventure Tourism**

A detailed discussion of research trends in tourism marketing can be found in Palatkova (2012). In this section, only a brief analysis of the main issues is provided. These include definitions of adventure tourism and marketing, marketing trends such as market segmentation and consumer behaviour, strategic marketing and e-marketing. These marketing trends are considered relevant to the marketing of adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya Region.

Adventure tourism has become one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing sectors of worldwide tourism. It has recorded immense growth at a global scale in the past two decades (Swarbrooke *et al.*, 2003). Despite this popularity, researchers and adventure tourism practitioners have not been able to provide a precise and satisfactory definition of this important segment of the travel and tourism industry (Shephard & Evans, 2005; Page *et al.*, 2005; Hudson, 2003; Swarbrooke *et al.*, 2003). This could be attributed to the multitude of adventure tourism activities such as camping, canoeing, white water rafting and mountaineering among others and the overlap between adventure tourism and adventure recreation.

Various authors have attempted to define adventure tourism. This is necessary in order to provide a standard tool for measuring and segmenting the adventure tourism market. Keeling (2003) defined adventure tourism as holiday and day visits that involve participation in active or adventurous outdoor activities, either as a primary or secondary purpose of visit. It includes three types of visits: adventure holidays in which adventure activity is the primary purpose of visit, holiday participation in adventure activities as secondary purpose of visit and adventure day visits in which adventure activity is the primary purpose of visiting a destination. A broad definition is assumed for the purpose of this research in order to avoid restrictions. For the purpose of this research, the definition proposed by Keeling (2003) is used, as not only does it set adventure activities in the tourism context but it also offers a helpful categorization of visit types. Other definitions of adventure tourism are available in literature (Sung *et al*, 1996; Millington *et al*, 2001; Buckley, 2006).

## **2.2 Destination Marketing Organizations**

Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) play a central role in the marketing of a destination. This is because they are established to take the overall responsibility for promoting tourism and for attracting visitors to the place or region defined as their domain. DMOs are mostly funded by the public and have small budgets. Therefore, they have little or no opportunity to generate income on their own. In other words they have few or no resources. Since destinations have many actors with different objectives and resource endowment as well as capacity, the main challenge for the DMOs is to come up with a coordinated marketing strategy that caters for this fragmented market. This process of coming up with a coordinated marketing strategy is referred to as an integrative destination-marketing process. (Elbe, Hallen & Axelsson, 2009; Alhroot, 2007). A number of tourism organizations may market a certain destination, but emphasize different and sometimes conflicting attributes.

## **2.3 Defining marketing**

The marketing definition used in this study is the one revealed at the American Marketing Association (AMA)'s Summer Educator's Conference in August 2004. According to AMA(2004), 'marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Thus, in the marketing field it is knowing customers and then predicting and meeting their needs and wants that is the key to success. Therefore, marketers need to recognize the main characteristics of tourists and their consumer behaviour in order to successfully identify their target segments (Kotler, Bowen, and Makens 2003; Swarbrooke, *et al*, 2003).

## **2.4 Market Segmentation and Consumer Behaviour**

By identifying different types of tourists and classifying them into groups or market segments, tourism companies would be able to direct their products/services more effectively at an identified target market. As Heyniger and Consulting (2008) argue, adventure tourism is not a well-defined segment in the discipline of tourism studies. Thus, adventure tourism companies selling to consumer markets ought to recognise that they cannot appeal to all consumers in the same way. Yang, Wall and Smith (2008) indicate that consumers are too numerous, too widely scattered, and too varied in their needs and buying practices. Furthermore, different companies vary widely in terms of their ability to serve different segments of the market. This has prompted Kurtz (2008) to suggest that every company should identify the market segment it can best serve, rather than trying to compete in an entire market, which may be costly and ineffective.

Due to the increasing fragmentation of mass markets into micro markets, each with different needs and lifestyles, target marketing is increasingly taking the form of micromarketing. According to Czinkota *et al* (2000), micromarketing would enable companies, such as adventure tourism companies, to modify their marketing programmes to match the needs and wants of closely defined geographic, demographic, psychographic and/or behaviour segments. According to Lai and Yang (2000), the ultimate form of target marketing, is customised marketing, when products/services and marketing are adapted according to the needs of a specific consumer or buying company.

McGee (2008) argues that it is a natural instinct for companies, to want to target as many people and groups as possible. However, Kurtz (2008) suggests that every company should attempt to identify the factors that affect consumers' purchase decisions; group consumers according to the presence or absence of these factors; and then adjust their marketing strategies in order to meet the needs of every selected group(s) of consumers. According to Rudra (2008), this is the first step of market segmentation which will allow adventure tourism companies to develop a highly focused marketing campaign to address the needs and desires of a specific group of consumers.

Lee, et al, (2006:577) indicate that researchers make extensive use of various segmentation bases, both a priori segmentation approach (such as geographic and demographic segmentation), and a posteriori segmentation approach (including the psychographic and behavioural segmentation).

Pine and Gilmore (1999) established that tourists want to buy an experience and to spend time enjoying a series of memorable events that engage them in a memorable way. This observation is echoed by Grant (2007) who states that tourists are motivated to travel in order to escape, socialize, fantasize, be creative, learn new skills, Many tourists want to escape the stress and boredom of their everyday routine, to spend their vacation time on pleasure filled trips with a range of exciting and new physically challenging experiences, as well as expressing their need to meet people and build new friendships. This change in mindset has challenged tourist agencies and other operators to rethink about how they view their customers, and how they are going to service their changing needs and desires. Gilmartin (2007b) captures this change in mindset by observing that there has been a shift from a product centric mindset to a customer centred one. This study examines whether the marketing tools used by the KTB are customer friendly.

## **2.5 Strategic Marketing**

Strategic marketing is not simply marketing strategies and tactics; it is the entire process of marketing in order to satisfy consumers' needs. Chong (2002) states that marketing offers a relatively holistic view of the entire enterprise. He also explains the role of marketing as image building, education, building participation, and assessment and planning. Thus, the assumptions in strategic marketing thinking have changed, as Kotler, Jain and Maesincee (2002) explain. The old strategic marketing is marketing department does the marketing, marketer focuses on 'interruption' marketing, marketing focuses on immediate transactions, and marketing expenditures are viewed as expenses. The new strategic marketing integrates the work of exploring, creating and delivering customer value, marketer focuses on 'permission' marketing, marketing focuses on customer retention and loyalty building, marketing focuses on capturing customer lifetime value, and many marketing expenditures are viewed as investments.

Go and Williams (1993) highlight the travel system in tourism in the light of the impact of recent developments in technology. The changes in the tourism channel system are discussed in terms of demand and supply and how information technology is affecting the marketing distribution channel for tourism producers. The focus of this analysis relates to the pooling of individual energies through and the promotion of co-operation in, supplier marketing efforts with compatible partners, so that supplier output is more available and accessible to target markets. Co-operation through networking in the tourism channel system provides the key to gaining a competitive edge in the tourism industry (Buhalis, 2000). This paper examines the extent to which KTB cooperates with other stakeholders in marketing adventure tourism in the study area.

## **2.6 E- Marketing**

During the last ten or so years marketing tourism has moved away from traditional forms to digital form. This meant that companies which could not adopt new marketing approaches or procedures, had to exit market and/or to surrender their market share to new or flexible companies. In other words, the methods of marketing have been transformed and improved. This has enabled marketers to become more efficient in communicating their marketing messages to their customers. This new marketing approach has come to be known as E-Marketing. E-Marketing is the product of the convergence between modern communication technologies (e.g. internet) and the age-old marketing principles applied in marketing tourism. E-Marketing or electronic marketing is the application of marketing principles and techniques via electronic media and more specifically the internet. The terms E-Marketing, Internet marketing and online marketing, are used interchangeably, and may be taken to be synonymous (Mousavi.2012).

## **2.7 Resource-based Theory**

In order to analyse the contribution of KTB in marketing adventure tourism in the study area, the 'Resource-based Theory' (RBT) is utilised as the theoretical framework To understand the dynamism of KTB's competitive marketing behavior, there is need to examine its growth in terms of its resources and capabilities, in particular the way it utilizes resources. To be able to do so, there is need to apply the Resource- based theory Resource- based theory is based on the premise that a company or organization should put more effort to enhance its own capabilities and deal with external factors or changes calmly and wait for the opportune moment (Seetoo, 2005).

This means that relevant development can be tracked back to unique competence which includes unique capabilities owned by the organization, technology, management, design, marketing, and coordination of each resource and knowledge (Seetoo, 2005). Its two basic assumptions are:

- 1) In the same industry or strategic group, the strategic resource each organization can command is dissimilar, that makes differences among the organizations.
- 2) These distinctions among these organizations are not easy to be imitated.

Many scholars opine that RBT emphasizes the unique resource and competence inside an enterprise, which is the basic source of profit, and can be accumulated and cultivated to form a kind of long-term and lasting competitive advantage. Corporate competitive advantage depends on resources with characteristics such as uniqueness, durability, transferability, replicability. In literature, various categorizations of RVT exist depending on the research orientation of each scholar. According to the RBV, firm resources include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc. controlled by a firm that enable the firm to conceive of and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Marketing capability involves integration of all marketing related activities of a company using superior market knowledge from customers and competitions. Operations capability is the process, technology, reliability and quality of the overall operations of the firm. According to RBT, a coordinated effect by the company to make these two capabilities as “immovable and inimitable” can bring the competitive edge (Narasimhan et al., 2006). Furthermore, the RBT is grounded on the premise that differences in valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources contribute to position company heterogeneity in the marketplace, which in turn, leads to greater performance.

Song, Benedetto, & Nason (2007) defined marketing capability as the integrative process, in which a firm uses its tangible and intangible resources to understand complex consumer specific needs, achieve product differentiation relative to competition, and achieve superior brand equity. Such capabilities, once built are very difficult to imitate for competing firm. Moreover, marketing capability creates a strong brand image that allows a firm to produce superior performance (Ruiz-Ortega & Garcia-Villaverde, 2008). This paper critically examines the applicability of this theory to the marketing strategies used by KTB in the study area. According to RBT, to develop successful marketing strategies KTB must have knowledge about the different adventure tourist market segments and ability to market the products to the targeted segment.

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

This paper adopts the Communications Life Cycle Model (CLC) as a conceptual framework to define the role of the Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) in marketing adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya Region. As Gareth (2009) observes, DMOs have traditionally been expected to play the important role of raising awareness to customers about destinations and what is on offer there. The Communications Life Cycle (CLC) is best suited to enhance this awareness. The premise of the model is that all tourists have to proceed along a line of awareness of a product to its eventual purchase through a number of stages (Fig.1).

It represents a key conceptual framework for the application of new media by National Tourism Organizations (NTOs). NTOs must optimize their opportunities by responding effectively to the requirements of the visitor at each stage in the cycle. Media for communication between NTO and tourists will vary at each stage in the life cycle. At each stage of this process different marketing approaches have to be undertaken because no one will jump directly from knowing nothing about a destination to buying a trip there. For example, while most people around the world will have heard of Kenya, a lot fewer will be aware of Kenya as a tourist destination. This applies not only to people in far-flung markets like Australia and China, but also in markets closer home such as Uganda or Zambia.

## **3.0 Methodology**

In order to achieve the research objectives stated earlier, this research adopted the exploratory philosophy in marketing tourism. Since very little information exists about marketing in the study area, an exploratory study is appropriate to accomplish the objectives (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2010). This research conducted an analysis of a case study. It analysed the marketing of adventure tourism in the Mount Kenya Region in Kenya. The methodology adopted for this research includes a critical review of secondary data, an in-depth interview with KTB officials and a questionnaire survey of carefully selected tour operators and campsite owners.

An open-ended personal interview was conducted to gather expert opinion in June 2009, with top management of KTB.

The paper has approached a single case study with the unit of analysis being the Mt. Kenya region. In view of Bonoma (1985) and Yin (2003a), case studies are plausible when a researcher has little control over events within the real life context. Moreover, it is significant to establish clear investigative question(s), in order to answer a research question. The purpose of case study is to explore and generalize theories by a process of inferences but not to develop frequencies in values (Yin, 2003a).

### **3.1 Target Population**

The target population for the study included tourists visiting campsites, campsite operators, tour operators and KTB senior management staff. On the average about 1000 adventure tourists visit the camp-sites in the Mount Kenya region annually (Republic of Kenya, 2009). These adventure tourists formed the sampling frame from which tourists to interview were selected. There were 20 campsites in the study area which formed the sampling frame for campsite operators. There were 50 tour companies operating in the study area but based in Nairobi. These tour companies formed the framework for selecting the tour operators to interview.

### **3.2 Sampling process**

Stratified random sampling was used to select luxury and budget campsites in the study area. In all, there were 20 campsites in the study area, 3 luxury and 17 budget campsites. Luxury campsites have facilities similar to those of a five star hotel such as ensuite rooms and hot showers. Budget campsites provide basic facilities such as shared tents and foam mattresses. A total of 13 campsites were randomly selected. They comprised 11 budget campsites and 2 luxury campsites whose owners or managers were interviewed. The sample size for tourists visiting campsites in the study area was estimated using the formula provided by Cochran (1977).

The sample of tour operators for this study was collected by purposive sampling method from the identified sampling frame. The major source of the sampling frame was the list of tour companies provided by the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO). At the time of the study, there were about 50 tour companies operating in the Mount Kenya region but based in Nairobi. Out of these 50 operators, a sample of 20 tour operators was selected for the study.

### **3.3 Data collection Instruments**

The present research involved collection and analysis of both secondary and primary data. Primary research involved quantitative data collection and analysis, which allowed presentation of the findings from questionnaires in the form of tables and graphs. The study is a combination of a descriptive, explanatory and evaluative research. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedule. Both open and close-ended questions were administered to 120 campers to capture their socio- demographic and other characteristics. Questionnaires were also administered to 13 camp site and 20 tour operators to obtain information on marketing of adventure tourism in the study area. In order to obtain reliable data, the questionnaire was carefully designed and developed.

A detailed interview schedule was used to get information from Kenya Tourist Board's Managing Director and Marketing Manager who were the key informants. The Kenya Tourist Board's Managing Director provided general information on the operations of Kenya Tourist Board. The Marketing Manager provided information on marketing strategies. Existing literature was also reviewed. This involved obtaining secondary data from both published and unpublished sources relevant to adventure tourism and marketing strategies. Some of the sources were theses and dissertations, government documents, research articles in journals and textbooks. Secondary data supplemented and helped update field data.

Field research was conducted for three months, from April 2009 to June 2009. Permission to carry out the research was sought from the relevant Ministry. The respondents were accessed from Mount Kenya region in selected campsites. Upon consent the questionnaires were then self-administered to the tourists, and then collected at the agreed time. One research assistant familiar with the study area was employed to help in administering of questionnaire.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

After completion of data collection, the questionnaire was scored. Data was edited, coded and entered into the computer for analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the analysis.

In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The descriptive statistics used to summarize the sample population included percentages, frequency distributions and charts. The Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) goodness of fit test was used to test whether there were any differences in marketing methods used by the Kenya Tourist Board and other marketing organizations such as tour operators, travel agents and others. Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) cross-tabulations were used to analyze relationships between responses.. Results for Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) were considered significant at 95% confidence level ( $p < 0.05$ ). Information from open-ended questionnaires and interview schedule that could not be coded was used in the discussion of results.

### 3.5 Results

In this section, the main research findings are presented and discussed. Following the discussion of the results, a generalisation is made as to whether KTB plays any role or not in marketing the destination in question. This will present a good case study on the changing roles of DMOs in marketing tourist destinations. Applicability of the resource-based theory (RBT) is also discussed in the light of the research findings.

#### 3.5.1 Creation of Awareness for Adventure Tourists

To find out whether Kenya Tourist Board plays any role in creating awareness for adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya region (fig.2), tourists interviewed were requested to indicate how they became aware about adventure tourism at the destination. It was established that a significant number of adventure tourists (83%) learned about adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya region from tour operators and travel agents ( $\chi^2 = 62.125$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These two organisations appear to be very active in marketing adventure tourism in the region. This tends to affirm the observation of Mulholland & Cachon (2004) that 'the internet places all tourist establishments on an equal footing in terms of marketing communications.' Despite funding by the government, KTB does not seem to have any advantage over other marketing organisations. This tends to support the resource-based theory because different operators in the study area such as tour companies and KTB have different resources to utilise in marketing including technology.

An in-depth interview held with the Marketing Manager of Kenya Tourist Board established that the organization started marketing adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya region in 2007. Kenya Tourist Board uses market segmentation in marketing adventure camping in the study area. Age, education and nationality are the basis of market segmentation. Kenya Tourist Board targets campers of between 25-45 years from all over the world. This finding is consistent with what Hall & McArthur (1992) suggested that the average adventure traveller is likely to be 25-40 years old, male, college or university educated and holding a professional position (Table 1).

From the findings, it was observed that 31 campers interviewed tended to visit the study area at least once or twice a year and another 7 visited the area more than two times a year. 42 campers stated that they were visiting the region for the first time and were therefore, excluded from the analysis. The 38 campers who responded said that they learnt about the study area from different sources such as tour operators, travel agents and Kenya Tourism Board. The respondents stated that the source of information tended to influence their frequency of visit. To test whether there was any statistically significant difference between the frequency of visits by campers and their sources of information, Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) test was used.

Kenya Tourist Board (KTB), the body charged with the responsibility of marketing the country overseas as a tourist destination performed very poorly. Only about 4% of the respondents reported that they became aware about adventure tourism from Kenya Tourist Board. This shows that the KTB as a DMO does not play a major role in the marketing of adventure tourism in the study area. This tends to indicate that contrary to the predictions of CLC model that a DMO should play a leading role in creating awareness to tourists about a destination in the initial stages, KTB does not appear to play this significant role (Fig. 2). According to the KTB officials interviewed, the poor performance of the organisation was due to inadequate funding. However, it is doubtful whether KTB would perform better with more funding given the aggressive promotional activity of tour operators and campsite owners operating in the study area. KTB does not appear to have any competitive advantage as postulated in the resource based theory. Tour operators are increasingly using internet for promotional purposes in the region. This means that the internet is becoming an increasingly important source of information (Buhalis, 2003; Page, 2003) about a destination.

### 3.5.2 Methods used in Marketing Adventure Tourism

Chi square test was used to test the null hypothesis that: ‘There is no significant difference between the methods used by Kenya Tourist Board to market adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya region and those used by other marketing organizations’ This involved preparing a contingency table to show observed frequencies of marketing methods used by the Kenya Tourist Board and other marketing organizations such as tour operators. The contingency table was used to compute  $\chi^2$  to test the null hypothesis. The table was compiled using information obtained from responses of the officials of the Kenya Tourist Board, managers or representatives of tour companies and campsite operators.

The value of computed Chi Square ( $\chi^2$ ) was 0.84. At 0.05 significance level and with 4 degrees of freedom, the critical (tabulated) value of  $\chi^2$  is 9.49. The calculated  $\chi^2$  is less than the tabulated  $\chi^2$ . The result tends to support the null hypothesis. Therefore, the Null Hypothesis was accepted. This finding was confirmed by the marketing manager of the Kenya Tourist Board. In an interview, he stated that his organization uses similar marketing methods employed by other marketing organizations such as tour operators and travel agents operating in the study area. The interview with the marketing manager revealed that Kenya Tourist Board uses brochures, newspapers, travel magazines, internet, and mass media including television in marketing adventure tourism in the study area.

Kenya Tourist Board uses internet as a method of marketing but, as Kiprop (2006) has observed, its website has been criticized for being graphic heavy taking too long to download images by would-be travellers. In addition, the organization uses local and international trade fairs and exhibitions. When asked whether Kenya Tourist Board carries out promotion in the study area jointly with tour operators or other NTOs, the Kenya Tourist Board official stated that his organization does so.

Apart from Kenya Tourist Board, tour operators are marketing organizations with a strong commitment to customers and products. In many ways, they complement marketing efforts of the government. When asked to indicate the methods used to market adventure tourism in the study area, the responses of tour operators were as shown in table 2. The survey results revealed that there was no significant difference between the tour operators who marketed adventure tourism in the region through the internet(50%) and the rest (50%) who used brochures and mass media ( $\chi^2=9.000$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p < 0.061$ ). The results are considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  or 5% of Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit.

The results imply that tour operators tended to use similar methods in marketing adventure tourism in the study area. From the findings, internet seems to be the most popular method (50%) used in marketing adventure tourism by tour operators in the study area. Therefore, the web sites of tour companies operating in the Mt. Kenya region should be updated regularly with current information to enable adventure tourists to make informed choices.

Campsite operators are also active in creating awareness of their facilities through different marketing methods. The methods used by campsite operators are shown in table 2. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the methods used by different campsite operators in marketing adventure tourism in the study area ( $\chi^2=5.692$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p < 0.682$ ). The results are considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  or 5% of Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit. About 38.5% of campsite operators interviewed indicated that they marketed their facilities through internet. Another 38.5% of campsite owners used mass media and the remaining 23% used brochures. Posting relevant and accurate information on the web site is an ideal and effective marketing strategy today.

### 3.5.3 Role Played by Tour Operators

Apart from Kenya Tourist Board, tour operators are marketing organizations with a strong commitment to customers and products. In many ways, they complement marketing efforts of the government. This section discusses the part played by tour operators in marketing adventure camping in the Mt. Kenya region. When asked to indicate the promotional techniques used in marketing adventure camping in the study area, the responses were as shown in table 2. The survey results revealed that there was no significant difference between the tour operators who marketed adventure camping in the region through the internet(50%) and the rest (50%) who used brochures, newspapers and television ( $\chi^2=9.000$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $p < 0.061$ ). The results are considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  or 5% of Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit.



The results imply that tour operators tended to use similar methods in marketing adventure camping in the study area. From the findings, internet seems to be the most popular technique or method used in marketing adventure camping in the study area and major tourism players should take advantage of this technique as it reaches more people. Therefore, details of adventure activities available in the region should be included.

When asked whether promotional campaigns are carried out jointly with Kenya Tourist Board, the responses were as shown in **fig 3**. Most operators (80%) do not carry out joint marketing campaigns with Kenya Tourist Board. To market the area more effectively, Kenya Tourist Board ought to carry out joint campaigns with tour operators.

When marketing adventure camping in the Mt. Kenya region, tour operators interviewed reported that they encounter several challenges which are summarized in table 4. The results revealed that there was no significant difference in the responses provided by tour operators ( $\chi^2=9.000$ ,  $df=9$ ,  $p< 0.437$ ). About 30% of the respondents cited lack of information by campers on the potential of adventure camping in the study area. This means that campers were not aware of the existing adventure camping facilities and, therefore, awareness campaign carried out by tour and campsite operators is essential. Other challenges cited by tour operators included lack of finance (20%), inadequate accommodation (15%), insecurity (10%) and few major events (10%). Some tour operators stated that they were facing financial difficulties and, therefore, could not to market adventure camping in the region as effectively as they wanted. This means that they were not able to prepare promotional materials such as brochures and newsletters. Inadequate accommodation was another major challenge faced by tour operators in the study area.

Mt. Kenya region does not have enough campsite accommodation facilities to cater for all would-be visitors especially at peak time. Insecurity has been a big challenge for all operators especially following post-election violence. Campers and tour operators tend to fear to venture into some of the remote parts of the study area where campsites are located. Lack of major events held in the study area was another setback in advertising the region as ideal for adventure camping. The Tour operators suggested that The Kenya Tourist Board should organize some conferences in some of the hotels in the study area. This would bring a cross section of visitors to the region.

#### **3.5.4 Role played by Campsite operators**

Since Kenya Tourist Board (KTB) role in marketing adventure camping in the Mt. Kenya region is rather limited, campsite operators are active in creating awareness of their facilities through different marketing tools or methods. The methods used by campsite operators and tour operators are shown in table 2. There was no significant difference in the methods used by different campsite operators in marketing adventure camping in the study area ( $\chi^2=5.692$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p< 0.682$ ). The results are considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  or 5% of Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit. A higher percentage of campsite operators (33.3%) marketed their facilities through internet. Some camp owners used word of mouth (13.3%) and another 13.3% used direct selling. A few campsite owners (6.7%) used other methods such as brochures, media, curio displays and newsletters. Posting relevant and accurate information on the web site is an ideal and effective marketing strategy today. This finding again appears to support the basic postulates of the resource-based theory (RBT).

The campsite owners were asked to give suggestions on how to improve the marketing of adventure camping in the study area and their responses did not differ significantly between them ( $\chi^2=5.00$ ,  $df=5$ ,  $p< 0.416$ ). The results are considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  or 5% of Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit and are presented in table 3. The campsite owners felt that there was need for marketing of adventure tourism in the study area to be a collaborative effort between all operators (38.4%), advertise through media (15.4%), create campsite networks (15.4%), produce more brochures (7.7%), encourage local campers (7.7%). They also suggested that Kenya Tourist Board should be more active in marketing (15.4%).

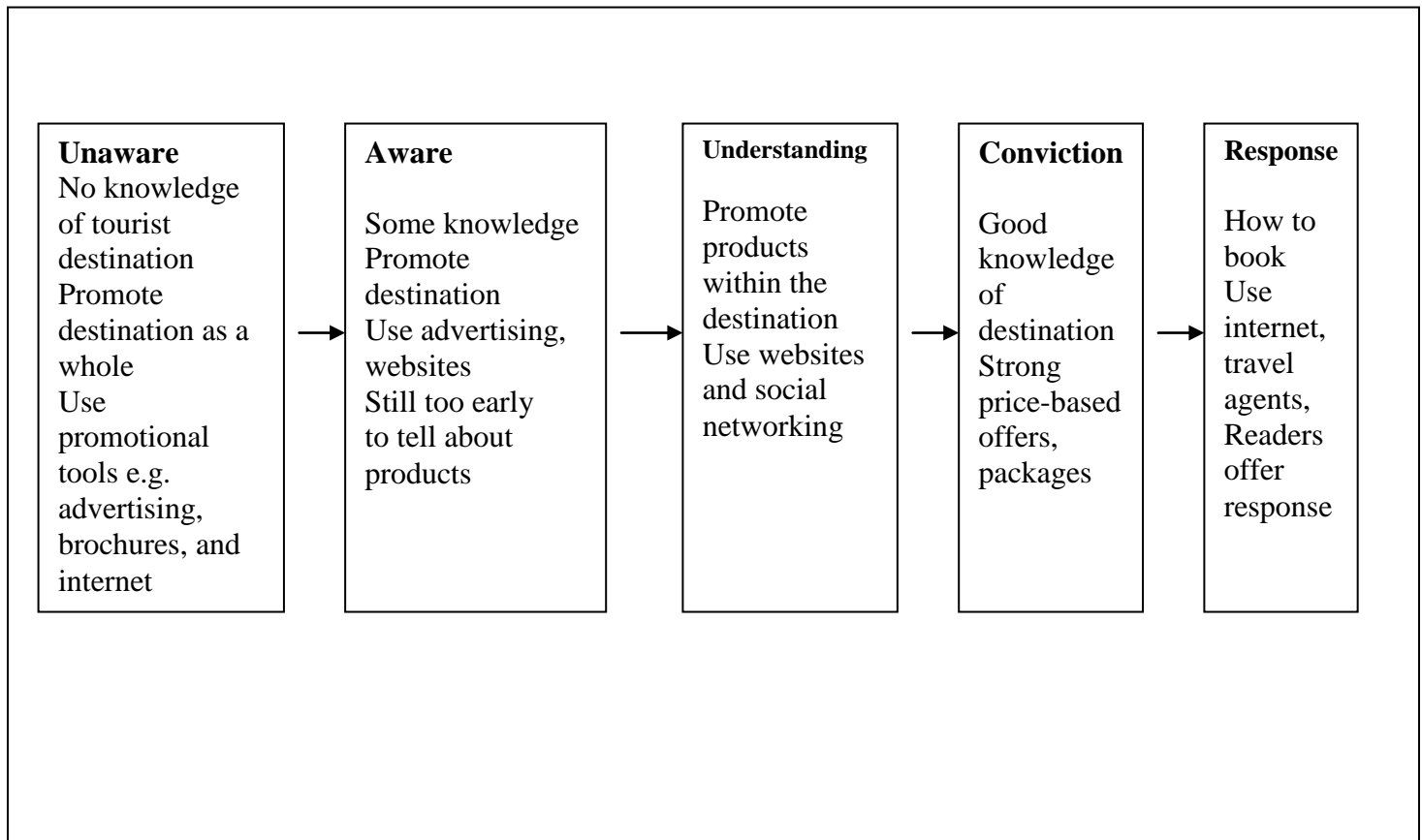
The findings show that all campsite operators were in agreement that enough marketing of adventure tourism has not been done in the study area. For example, majority of campsite operators (85%) interviewed reported that they did not receive any visitors through Kenya Tourist Board. This view was also supported by campers, with a mere 4% of those interviewed stating that they got information about adventure camping in the study area from Kenya Tourist Board. It also emerged that different stake holders should work hand in hand with Kenya Tourist Board to enhance marketing. Kenya Tourist Board should avail more funds for marketing adventure camping locally and internationally.

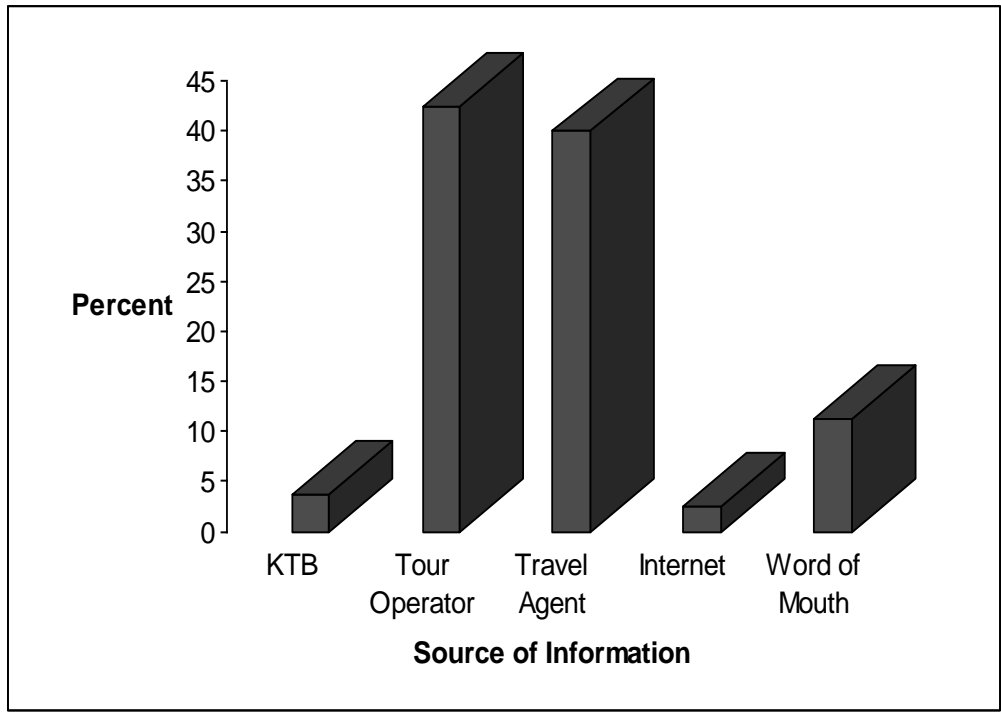
#### 4.0 Conclusion

This study examined the methods used by the Kenya Tourist Board to market adventure tourism in the study area. From the findings, it can be concluded that Kenya Tourist Board uses similar methods of marketing adventure tourism in the Mt. Kenya region to those used by tour companies and campsite operators. It was also observed that a significant number of tourists became aware about the potential of Mt. Kenya region for adventure tourism mainly from tour operators and travel agents. It was also found out that Kenya Tourist Board uses market segmentation in marketing adventure tourism in the study area. The Kenya Tourist Board should collaborate with tour operators and other industry players to market the area jointly. This would make marketing of adventure tourism more effective and efficient. DMOs do have a future but only if they clearly understand their unique role and are able to effectively articulate it to the industry and the government. This is the challenge facing KTB.

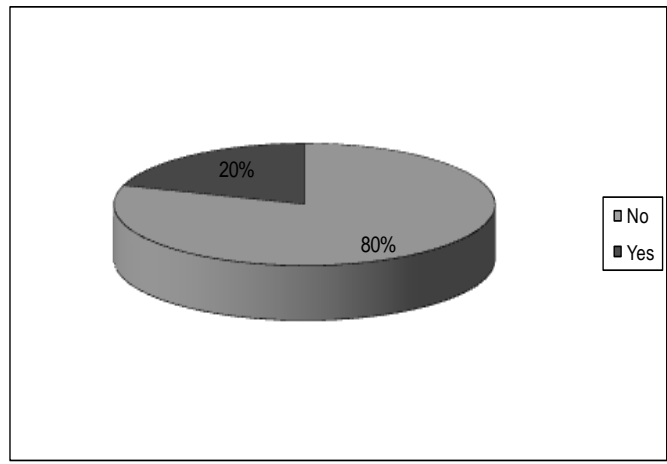
No attempt was made to seek tourists’ opinions on the quality of camping facilities and services provided. The study did not also examine the extent to which local communities were involved in adventure tourism projects in the study area. The areas that were not covered in the present study can be considered for further research. As pointed out in the study, adventure tourism is a growing area of research. There is need to carry out more research in the topic in order to provide more insight on this important aspect of tourism and to clarify any grey areas. There is also need to carry out more case studies on DMOs in other parts of the world to establish whether their role is changing to reflect different marketing environment today. The information provided by this research may be of value to tourism industry operators especially those planning destination marketing management strategies in the study area or in any other destination. The study has also attempted to apply the resource-based theory as its theoretical framework and the Communication’s Life cycle model as its conceptual framework. According to the findings presented above, both frameworks appear to apply fairly well in the study area.

#### Appendices





**Fig. 2: Source of Information for Tourists**



**Fig. 3: Joint Promotional Campaigns**

**Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Campers**

Information Sought	Responses	Number of Respondents and percentage	Chi Square( $\chi^2$ ), Degrees of freedom(df), p-value
Continent of Origin	Europe North America Asia Africa Oceania	31 (38.75%) 21 (26.25%) 12. (15%) 11 (13.75%) 5 (6.25%)	$\chi^2 = 60.18$ df=20 p< 0.001
Age (Years)	20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 >45	2 (2%) 36 (45%) 24 (30%) 15 (20%) 2 (2%) 1 (1%)	$\chi^2 = 77.95$ df=5 p< 0.001
Gender	Male Female	43 (54%) 37 (46%)	$\chi^2 = .450$ df=1 p< 0.500
Marital Status	Single Married	46 (57%) 34 (43%)	$\chi^2 = 1.80$ df=1 p< 0.180
Occupation	Business People Middle Level Executives Teachers/Lecturers Top Executives Others	35 (43.75%) 27 (33.75%) 10 (12.5%) 2 (2.5%) 6 (7.5%)	$\chi^2 = 75.70$ df=5 p< 0.001
Education	University Graduates Secondary School Others	55 (68.75%) 3 (3.75%) 22 27.5%)	$\chi^2 = 84.20$ df=3 p< 0.001

Significance Level is p&lt;0.05

**Source: Researcher, 2011**

**Table 2: Responses of Campsite Owners and Tour Operators on Methods used to Market Adventure Camping**

Operator	Responses	Number of Respondents and percentage	Chi Square( $\chi^2$ ), Degrees of freedom(df), p-value
Campsite Owners( N=15)	Word of Mouth	2 (13.3%)	$\chi^2 = 5.692$ df=8 p< 0.682
	Internet	5 (33.3%)	
	Brochure	1 (6.7%)	
	Travel Agents	1 (6.7%)	
	Media	1 (6.7%)	
	Signboard	1 (6.7%)	
	Curio Displays	1 (6.7%)	
	Direct Selling	2 (13.3%)	
	Newsletter	1 (6.7%)	
Tour Operators ( N=20)	Internet	10 (50%)	$\chi^2 = 9.000$ df=4 p< 0.061
	Brochures	5 (25%)	
	Newspapers	3 (15%)	
	Television	2 (10%)	

Source: Researcher, 2011

**Table 3: Campsite Owners’ Responses on How to Improve Marketing of Adventure Camping in Mt Kenya Region**

Information Sought	Responses	Number of Respondents and percentage( N=13)	Chi Square( $\chi^2$ ), Degrees of freedom (df), p-value
Campsite Owners’ Suggestions	Advertising through Media	2(15.4%)	$\chi^2 = 5.00$ df=5 p< 0.416
	KTB to be more Active	2(15.4%)	
	Collaboration between operators	5(38.4%)	
	Production of more Brochures	1 (7.7%)	
	Formation of Campsite Networks	2 (15.4%)	
	Encouragement of Domestic Camping	1 (7.7%)	

Source: Researcher, 2011

**Table 4: Tour Operators' Responses on Challenges faced in Marketing Adventure Camping in Mt. Kenya Region**

Information Sought	Responses	Number of Respondents and percentage(N=20 )	Chi Square( $\chi^2$ ), Degrees of freedom (df), p-value
Challenges faced by Tour Operators	Inadequate Accommodation	3 (15.0%)	$\chi^2=9.000$ df=9 p< 0.437
	Poor Infrastructure	1 (5%)	
	Lack of Finance	4 (20%)	
	Camping Costs	1 (5%)	
	Insecurity	2 (10%)	
	Few Major Events	2 (10%)	
	Lack of Information on Attractions	6 (30%)	
	None	1 (5%)	

**Source: Researcher, 2011**

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