

**INFLUENCE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS ON URBAN DOMESTIC  
TOURISM IN KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined the influence of marketing communication channels on demand for urban domestic tourism in Kenya. The study was conducted in tourist destinations within Nairobi and Nakuru town. The sample size comprised of 384 respondents: 254 respondents from Nairobi city and 130 respondents from Nakuru town surveyed using multistage sampling procedure. Nairobi city and Nakuru town in Kenya were selected using cluster sampling. Stratified sampling was then used to divide the tourist destinations within Nairobi city and Nakuru town. Systematic sampling procedure was used to select every 3rd respondent visiting these tourist destinations. Primary data was collected through questionnaires. The survey revealed that telephone, direct mail, yellow pages, newsletters, internet, television and travel diaries television show aired on Kenya Television Network (KTN), magazines, brochures, newspaper, radio, exhibitions, tour firms and travel agencies, Sales promotion were found significant in creating awareness of tourist destinations in Kenya.*

**KEYWORDS:** Domestic tourism, urban tourism, marketing communication channels, Tourism demand, Kenya

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## INTRODUCTION

Kenya is endowed with natural resources, scenic landscapes and diverse cultural heritage that draw millions of visitors from all over the world. For a long time, much attention has been given to international tourism as compared to domestic tourism because of the high earnings drawn from the former. However, the challenges associated with international tourism has made it necessary for the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya to encourage domestic tourism. Domestic tourism remains one of the backbones of a country's economic progress as it supports the tourism industry when international arrivals are minimal (Ghialy, 2010). It contributes to the growth of informal sectors and small scale enterprises when locally produced goods and services are purchased, and is also less vulnerable to external factors such as international political events, and exchange rate fluctuations (Scheyvens, 2007).

Tourism is a major generator of income in Nakuru county contributing roughly 90% towards Nakuru municipal's council budget (Kenya decides, 2012), thus one of the major economic backbones of Nakuru town (Rop *et al.*, 2009). Nyayo gardens is a popular relaxation place by the local residents in Nakuru (Kenya yote, 2014). It is a common place where events, exhibitions and activities are held (Primecom Events Management Ltd, 2012). It has been observed that majority of the local population in Kenya do engage in some form of domestic tourism such as family holiday trips to rural homes, sightseeing and picnics especially during public holidays and school holidays (Ondicho, 2003). Moreover, the popularity of engaging in domestic tourism is increasing particularly among well off Kenyans who take advantage of price discounts during low seasons to stay at the beach resorts whereas those who cannot afford overnight trips opt to visit parks as excursionists (Ondicho, 2003). The focus by most local tourists however, has been to the coastal areas and renowned national protected areas (Nakuru, Maasai Mara, Amboseli) equally frequented by international tourists (Kenya Economic Report, 2009; Mutinda and Mayaka, 2011). This could be because majority of the local people may not be aware of other diverse tourist attractions in Kenya as they are not frequently promoted.

In any country, the Ministry of Tourism seeks ways to develop and promote tourism by coming up with policies that enable the Ministry to counteract barriers that hinder the development of tourism and also enhance tourism services, and craft tools that make the country more appealing to as many tourists as possible (Economy Watch, 2010). With the help of several public and private sector associations and parastatals, the main objective of the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya is to steer the country towards posterity through creation, administration and coordination of policy within the tourism sector. The government agency responsible for marketing Kenya

tourism is the Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) (Ministry of East Africa, Commerce and Tourism, 2013). The Domestic Tourism Council re-introduced in 2008 to improve domestic tourism was disbanded paving way for the Kenya Tourism Board to take over its functions as it was less effective (Euromonitor, 2011). The Kenya Tourism Board role is to develop, coordinate and implement a national tourism marketing strategy, identify tourism trends and market needs, and market Kenya not only at the international level, but also at the local, regional and national level (Kenya law, 2013).

The Tourism Act of 2011 prescribes the packaging of niche tourism services and products, domestic and regional tourism marketing and promotion, which when appropriately implemented will boost domestic tourism performance. The Act also underscores the need for regional cooperation and public private partnerships, which has been missing for over the years. Some of the Act's aspirations are captured in the national development blueprint-Vision 2030 which the Ministry of Tourism is already working towards implementation with aim of various initiatives aimed at enhancing the tourism sector (Kenya law, 2013). For instance, Kenya Wildlife Service is involved in tourism diversification by opening new tourist attractions in previously underutilized parks and reserves or sections of parks (Tsavo East, Tsavo West, Chyulu Hills, Hells gate, Ruma, and Sibiloi national park). The Kenya Tourist Board has been trying to diversify Kenya's tourism products by promoting regions and products that have previously been under marketed (Ministry of East Africa, Commerce and Tourism, 2013). The travel diaries aired by the Kenya Television Network (KTN) showcases tourist attraction sites across Kenya, highlighting tourist areas that have not been marketed before. All these endeavors, given the use of local communication tools are meant to encourage domestic tourism (Kamau, 2011).

Despite the initiatives that have been undertaken by the Ministry to encourage domestic tourism such as reduction of entry fees at subsidized rates for local residents especially entry to the parks, hotel concessions for domestic tourists and free entry to parks during Kenyan Independence Day, domestic tourism has not increased in Kenya. There are limited studies attempting in an inexhaustible manner to explain why domestic tourism is minimal or the initiatives used are tackling the wrong causal factors (Manono and Rotich, 2013). Moreover, the Domestic Tourism Strategy Taskforce commissioned by the Ministry of Tourism in January 2010 to look into domestic tourism presented a report citing the local population's lack of awareness of the diverse tourism products and the mentality by locals that engaging in tourism is very expensive (Euromonitor, 2011). Additionally, the performance of the tourism industry in Kenya has been uneven. In 2009, domestic tourism regained a 22% growth rate from a previous decline of 30% in 2008, and later regained a growth improvement of 16% in 2010, followed by only a 4% increase in 2011 (Omolo, 2008). Moreover, Okello *et al.*, (2012) found out that poor marketing

of national parks was a major cause for low park visits by the locals. In this context, this study aims to establish the effect of marketing communication channels in creating demand for urban domestic tourism in Kenya. The study hypothesizes that there is a significant relationship between marketing communication channels and demand for tourism products.

## LITERATURE

One of the most significant factors that impacts on the purchase of tourism services and products is information about tourism services and goods (Blake and Cortes-Jimenez, 2007; Răbonțu and Bălăcescu, 2011; Qirici, 2011; Seddigghi and Theocharous, 2002). Tourists not only look for promotions with reasonable prices but also consider the information provided that assist them in the decision making process (Yimsrisai and Khemarangsarn, 2012). A major obstacle which hinders the development of domestic tourism and the lack of popularity of most tourist attractions in Kenya is lack of awareness and limited sources of information about travel (Ndivo *et al.*, 2012).

Studies by Mutinda and Mayaka (2011) also revealed that the awareness by Kenyans on domestic tourist destinations as categorized by the Kenya Tourist Board was lacking and the determinants of tourists' choice of destination was highly influenced by individual traits (push factors) than environmental factors (pull factors) because majority of Kenyans lacked information on tourist offers in a majority of destinations which form the "pull factors" that play an essential role in determining the tourist's motivation for travel (Kasean and Gassita, 2013). Marketing communication channels do significantly affect domestic tourism growth (Maiko, 2013) and play a significant role of informing both current and potential customers about an organization's offering, persuades them to purchase tourism products, reinforces experiences, differentiates an organization's product offerings from its competitors (Fill and Jamieson, 2011), fosters goodwill, and positions the distinctive benefits of the product to customers (Hill, 2015).

Targeting the right market at the right time with the appropriate message is not an easy task for destination marketers because destinations attract consumers from numerous regions which may differ in the linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Buhalis, 2000). Moreover, seasonality issues in tourism makes it essential for marketing activities to be undertaken so as to create demand for the product (Van Der Merwe, 2003; Bhatia, 2002). Most firms rely heavily on one or two communication tools to achieve their communication objectives despite the growing sophistication of consumers, increase of new types of media, and many minimarkets brought about by fragmented mass markets which makes it crucial for companies to move towards integrated marketing communications because different approaches are required to attract

different segments (Kotler and Keller, 2006). An integrated marketing communications mix combines sales promotion, advertising, publicity/public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing so as to provide a clear, consistent and maximum impact through their integration (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

Destination promotion calls for a coordinated message and campaign for all suppliers and local principals however, there are challenges associated with designing a promotional mix that is cost effective as a result of many diverse tourism suppliers at tourist destinations and the vast distribution of consumers all over the world (Buhalis, 2000). Therefore, destination marketers need to have a clear understanding of how tourists choose destinations and their travel decision making process. This is significant in helping destination marketers decide upon which marketing strategies to implement in order to influence consumer behavior. One destination-specific factor that prohibits or enhances a tourist's visit a tourist destination is promotion and advertising (Seddigghi and Theocharous, 2002; Blake and Cortes-Jimenez, 2007; Răbonțu and Bălăcescu, 2011). Hence, proper communication to the target market is essential and without it, no matter how great a product or service is, it could go unnoticed by potential customers. Additionally, seasonality issues in tourism makes it essential for marketing activities to be undertaken so as to create demand for the product (Van Der Merwe, 2003; Bhatia, 2002).

Marketing communication channels commonly used in the tourism industry are advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations and trade shows (Dwyer and Tanner, 2002; Devashish, 2011), brochures, travel fairs, direct marketing, discount schemes, loyalty clubs, public relations, and the use of a celebrity or journalist (Buhalis, 2000), personal experience and colleagues/friends/relatives (Ndivo *et al.*, 2012), publicity and internet (Yimsrisai and Khemarangsai, 2012). The study by Njung'e and Liswani (2013) shows that a number of tour companies and hotels in Kenya use the internet daily for reservations and bookings done by domestic tourists. Sales promotions are commonly used to increase customer awareness, introduce new services and products, or to combat competition by rewarding customers with special deals or discounted prices (Kumar, 2010). Personal selling is most effective in complex, highly risky and involving decisions such as honeymoon travel, event and conference coordination, wedding planning, volunteer tourism which requires the seller to customize the product and offer flexible solutions while addressing the needs of the customer (McCabe, 2009).

Public relations remains the most extensively used marketing promotion especially at the national level where destination representatives establish tourism offices to provide information and promotional material while publicity is an excellent way that the image of a tourist destination site can be presented and it is through those official advertisements that tourist's

gather information about certain tourist destinations which in turn influence their decision to travel (Yimsrisai and Khemarangsana, 2012). Ndivo *et al.*, (2012) point out that domestic tourists' in Kenya consider television as more important as opposed to print media (travel brochures, newspapers, magazines, and books) in creating awareness of a tourist destination, however, the choice of a tourist destination is highly influenced by print media. This awareness could be because free to air TV info is free for viewers whereas print media such as tourist guidebooks are very expensive, hence destination info is out of reach for many Kenyans, especially those with low budget. Overall, however, personal experience and colleagues/friends/relatives played the most significant role in creating awareness and final choice of tourist destination whereas travel agents on the other hand were considered less significant (Ndivo *et al.*, 2012). Nyagaka (2009) notes that print, outdoor, electronic media, sales promotion (brochures and price cuts), publicity, telephone and structured selling were the most significant advertisement tools that had an influence on respondents loyalty to visit particular tourist destinations. Tourists not only look for promotions with reasonable prices but also consider the information provided which assists them in the decision making process (Yimsrisai and Khemarangsana, 2012).

Statistics in the year 2005 (Table 1) show that Kenya spent relatively less on tourism marketing and ranked the lowest in terms of money spent on marketing per tourist.

**Table 1: Budgetary allocation for marketing**

COUNTRY	YEAR (2005) TOTAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION (US \$)	MARKETING PER TOURIST (USD \$)
Kenya	5.4 million	3.7
South Africa	70.2 million	9.3
Tunisia	43.1 million	6.8
Egypt	48 million	5.8
Singapore	370 million	10

Table 1 above shows the total budgetary allocation was US\$5.4 million targeting different destinations compared to South Africa (US\$70.2 million) whereas Malaysia had the highest at US\$ 117.9 million while Egypt allocated US\$ 48.0 million, Tunisia US\$ 43.1million and Singapore US\$ 370 million (Kenya Economic Report, 2009). Singapore spent much higher so that they could develop their tourism infrastructure and attractions such as upgrading the Changi International Airport, rail and road network, and port facilities (Abeysinghe, 2007). As one of the most efficient economies worldwide (Abeysinghe, 2007), and small island state, Singapore relies more heavily on international tourists than local tourism (Economic survey of Singapore, 2010). Therefore, they would require a high budgetary allocation to market their tourist attractions to

international markets. In terms of money spent on marketing per tourist for both local and international, Kenya ranked the lowest at US \$ 3.7, followed by Tanzania (US\$ 5.2), Egypt (US\$ 5.8), Tunisia (US\$ 6.8), and South Africa ranked the highest in Africa at US\$ 9.3 whereas Singapore spent roughly US\$ 10 per tourist in marketing (Kenya Economic Report, 2009).

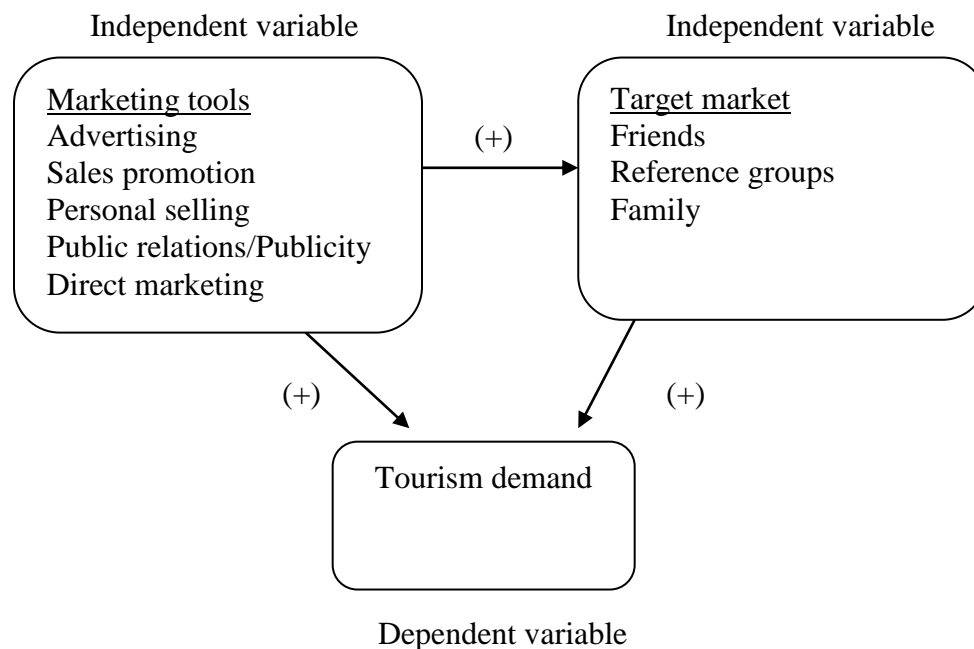
A survey of senior executives in the tourism sector, case studies and previous research done at the national and sub-national level on return on advertising investment suggests that a well-formulated marketing promotion strategy and campaign likely increases destination brand awareness, improves perceptions of tourist destinations, and eventually leads to increased visitation by tourists and tourist spending (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2012). Numerous studies have reported a positive increased return on marketing investment, with benefits that surpass the initial investment therefore, it is crucial for organizations to maintain the relevance of their brand and product and continuously communicate with their target markets, because research shows that a reduction in advertising spending especially in times of recession would decrease market share, resulting to fewer tourists and tourist spending causing a decrease in sales, which would then require spending more money so as to recapture the sales and market share back (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2012).

Therefore, if tourism is to improve in Kenya, the country should allocate more resources for marketing activities and actively promote tourist destinations for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions. This is prominent in South Africa, Malaysia, and Singapore who leverage on events such as World championships, cultural events and Grand Prix which tend to boost the image of these countries making them desirable holiday destinations (Kenya Economic Report, 2009). Further, if domestic tourism is to improve, then tourism facilities should be aligned to the domestic tourist needs because they are too expensive, thus making it hard for local tourists to enjoy them as they are left with little disposable income after paying schools fees, rent, health care and other basic utilities; such that they can hardly afford transportation and accommodation costs despite them wanting to travel (Travel Destination Management, 2014).

The Ministry of Tourism has been trying to put more effort in their marketing communications to encourage domestic tourists in Kenya, by using an advertising campaign known as 'Tembea Kenya' which was launched in the year 2008. The campaign was established as part of a tourism recovery strategy encouraging Kenyans to participate in domestic tourism so as to counter adverse effects from overdependence on international tourism. The Ministry also established an online presence, Magical Kenya website to directly market tourism products to domestic tourists by giving holiday offers, weekend getaways in various destination places to suit different customer needs. Occasionally, holiday exhibitions targeting both the regional and domestic

tourism market are held at Nairobi's Sarit Centre to create awareness of tourist destinations while offering special offers. Recently, a partnership was formed between the Ministry of Tourism and the Standard media group to showcase tourist attractions in Kenya. The Television programme 'Travel diaries' is aired by the Kenya Television Network (KTN). Tour and travel firms and hotels also play a role in promoting travel products by offering different packages (Ministry of Tourism, 2008).

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**



Communication may be formal either through the use of advertising (radio, television, print, brochures, directories) sales promotion techniques, personal selling, direct marketing (catalogs, mailings, telemarketing, internet) and public relations (sales presentation) or informal through reference groups such as word of mouth from friends, family and groups of people with whom they interrelate with socially or at work and largely influences to a large extent our behaviour. Therefore, the marketing communication channels used to promote a product to family, reference groups and friends and other tourists will significantly influence demand for tourism products.



## **METHODOLOGY**

This survey was conducted from the local residents visiting tourist destinations in Nairobi and Nakuru town namely: Nairobi National park, Bomas of Kenya, National Museums, Uhuru Park, Lake Nakuru National park, and Nyayo gardens. This target population was chosen because both Nairobi and Nakuru town have diverse tourist attractions that are easily accessible by the local population, are proximal to each other, are cosmopolitan urban centres with diverse populations coming from every major tribe in Kenya and have national parks so close to the city/town that are most frequently visited by both local and international tourists (Gachie, 2014; Kenya information guide, 2014). Statistics show that Nairobi National park, Lake Nakuru National park, National museum and the snake park are the most frequently visited tourist destinations in Kenya (KNBS, 2013). Uhuru park is a popular place for relaxation by Nairobi residents whereas Bomas of Kenya showcases daily performances of Kenyan traditional songs, dances and culture (Gachie, 2014) and appeals to majority of urban Kenyans especially on Sunday afternoons who visit there with their families and crowd the place (Bruner, 2005).

The sample consisted of 384 randomly selected respondents: 254 respondents from Nairobi city and 130 respondents from Nakuru town surveyed using multistage sampling procedure. Nairobi city and Nakuru town in Kenya were selected using cluster sampling. Stratified sampling was then used to divide the tourist destinations within Nairobi city and Nakuru town. Systematic sampling procedure was used to select every 3rd respondent visiting these tourist destinations. Primary data was collected through questionnaires. Data obtained from 384 questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS 16.0. Questionnaires were used because the study focused on variables that cannot be directly observed such as views and opinions of the respondents. Marketing communication channels with a 16-item scale was measured using Likert type scale ranging from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree to assess the role they have played in creating awareness of tourist destinations. The marketing communication channels under study were newspapers, television, radio, outdoor advertisements, newsletters, telephone, sales promotion, exhibitions, tour firms and travel agencies, word of mouth, direct mail, magazines, yellow pages, brochures, internet, and travel diaries TV show by KTN.

**RESULTS AND FINDINGS****Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Variable</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	218	56.8
	Female	166	43.2
<b>Age group</b>	Less than 25	103	26.8
	25 to 34	179	46.6
	35 to 44	72	18.8
	45 to 54	15	3.9
	55 or older	15	3.9
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	159	41.4
	Single with child/children	18	4.7
	Married	125	32.6
	Married with child/children	73	19.0
	Divorced	6	1.6
	Widowed	3	0.8
<b>House Monthly Income (Kshs)</b>	Less than 20,000	190	49.5
	20,000 – 49,999	96	25.0
	50,000 - 79,999	47	12.2
	80,000 – 109,999	23	6.0
	110,000 and over	28	7.3
<b>Level of Education</b>	Primary or less	10	2.6
	Secondary	47	12.2
	College	131	34.1
	University	160	41.7
	Post University	36	9.4
<b>Members in Household</b>	1 - 2 people	63	16.4
	3 -4 people	164	42.7
	5 - 6 people	105	27.3
	7 or more people	52	13.5

Regarding the marketing communications (Table 3) that have created awareness of the tourist destinations within Kenya, most respondents were in agreement that television (4.30) and internet (4.22) were the most significant. This shows the growing use of internet and television by tourist destinations to market their destinations as a result of easy access of services,

convenience and wide target audience. Similarly, other marketing communication tools that were important in creating awareness were newspaper (3.97), travel diaries show on KTN (3.96), radio (3.91), tour firms and travel agencies (3.81), magazines (3.67), exhibitions (3.66), outdoor advertisement (3.64), sales promotions (3.53), brochures (3.49), word of mouth (3.37) and newsletters (3.29). Telephone (2.85) yellow pages (2.85), and direct mail (2.84) were moderately significant in creating awareness of tourist destinations within Kenya.

**Table 3: Marketing Communication Tools (n = 384)**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Television	4.30	.941
Internet	4.22	.960
Newspaper	3.97	1.070
Travel diaries	3.96	1.170
Radio	3.91	1.080
Tour firms and travel agencies	3.81	1.076
Magazines	3.67	1.134
Exhibitions	3.66	1.143
Outdoor advertisement	3.64	1.107
Sales promotion	3.53	1.217
Bronchures	3.49	1.220
Word of mouth	3.37	1.332
Newsletters	3.29	1.254
Telephone	2.85	1.367
Yellow pages	2.85	1.245
Direct mail	2.84	1.285

With regards to how often the respondents saw tourist destinations being advertised by the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya in the past one year (Table 4), 17.2% of the respondents agreed that they have always seen tourist destinations being advertised, 3.6% have never seen any advertisements, 22.4% have rarely seen advertisements from the Ministry of Tourism, 38.8% of the respondents have sometimes seen advertisements, whereas 18.5% have very often seen adverts by the Ministry of Tourism. This shows that more efforts need to be undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism to create awareness of Kenya's diverse tourism products and services.

**Table 4: Advertisements by the Ministry of Tourism (n = 384)**

Variable		Frequency	Percent
<b>How often local tourists have seen advertisements by the Ministry of Tourism</b>	Always	66	17.2
	Never	14	3.6
	Rarely	86	22.4
	Sometimes	147	38.3
	Very often	71	18.5
<b>Marketing done by the Ministry of Tourism enough</b>	No	246	64.1
	Yes	138	35.9

With regards to whether the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya had done enough to market the diverse tourism products and services to Kenyans, 64.1% responded that the Ministry had not done enough in terms of marketing whereas 35.9% were in agreement that the Ministry had done enough in terms of Marketing.

The reasons given by respondents who felt that the Ministry of Tourism had not done enough in terms of their marketing to domestic tourists were lack of aggressive marketing strategies and diversity in use of communication channels; domestic packages are not adequately advertised since only a few Kenyans know tourist destinations within Kenya and the focus had been on the high end spender, who generally are international tourists. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism should offer more favourable packages to Kenyans, particularly the accommodation rates which are expensive for locals.

Additionally, some respondents felt that the advertisements by the Ministry lacked a clear target group and therefore, their impact was hardly felt whereas others were not even aware that they advertise. Other felt that Kenya's tourism products was not diversified, there was too much dependency on wildlife and coastal areas and only the major tourist sites were marketed e.g. Parks, therefore, in-depth information about many other tourism destinations within Kenya was lacking yet there are so many undiscovered places. Some parts in Kenya also does not have access to media making it hard for locals to know about Kenya's tourist destinations. Finally, other respondents felt that the Ministry of Tourism had not made an effort to reach out to the low and middle class population.

The reasons given by respondents who felt that the Ministry had done enough in terms of their marketing to domestic tourists were because of the appealing advertisements they place on local TV, radio, website, expos on tourist destinations within Kenya, domestic tourism had increased

and the tourism sector had brought a lot of revenue to Kenya because it was now more affordable to visit tourist destinations especially with the lowering of park entry fees.

### Reliability tests

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient test results of the measurement scale shows that marketing communication with 16 items had a reliability coefficient of 0.878. According to George and Mallery (2003) Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.8 and above is good therefore, the measurement scale had a high level of internal consistency.

### Hypothesis tests

Using principal component analysis (PCA), the data was reduced to composite factors. Those variables above cut off of 0.5 were used to form the composite factor.

**Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.864
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	2.235E3
	df
	120
	Sig.
	.000

The KMO value for this study was approximately 0.864 (Table 5) which is above the suggested minimum of 0.5.

### Correlation Matrix

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used to test the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix upon which the factor analysis was based is an identity matrix. According to table 5, the approximate Chi-Square value was 2235.0 and Sig value of =0.00. The Null Hypothesis that the Correlation matrix is an identity matrix was consequently rejected while the alternative hypothesis accepted that indeed, the factor analysis procedure was based on a correlation matrix not identity in nature and that there are significant correlations among at least several variables.

**Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**  
**Factor Extraction**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Telephone	.816			
Direct mail	.783			
Yellow pages	.678			
Newsletters	.607			
Internet		.764		
Travel diaries		.668		
Magazines		.595		
Bronchures		.563		
Newspaper			.770	
Radio			.759	
Television			.725	
Exhibitions				.840
Tour firms and travel agencies				.682
sales promotion				.639

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Factor analysis was used to reduce the marketing communication attributes items by putting together interrelated variables and generate a small number of marketing communication variables dimensions. Using the criterion of retaining only factors with eigenvalues of 1 or greater, four factors were retained for rotation having a total variance of 60.54%. Four items loaded on Factor 1 and comprised of telephone, direct mail, yellow pages, and newsletters (e.g. email newsletters). Four items also loaded on Factor 2 and consisted of internet, travel diaries on KTN a show that promotes local tourism, magazines and brochures. Three items loaded on Factor 3 and Factor 4 respectively and comprised of Newspaper, radio and television; and exhibitions, tour firms and travel agencies, and sales promotion.

**Table 7: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**  
**Regression analysis**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.489 <sup>a</sup>	.239	.237	.39058

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing communication channels

b. Dependent Variable: Tourist demand

**Table 8: ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.324	1	18.324	120.111	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	58.276	382	.153		
	Total	76.600	383			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing communication channels

b. Dependent Variable: Tourist demand

**Table 9: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-.810	.077		-10.581	.000	-.960	-.659
	Marketing communication tools	1.484	.135	.489	10.960	.000	1.218	1.750

a. Dependent Variable: Tourist demand

A linear regression ascertained that marketing communication channels could statistically significantly predict domestic tourism demand,  $F(1, 382) = 120.11$ ,  $p = .000$  and marketing communication channels accounted for approximately 24% of the explained variability in domestic tourism demand. The regression equation was: domestic tourism demand =  $-0.81 + 1.484 x$  (marketing communication channels). This implies that for every unit increase in marketing promotions of tourism products in marketing communication channels, demand for local tourism will increase on the average by 1.48 times.

## DISCUSSION

The objective of the study was to determine the relationship that exists between marketing communication channels and demand for urban domestic tourism. To achieve this objective respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on different types of communication channels that have created awareness of tourist destinations. The results showed that the relationship between marketing communication channels and demand was statistically significant. This is consistent to empirical and theoretical evidence which shows that one of the most significant factors that impacts on the purchase of tourism services and products is information about tourism services and goods (Qirici, 2011; and Maiko, 2013).

Buhalis (2000) and Dwyer and Tanner (2001), noted that the most significant marketing communication tools used by the tourism industry were advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations and trade shows. This is consistent with the research findings from this study which shows that the most important marketing communication channels used are exhibitions, telephone, direct mail, newspaper, internet, radio, television, tour firms and travel agencies, yellow pages, travel diaries show on KTN, sales promotion, newsletters, magazines and brochures. Word of mouth and outdoor advertisements were the least form of marketing communication tools as their factor loadings were below 0.50 and therefore had a minor significant impact in creating awareness of tourist destinations. Even though print media did influence choice of tourist destinations among Kenyans, the most significant marketing communication tools were tour and travel exhibitions, telephone, direct mail, newspaper, internet, radio and television.

According to Nyagaka (2009), print, sales promotion, brochures, publicity tools, electronic and print, and personal selling and telephone, and outdoor advertisements were the most effective marketing communication tools in creating awareness of the different tourist destinations. Research findings however, showed that outdoor advertisements had a minor role in creating



awareness of tourist destinations. The growth of direct marketing (Newsletters, internet, direct mail, telephone) has also played a role in creating awareness of the different tourist destinations within Kenya. Interestingly, these findings are consistent with Yimsrisai and Khemarangsan (2012) who indicate that the most preferred source of information on promotions and special offers is through the internet.

The study findings reveal that tour firms and travel agencies did significantly influence demand for tourism products by domestic tourists which is contrary to Ndivo *et al.*, (2012) who pointed out that travel agents were considered less significant. The Ministry of Tourism (2008), indicates that tour and travel firms play a role in promoting travel products by offering different packages. This significant increase in tour and travel agencies can be explained by the fact that most tour and travel agencies are also focusing on a new market segment (domestic tourism) to increase their market share and profits by offering different and customized travel packages targeted towards the domestic market.

The growth of the internet has been a contributing force to the increased source of information to domestic tourists from tour and travel agencies because of their online presence therefore, making it possible for domestic tourists to search for special offers and domestic packages from different tour and travel firms.

Occasionally, holiday exhibitions targeting both the regional and domestic tourism market are held at Nairobi's Sarit Centre and Kenya International Conference Centre (KICC) to create awareness of tourist destinations while offering special offers. Sylvester Mbandi, the general manager of Baobab Beach resort in the South Coast, noted that the hotels that participated in the 2014 Sarit and Magical Kenya Expo in Nairobi, got reservations from the locals for the festive season. Moreover, the partnership between airlines (Safarilink, Fly 540 and Air Kenya) and hotels played a significant role of increasing both local and regional hotel bookings by 80 - 90% occupancy rate as they offered local residents special holiday rates (Kenya Investment Authority, 2014). Therefore, the travel exhibitions and expos have significantly played a major role in creating demand for domestic tourism.

Demand for tourism may be prohibited by lack of promotion and advertising of a tourist destination (Seddigghi and Theocharous, 2002). Findings from this study revealed that 22.4% of the respondents have rarely seen any advertisements advertised by the Ministry of Tourism, 38.3% have sometimes seen the adverts and a further 3.6% have never seen any adverts. Moreover, 64.1% feel that the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya has not done enough to market tourist destinations to locals. This could mean that either the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya is not aggressive enough in their marketing or they do not have a well defined target market therefore

they undertake mass marketing the products the same way to everyone else despite the different consumer tastes or other tourist players do market the tourist destinations more than the Ministry of Tourism in Kenya does or they only market specific common destinations. This could explain the growth of tour and travel firms role in creating demand for domestic tourism by aggressively marketing the tourism products. Moreover, other tourist attraction sites besides safari and beach tourism should be advertised.

### **IMPLICATION TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE**

This study reveals that different marketing tools have played a role in creating awareness of tourist destinations in Kenya. Destination marketers should move towards integrated marketing communications because of the growing sophistication of consumers, increase in different types of media and many minimarkets. The choice of media mix and message used should fit the target audience and be in line with the overall communication objectives. This implies that before any marketing promotion is done, players in the tourism and hospitality industry should first identify the needs and wants of domestic tourists so that they can match their promotions to suit the domestic tourists' needs. Tourist destination marketers should find ways to measure the effectiveness of their communications so that they can measure the success of the promotional tools used and achievement of set objectives. Moreover, they should have a database of their clients and create long lasting relationships with them, so as to better understand how they make decisions, which communication channels are the most effective and this will help increase sales through repeat visits and new visits from client referrals.

Therefore, there should be marketing partnerships between the Ministry of Tourism and associations with tours, travel and hospitality organizations as this will help in reduction of advertising costs for all the tourism organizations involved as well as enhance brand exposure thus create widespread awareness among the locals on the different tourist destinations. Tour and travel exhibitions should not only be focused in one town (Nairobi) but to other potential areas country wide. The Ministry should also organize for more festivals and regional events to stimulate the growth of urban domestic tourism. Stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality industry need to understand their target markets so that promotional messages can be tailored to suit them and unique selling point of the tourist destination is communicated effectively.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study population was conducted primarily from a large and varied sample of local tourists visiting major tourist attractions in Nairobi city and Nakuru town. Therefore, the study results

can be generalized to other populations living particularly in the urban areas. The tourist attractions chosen can also be generalized to other tourist destinations within the urban areas because of the diversity of the attractions and population visiting these destinations. Moreover, because of the similarity of tourist attractions especially wildlife and culture in both urban and rural areas, then this study can also be generalized to other populations visiting these tourist destinations. It can then be concluded that the marketing communication channels that are significant in creating awareness and demand for urban domestic tourism in Kenya are Telephone, direct mail, yellow pages, newsletters, internet, television and travel diaries television show aired on Kenya Television Network (KTN), magazines, brochures, newspaper, radio, exhibitions, tour firms and travel agencies, and sales promotion. These marketing communication channels are easily accessible by local tourists. Therefore, any tourist destination that wants to achieve its communication objectives should use diverse marketing communication tools to reach local target markets.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study examined the different types of marketing communication tools that have created demand for urban domestic tourism. However, urban domestic tourism demand is not only influenced by the type of communication channel used but also on other factors such as the promotion message, timing, and levels of exposure. Future research studies would be to measure the effectiveness of promotion messages used and the effect of timing and exposure levels. Furthermore, this study was conducted on domestic tourists visiting tourist destinations in urban centers, therefore a similar survey undertaken in tourist destinations within rural areas may present interesting findings.

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