

Reimagining Ethiopia through Destination Branding

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Abstract

As the name of a country is negatively seen due to certain unpleasant incidents, re-imagining is obviously important and Ethiopia is affected by early derogatory histories which force the modern readers and viewers conception to be shaped by stories of wars and natural disasters including famine crisis that highly affect the destination brands especially the re-imagining effort. On this regard, Ethiopia was analyzed from the context of the tourists and some concerned organization so as to identify the possibility of re-imagining the country by using destination branding practices. To meet the goal, the study used mixed research approach and samples of 368 respondents were selected randomly to fill the questionnaires and out of it, 316 of them were collected and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics accordingly to test the hypothesis and reach the conclusions. The output reflects the destination marketing facts and insights in general, and recommendations are provided on how to re-image Ethiopia through destination branding which can be possible using branding techniques that could bring significant changes over stereotypes developed because of incidents that happen in the past.

Keywords

Brand Ambassadors, Destination Branding, Nation Branding, Re-Imaging

1. Introduction

The image of a country is defined as the picture, reputation or stereotype that is attached to a specific country, [1]. This reputation or stereotype is defined by its external audience, which is consumers, inward investors, foreign governments, the media, and external firms based on the cognitive, affective, evaluative, and/or behavioral processes of individual [2] [3]. It follows then that individual nations have distinct images that are unique to their particular individual situations, as it is these images that “consumers” of nation offerings use to make con-

sumption related decisions. In today's competitive worlds countries compete with each other for the attention, respect and trust of investors, tourists, consumers, donors, immigrants, the media, and the governments of other nations so as to be the preferable country in the world, which is leading to the concept of destination branding defined as a way to communicate a destination's unique identity by differentiating a destination from its competitors [4].

On this regard, understanding a positive destination branding can help countries in many directions and to mention it will help to attract crucial competitive advantage on the area of export, preface to visit, product choice and also will also help on attracting high-profile world events, such as international summit meetings, the Olympic Games, world caps, and global conferences, which can add prestige to a country's destination brand. That is why majority of the nation are striving over branding their countries [5].

As [6] suggests, perceptions of people outside the country on certain destination are influenced by personal experiences, the media and its coverage of issues pertaining to the nation, and stereotyping on the contrary. This probably leading to the overall brand of the nation may present quite a complex picture and this picture is further complicated by the fact of world phenomenon (natural or human made) or the governments often may fail to undertake a proper "map" of the country's key audiences [7]. This will affect the overall performance of the nation on attracting tourist by creating illusion. On such moment, by understanding how they are seen by publics around the world and citizen itself; and how their achievements and failures, their assets and their liabilities, their people and their products are reflected in their brand image, they need to reduce or alleviate the shadow that tackles re-imaging practices to lead the concept of destination branding; that is marketing of destinations with the purpose of attracting tourists.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Twenty years ago and above, countries with the "right" political systems or economic policies enjoyed and sipped the best reputations for business and diplomacy; at the time where Ethiopia was in serious political, economic and natural catastrophic conditions and lost many things despite the contribution for the world with regard to peace, literature performance art, graphic art [8] rich in history and the feeling of people's fierce independence and historical pride in addition of being considered as curdle of human kind [9]-[15] which has great account for a people rich in self-determination, attractive, mosaic natural, historical and religious heritage [11] [16]-[18] supplemented with low cost to visit and stay, good hospitality of the people thorough out the country [18] [19] with diverse attractive culture, and conducive climatic atmosphere [20]; having relatively stable political system and securities [20], the state has been imaged as a land of war, drought, and famine [19] [18] and the modern reader's conception of Ethiopia has no doubt been shaped by stories of wars and natural disasters including famine crisis [16]. Even the local peoples and several of the "liberation movements" and political parties argued against Ethiopia as a nation, defining it as an obsolete autocrats-state, a prison house of peoples [16]; showing how mach Ethiopia is adversely affected by media and academic exposure. Although according to [21] rank Ethiopia as the number 22 countries out of 52 nation in Africa and 123 out of 133 nation; even what the nation proud of Human, Cultural & Natural Resources Rank Ethiopia as 101th out of 133 nation [22], which still show the country need due emphasis on re-imaging the destination, so as to help countries to develop and communicate strong brand identities which could help and speed up development by attracting foreign investors and tourists, [23], to discover and invent the truth about the nation that could form the basis of the country's brand identity and align the way the nation and its subjects think of and conduct themselves with the logic of the "reality of globalization" [24], to apply a brand strategy for the economic, social, political and cultural development of countries [25], to create the country communication as a final-stage activity, to which belong slogans, national themes, advertising, and public relations [26] to practice by the citizens and thereby contribute to re-construction of the destination, and acquire global recognition and achieve global competitiveness in tourism [5]. On this regard, the central the objective was to identify ways to re-image Ethiopia under cumbersome and difficult situation for the international audience's using destination branding in addition:

- To identify Brand Ethiopia means for both Ethiopians and foreigners audiences.
- To identify the perceptual effect of destination branding toward Export, Governance, FDI, Immigration, Culture and Heritage, and Peoples dimensions of nation branding.
- To identify strategies that help to counter previous negative image of the country.
- To identify the potential of Ethiopia as tourists destination in relation to the traveler's motivations, preferences and habits.

- To explore the nation competitive advantage on tourism for branding to the international market.
- To identify the practices of the government to re-image the country as distinctive tourist destination.
- To recommend how it should be done in the future for branding Ethiopia as a unique destination.

1.2. Hypothesis

Based on the above objective, the following hypotheses were developed in relation to the problem and theoretical concepts. This are:

H₁: Understanding of the brand “Ethiopia” by internal and external audiences can affect the re-imaging effort using destination branding.

H₂: Destination branding can create positive perception toward Export, Governance, FDI, Immigration, Culture and Heritage, and Peoples dimensions of nation branding.

H₃: If Ethiopia is much unknown by foreigners the possibility of re-imaging the country might be easy.

H₄: The image of the citizen toward their own country has a direct impact on the process of re-imaging and marketing of Ethiopia.

H₅: Any positive experience of a country or its peoples tends to create a positive bias towards tourism product of the country.

H₆: A destination image is affected by negative incidents happening to the country.

H₇: The large number of visual manifestations of national identity, the higher to attracts tourists and investors.

2. Literature Review

Destination Branding

Destination branding defined as a way to communicate a destination’s unique identity by differentiating a destination from its competitors [27]. It is the most powerful marketing weapon available to contemporary destination marketers confronted by increasing product parity, substitutability and competition [28]. Furthermore, “branding associations with the attitude, the information, the reason to buy implanted in the mind of consumers help differentiate travel destinations” [29].

Destination branding in history: According to [30], “relatively few papers attempted to measure the destination image for any specific travel context. In fact, travel context was explicit in only 23 of the 142 papers. Over a half of the papers (75) measured the perceptions of only one destination, without a frame of reference to any competing destinations.” Meanwhile, destination branding is all about tourists and according to international tourist association a person become tourist when left his home and stay 24 hour and more in other place and knowing the reason why tourist’s motivation is important for the tourism industry in general is the fact that it acts as the trigger that sets off all the other events involved in travel [31]. Having this tourist has different reason to travel from one place to other depending preference of the traveler it include 1st their Motivations to escape and 2nd Motivations for personal growth and self-promotion etc. having this, when tourist plan to go same where they began to consider different countries which is called the brand image of countries Which is affected by natural disaster, past experience, media, word of mouse communication and other element to result in determining of the tourists motivation to go or not to on certain place.

Brand identity: is defined as the contribution of all brand elements to awareness and image [32]. It is created by the sender [33]. It provides a direction, purpose, and meaning for the brand and is central to a brand’s strategic vision and the driver of brand associations [34]. Meanwhile destination marketers establish and enhance brand identity based on their knowledge about consumer’s brand image on the particular destination; which means destination image is critical to create the positive and recognizable brand identity [31].

Brand image: is defined as consumer perceptions of a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer’s memory [35]. It is perceived by the receiver [36] to brand a destination, the sender projects a destination brand identity through all the features and activities that differentiate the destination from other competing destinations and the receiver perceives the image of the place, which is formed and stored in their minds [37].

Destination brand images: The images of nations are much like those of corporate and product brands that refers to consumer’s general perception and feeling about a brand and has an influence on consumer behavior with impression of cognitive and affective evaluations [38]-[42]. It is mostly are susceptible to negative percep-

tions and stereotypes.

As [3] points out the image of a nation are defined by its external audience, which is consumers, inward investors, foreign governments, the media, and external firms. Also [6] does suggest that the perceptions of people outside the country are influenced by personal experiences, the media and its coverage of issues pertaining to the nation, and stereotyping. It is this existing image or perception of a country that is referred to as a country's nation brand, with a nation brand being viewed as a representation of the enduring reputation of a specific country [43]. The destinations with strong positive images are much more likely to be considered and chosen in the travel decision process, than those with weak images. As [6] points out, in the case of nations associated with negative image, the 'stigma' associated with the nation impinges on the inflow of tourism, foreign aid and foreign direct investment, even long after these negative events have become irrelevant.

Brand reputation: It is the feedback received from other [44]. Image and reputation, which is the reciprocal of image, both are components of a symmetrical communications process between the organisation and relevant stakeholders [44]. It is a particular type of feedback received by the nation from the outside world, concerning the credibility of the nation's identity claims. Identity, image and reputation are all mental associations generated by knowledge and past experience.

Nation re-imaging: is the deliberate representation and re configuration of a one's nation, place or cities or region image to accrue economic, cultural and political capital. As many commentators identify, this often involves the deployment of conventional marketing tools, such as slogans, logos and promotional literature [45]. However, more subtle techniques are also used, such as staging events, constructing iconic buildings and implementing sophisticated public relations strategies.

Brand positioning: Positioning involves creating the appropriate image of the product in the minds of the consumers in the targeted markets with no exception to tourism destinations that includes states, regions and countries [46]. And it began with the stakeholder defining a superiority declaration for others to believe with reasons [47]. Unambiguous positioning helps nations to succeed. A good positioning platform can help carry the core brand identity, brand essence and image across to the receivers without distorting the message.

The challenge destination branding: There are four major challenges in destination branding limited budget, little management control, and political pressures with consideration to stakeholders. External environment factors such as economic downturn, natural disasters and pandemics can affect the tourism industry drastically [48].

3. Material and Methods

3.1. Description of the Study Area

Ethiopia is found in the eastern part of Africa between latitudes of 3° and 18°. And found in a favorable time zone for financial markets as it is situated at GMT+3:00, 8:00 Hrs. ahead of New York and 6:00 Hrs.

3.2. Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis

The study implemented descriptive and correlation research design together with mixed research approach to triangulate data in order to map out the characteristics and perceptions of the respondents and provide an accurate snapshot of the surveyed market.

The total populations for the study were international tourists and minister of culture and tourism. The target populations were equal or above age 18-years-old. The estimated numbers of tourists' arrival at different category for the six months were 303,000 [49]. *And to determine the sample the study use sample size determination formula from* (www.cengage.com/highered) and took 368.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(E^2)}$$

$$368 = \frac{303000}{1 + 303000(0.05^2)}$$

According to [50], sample size 30 - 500 is already adequate for most of the research, in multivariate research. Comrey & Lee also noted that samples of size 100 can give more than adequate reliability correlation coefficients.

Furthermore, there are 712 hotels in Addis Ababa, from that 58 of them are star hotels [51] considered as target population and take 7% of target population, than the hotels categorized in to two groups based on their brand name origin (local and foreign brands) than assorted alphabetically to take every tenth of the target hotels and result in selection of Geon and Shebelle from local one where as Hilton from the international and interview were conducted with marketing managers of the hotels.

Although there were 27 five scaled items of questionnaires for the first part which intended to analysis the tourists perceived image and important factor to be consider in choosing a destinations; followed by 22 items that expected to answer how destination branding can help nation reimagining effort on its culture, FDI, government, peoples and migration dimensions. Meanwhile, 2 - 4 questions were developed for each dimension and grouped according to the constructs they were intended to measure.

All interview and questionnaires were collected December 20, 2011 and January 28, 2012. The primary data collected was organized and analyzed using SPSS by applying both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques supplemented with thematic analysis for interview section.

4. Data Analysis and Presentation

4.1. Demographic Analysis of Respondents

The most numerous age groups is “25 - 31” with 104 (32.9%) respondents, followed by group “32 - 38” with 67 (21.2%) respondents, “39 - 45” with 51 (16.1%) respondents, “46 - 52” with 41 (13%) respondents, “18 - 24” with 32 (10.1%) Respondents, and finally “more than 53” with 21 (6.6%) respondents around 56.6% respondents were males and 43.4% were females. Gender groups are well-balanced and Most of the respondents were above diploma level (Table 1).

4.2. Tourist Flow in Terms of Geographic Origin

It is possible to conclude that a great majority (42.7%) of respondents are from Africa and this probability because of Ethiopia specially Addis Ababa location as center or head quarter of Africa union and the second large visitors were come from Europe followed by Asian (Table 2).

Table 1. Demographic analysis of respondents.

		Frequency	Valid%	Cumulative%
Age	18 - 24	32	10.1	10.1
	25 - 31	104	32.9	43.0
	32 - 38	67	21.2	64.2
	39 - 45	51	16.1	80.4
	46 - 52	41	13.0	93.4
	Above 53	21	6.6	100.0
Total		316	100.0	
Gender	Female	137	43.4	43.4
	Male	179	56.6	100.0
	Total	316	100.0	
Academic level	Diploma	78	24.7	44.0
	Degree	100	31.6	75.6
	Masters	55	17.4	93.0
	Doctorate	14	4.4	97.5
	Not specified	8	2.5	100.0
Total		316	100.0	

Source: survey data 2015.

Figure 1 shows, the negative incidents (war, politics, famine, red terror and drought) has highly influencing tourists’ perception not to choice Ethiopia as a preferable destination before visiting the country with total percentage 89%. Only 9% of the respondents have positive perception that is developed because of the event of being curdle of human kind announcement and victory of Adwa. On this regard “destination branding, often suffer from negative stereotypes, and one of the primary goals of nation-branding is to counter such negative stereotypes which can be very damaging to a nation” [52]. In addition, as [53] described, because people do not have time to search for in-depth information about a specific destination or product, destination brands were a fast way to make informed decisions whether they were based on feelings or facts.

Figure 2 shows 50.63% of the respondents’ perception were developed from television, radio and print Medias whereas 40.8% of the respondents were influenced by all media types. Internet friend and family usage as a source of information was very low taking 9.29% responses only. Meanwhile, the perception can be developed in many ways but the media and entertainment business is a strong factor when it comes to influencing people’s image of different destination [54].

4.3. Statistics Indicating Important Variables for Re-Imaging Nation through Destination Branding

The importance level and practices of destination branding attributes were posed in the way respondents rate both the importance level and practices of each variables and Likert scale was used to measure the importance level of the variables. The mean score were calculated to determine the importance of factors in the reimagining practice. With five point scales, the intervals for breaking the range in measuring each variable are calculated as follows:

$$= \frac{\text{max} - \text{min}}{5} = \frac{5 - 1}{5} = 0.8 = \text{Importance Level}$$

The higher the score, the more important are the variables as evaluation criteria. It means that the scores falling between the ranges of 1.00 - 1.80 considered as totally unimportant, somewhat un important while it fail between mean score of 1.81 - 2.60, fair between 2.61 - 3.40, 3.41 - 4.20 become Importance and finally when it fail with the mean score of 4.21 - 5.00 it turn out to be Extremely Important. Eighteen variables were used as important to reimage the nation though destination branding which is found in Table 3.

Table 2. Tourist flow in terms of geographic origin.

Value	Label = geography	Frequency	Percent	Valid%	Cumulative%
1	Africa	135	42.7	42.7	42.7
2	Asia	56	17.7	17.7	60.4
3	Europe	81	25.6	25.6	86.1
4	Other	44	13.9	13.9	100.0
5	Total	316	100.0	100.0	

Source: survey data 2015.

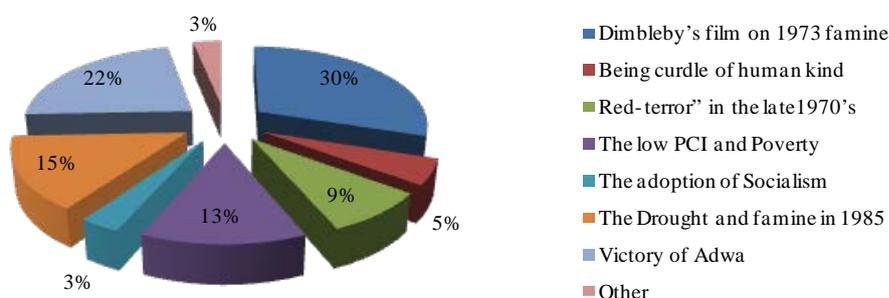


Figure 1. Event that shapes tourists perception before visiting Ethiopia (Source: survey data 2015).

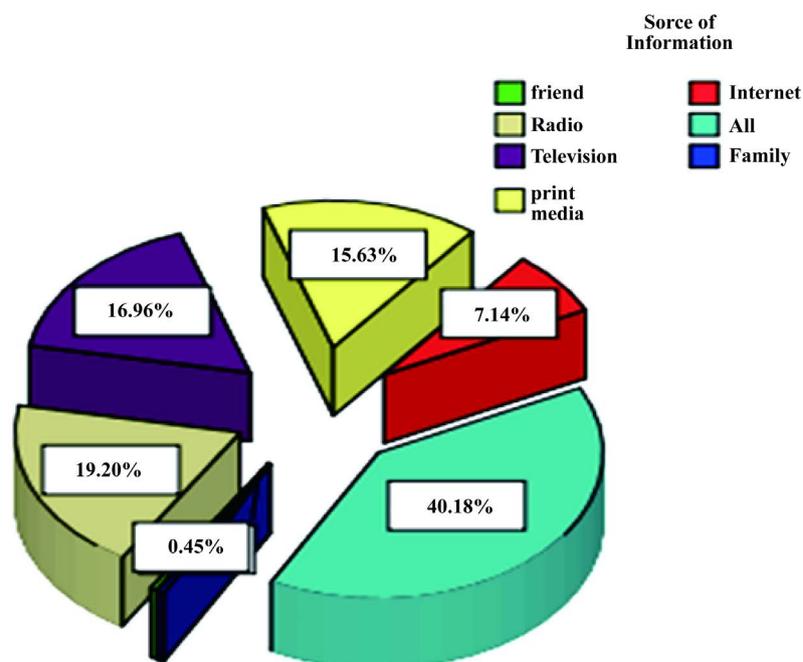


Figure 2. Sources of information for perception development of tourists (Source: survey data 2015).

Table 3. Important variables for re-imagining a nation through destination branding.

	N	Min	Mix	Mean	St.d	Importance Level
The country action on environmental protection	316	3	5	4.69	0.499	Extremely important
Richness cultural heritage and historical monuments	316	3	5	4.52	0.640	Extremely important
the country have exciting contemporary culture	316	2	5	4.26	0.792	Extremely important
Facilities on the cites	316	3	5	4.38	0.721	Extremely important
Richness in natural beauty	316	3	5	4.52	0.676	Extremely important
Safety, material or service cost	316	2	5	4.50	0.735	Extremely important
The peoples are different and exciting	316	3	5	4.54	0.665	Extremely important
The peoples are friendly, hot, and modern	316	2	5	4.28	0.763	Extremely important
Nightlife's availability, convince and safety	316	1	5	4.34	1.037	Extremely important
The country are clean and attractive	316	1	5	4.23	0.992	Extremely important
The country has vibrant city life and urban attraction	316	2	5	3.86	1.040	Somewhat important
The country is safe compare to neighboring country	316	3	5	4.33	0.700	Extremely important
Transportation availability and cost	316	1	5	4.76	0.911	Extremely important
Restaurants service convinces are good	316	3	5	4.48	0.652	Extremely important
The peoples are conservative and sophisticated	316	1	5	3.51	0.995	Somewhat important
Accommodation accessibility and affordability	316	1	5	4.22	0.857	Extremely important
Availability of information on the tourist sites	316	1	5	4.23	0.796	Extremely important
Clearly, identification, easily accessibility of cites	316	1	5	4.20	0.973	Extremely important

Source: survey data 2015.

The mean scores on **Table 3** shows the most important destination branding variables were environmental protection (mean = 4.69), historical and cultural asset richness of the nation (mean = 4.52), natural beauty (mean = 4.52), safety and cost of shopping (mean = 4.50), facilities on the tourist sites and infrastructure in general (mean = 4.38), quality of service, food & beverage in restaurant/bar (mean = 4.48), general safety in all area and vicinity of the country (mean = 4.33), accessibility of sites (mean = 4.20), over all accommodation availability and cost for the service (mean = 4.22) respectively.

4.4. Reliability Testing

To assess reliability and internal consistency of the variables, Cronbach's "alpha" was calculated. A benchmark alpha of 0.70 was set as an acceptable measure of reliability [55]. The value of Cronbach's alpha for environmental protection was 0.839, infrastructural development was an alpha of 0.858, natural beauty 0.892, modernity of the peoples on different destination 0.732, safety and security was an alpha of 0.854, and cost of accommodation had an alpha of 0.852 (**Table 4**).

4.5. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used for investigating the strength of relationships between the studied variables. According to [56] "measures the linear association between two metric variables". The results are shown in **Table 5**.

The correlation between Export dimension with effect on reimagining practice was 0.782* and Government dimensions with reimagining practice effect equals 0.874* Cultural dimensions and reimagining practice was 0.976** Peoples dimension equals 0.904* Tourism dimension = 994* Immigration and investment having correlation significance of 0.792* showing strong correlation between nation brand dimensions and marketing to reimage the nation. There for it is possible to conclude that branding could also help to boost not only the tourism sector but also all other sectors of the country too.

4.6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regressions is conducted in order to examine the relationship between brand understanding, destination brand process, degree of knowledge image and number of visual manifestation with 1) reimagining possibility, 2) tourist attraction. And also it used to assess the influence of those constructs on over all branding process. Finally the results of this analysis indicate how well a set of variables is able to predict the dependent variable. Besides, it shows how much unique variance in the dependent variable is explained by each of independent variables [57]. On this regard, several independent variables were entered into the multiple regression equation and the following outputs were gotten.

The first model (**Table 6**) presents how much of the variance in the measure of perception change toward other nation brand dimensions is explained by the model. The model's multiple coefficient of determination or R square ($R^2 = 0.679$) obtained indicates that 67.9% of variance in the measurement (perception change toward other nation brand dimensions) function can be explained by destination branding. While, remaining 32.1% are explained by other variables. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.523$ with estimated standard deviation 0.60587. The regression model is statistically significant since the probability level is 0.000. Meanwhile the second model that explain

Table 4. Variables reliability.

Variables	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Environmental protection	0.839
Infrastructure development	0.858
Natural and cultural and historical place beauty	0.892
Modernity of the peoples	0.732
Safety and security	0.854
Cost of accommodation and its availability	0.852

Source: survey data 2015.

Table 5. Nation branding vs. reimagining practice.

Nation branding dimensions	Reimagining practice
Export dimension	0.782*
Contributes to science and technology	0.512*
Feel good about buying products from country	0.908*
Creative place with cutting-edge ideas and new ways of thinking	0.474*
Government dimensions	0.874*
Competently and honestly governed	0.481*
Respects the rights of citizens and treats them with fairness	0.377*
Behaves responsibly in the areas of international peace and security	0.985*
Behaves responsibly to protect the environment	0.903**
Behaves responsibly to help reduce world poverty	0.974**
Cultural dimensions	0.976**
This country excels at sport	0.937**
This country has a rich cultural heritage	0.939**
contemporary culture such as music, films, art, and literature	0.624*
Peoples dimension	0.904*
People would make you feel welcome	0.993**
Like to have a person from this country as a close friend	0.809*
Willing to employ a well-qualified person from this country	0.776*
Strongly like to visit if money was no object	0.817*
Tourism dimension	0.994*
This country is rich in natural beauty	0.908**
This country is rich in historic buildings and monuments	0.993**
This country has a vibrant city life and urban attractions	0.455**
Immigration and investment	0.792*
Willing to live and work for a substantial period in this country	0.697**
High quality of life	0.574**
Good place to study for educational qualifications	0.463**
Has businesses I'd like to invest in	0.916*

** : Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; * : Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. Source: survey data 2015

Table 6. Multiple regressions.

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	\sum^2	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Understanding brand "Ethiopia" to re-imagining a nation	0.728 ^a	0.529	0.523	0.60587					
Regression					128.454	4	32.114	87.483	.000 ^a
Residual					114.163	311	0.367		
Total					242.617	315			
Destination brand to perception change toward other nation brand dimension	0.824 ^a	0.679	0.675	0.51693					
Regression					175.972	4	43.993	164.635	.000 ^a
Residual					83.104	311	0.267		
Total					259.076	315			
Degree of knowledge to easiness of reimagining	0.760 ^a	0.578	0.574	0.42852					
Regression					78.566	3	26.189	142.618	.000 ^a
Residual					57.292	312	0.184		
Total					135.858	315			
Number of visual manifestation to degree of attraction of tourists	0.792 ^a	0.637	0.634	0.37802					
Regression					55.509	3	25.509	111.984	.000 ^a
Residual					44.349	314	0.260		
Total					149.858	315			

Source: survey data 2015.

understanding brand “Ethiopia” to re-imagining a nation, the multiple regression analysis focuses on how much of the variance in the dependent measurement reimagining is explained by the model. Based on this, the model’s multiple coefficient of determination or R square ($R^2 = 0.529$) obtained indicates that 52.9% of variance in the measurement (re-imagining of a destination) function can be explained by understanding of a brand while the remaining 47.1% are explained by other variables out of this model. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.675$ with estimated standard deviation 0.51693. The regression model is statistically significant since the probability level is 0.000 also the third modal focuses on how much of the variance in the dependent variable easiness of reimagining process is explained by the model. The R Square value of this model is 0.578 thus 57.8% of variance in the variable (easiness of reimagining process) function can be explained the degree of knowledge that the audiences have on the destination, while the remaining 42.2% are explained by other variables out of this model. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.574$ with estimated standard deviation 0.42852. The regression model is statistically significant at Sig. value of 0.000. The final modal in the multiple regression analysis focuses on how much of the variance in the dependent variable attraction of tourists is explained by the model. The R Square value of this model is 0.637 thus 63.7% of variance in the variable (tourist attraction) function can be explained by with the number of visual manifestations the county can have. While the remaining 36.3% by other variables out of this model. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.634$ with estimated standard deviation 0.37802. Showing the model is statistically significant at Sig. value of 0.000.

4.7. Qualitative Analysis

Interviews analysis for culture and tourism minister and managers of different hotels shows, Ethiopia uses a composite approach to differentiate its tourism market from other African countries because Ethiopia is proud of its time honored civilization. Therefore people seeking authentic experience or explorative adventures are the main target for Ethiopian tourism. Having the above, as competition is becoming a fierce in the travel and tourism industry it would be necessarily for Ethiopia as destinations to focuses on the product that differentiate Ethiopia from other competitive offering. Because expert suggest that Ethiopia should provide a more cultural approach to divide its tourism market from other African countries.

The ambassadress located in other countries where promote their countries regarding to peace, safety and related terms in general and they arrange creation festivals and fair by cooperating with the ministers once a year to promote the countries tourists destinations. However, the minister did not believe that this is enough despite they try to develop additional method to promote the tourism sector and make an appealing one and lead the re-imagining effort made by the government by using the untouched authentic historical heritages and natural resources to attract tourists, investors and others too.

Ethiopia has been trying to use promotion tools such as trade fair attendance representatives officer, brochures and public relation under restrained marketing budget where the marketing plan relies heavily on public relation to promote its tourists business by establishing partnership with stake holder creating a distinct brand enhancing quality service, using media channels and joint marketing with neighboring counties were highlighted to complement the promotional work. The empirical data presented by the ministers shows promotion of the country to the international should be a joint public private sector activity. As emerging destination the promotional campaign of Ethiopia have been lend by the government where as tour operators could contributes for the country something through trade fairs participation. Also several techniques of promotion are widely used by destination so as to increase awareness and persuade customers to visit Ethiopia. Some the major promotion techniques used by the minister includes TV, radio press as well as poster campaign are the major one. However, up to now there are no well organized brand ambassadors to reimage Ethiopia as an appealing tourist’s destination but there has been still an effort in fragmented manner by the athletes, artistes and Diasporas. Also the interview shows Ethiopia does not have obvious boundaries between segmentation for distributing its tourism product. However the data show the European and the old population took the lion share from any of age interval and continents. But following the growth and transformation plan implementation the ministers believe that building destination image is Avery key issue for all.

Also the interview with selected hotels shows, the areas that major foreign customers complain in the Ethiopians’ hotels are the way that the receptionists handle them, the problem of delivering the service as they want and waiting time are the major one in addition to their question of getting international hotels in all region of the countries where there are many historical place and cultural heritage exist and majority of the foreigners coming and arrive in Ethiopia are the middle and the old age.

Although from this group almost all of them who come for leisure purpose are the European and American, where as for the business, for not stated reason and ask friend and relatives reason the Indian/Asian and African, (Nigeria) citizens take the lion share in addition to the Somalia, Djiboutian and Sundance citizens. The hotels like any institution and have the responsibility of reimagining Ethiopia through providing of cultural food, promoting about the country culture, historical heritage, even they are expect to design the internal part that could tell something about the country when the arrival saw it.

4.8. Hypotheses Test

Proposed hypothesis are tested based on the results of the multiple regression analysis. A Hypothesis is supported when the Sig. value is smaller than 0.05; and a null hypothesis is rejected when the Sig. value is equal or larger than 0.05 [57]. Beta coefficients were used to evaluate the direction of each linear relationship (*i.e.* negative or positive). Therefore, interpretation of the t-statistics and beta estimates proceeded for each hypothesis.

The multiple linear regression analysis (Table 7) revealed that understanding of the brand “Ethiopia”, destination branding impact on perception changing on other nation branding dimensions and degree of knowledge and it is impact on easiness of branding the destination, the image of citizen for their own country and its effect on marketing the destination, effect of past negative incidents on reimagining and visual manifestation of the country and its impact on tourist arrival were significant predictors of reimagining Ethiopia through destination branding ($p < 0.05$) and were significant at ($p = 0.000$). And the nature of the relationship were positive for variables all with beta value of $\beta = 0.349, 0.417, 0.533, 0.206, 0.348, 0.148$ and 0.335 respectively. This shows all hypotheses were accepted.

5. Discussion and Recommendation

5.1. Key Findings

In addition to the hypothesis test result, the interview section helps to identify the following elements that help the nation to be able to reimage the country through marketing the tourism resources that are found throughout the country. This finding includes:

- A positive country name amounts to brands of anything produced, established and done by the country and any unpleasant incident happening to the country negatively affects nation branding.
- The different ethnic groups, religious, cultural events and historical monument could play a central role in enriching a country’s brand and could be also the honey pot and trophy for Ethiopian tourism sector and a base for re-imagining Ethiopia. Though there is also a finding showing that the cost of accommodation, transportation and other services are not fair which probability lead to losing competitive advantage.
- Despite the resources that the nation endowed in the tourism sector, there is no significant effort made to rejuvenate the local people perception toward their country.
- The negative and poor image that Ethiopia has is mostly due to the fact that they have bad experience of the country which gets from media and aid agency and other derogatory history by adopting the Echtner and Ritchie model. The following classification was made to represent Ethiopia.

Table 7. Hypotheses test.

Hyp.	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	Independent Var.	Dependent Var.	β	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
H1	Understanding	Re-Imagining	0.349	0.045	0.402	7.739	0.000
H2	Destination Branding	Perception	0.417	0.061	0.270	6.813	0.000
H3	Knowledge	Re-Imagining Easiness	0.533	0.046	0.585	13.726	0.000
H4	Image	Marketing	0.206	0.039	0.222	6.124	0.000
H5	Experience	Positive Bias/ Choices	0.348	0.037	0.481	9.588	0.000
H6	Negative Incidents	Destination Image	0.148	0.034	0.161	4.362	0.000
H7	no. visual manifestations	Number of Tourists	0.335	0.058	0.210	6.412	0.000

Source: survey data 2015.

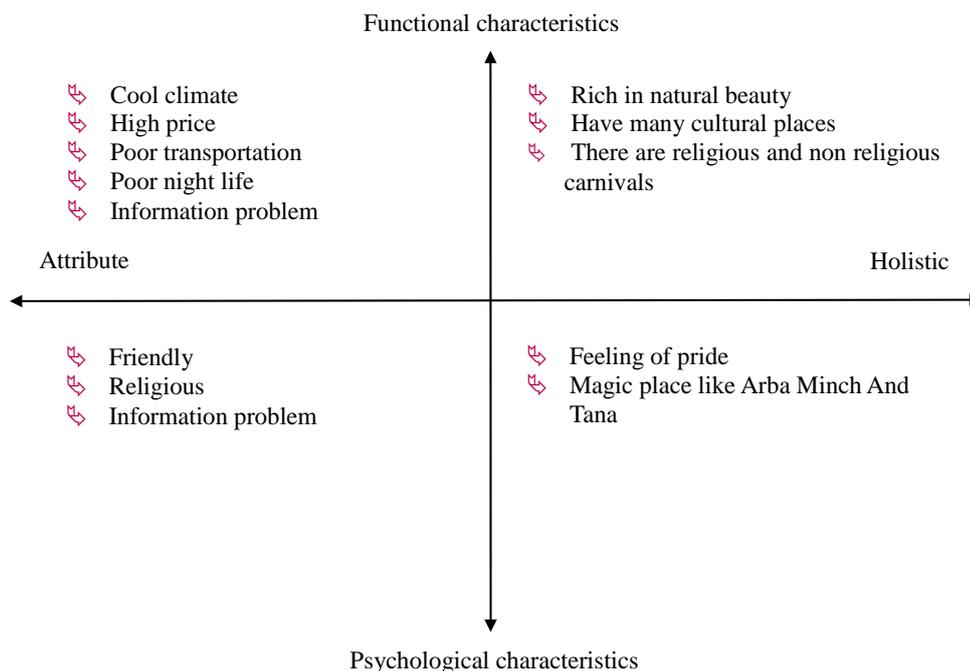


Figure 3. The components of a destination's image of Ethiopia adopted from Echtner & Ritchie (Source: survey data 2015).

The model (**Figure 3**) shows that Ethiopia is characterized as having friendly, religious people, cool climate, and being rich in natural and historical asset, though the nation has poor transportation, infrastructure and night life and high cost for accommodation. Finally, the study reveals that there is a strong relationship between destination branding and reimagining efforts, and destination branding will affect nation branding dimensions too. And it is also possible to increase the perception of international audience to invest, work, live and buy products by putting effort on tourism sector.

5.2. Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

The study mainly emphasizes on the destination branding and its impact on the nation image building, though there are other factors that are also equally important on reimagining of a given nation. Furthermore, the study mainly emphasizes from the perspective of image and it does not study the nation identity perspective which analyzes how the citizens of the country see their own country and its impact on image; and how external audiences see the country. As a result, the nation identity perspective and other nation branding dimension could be a potential researchable area.

5.3. Recommendation

Destination promotion is like “dream selling”, and selling one’s dream depends on the brand identity and image. Therefore, to alleviate the bad image of Ethiopia, to keep tourism development and to avoid the possibility of presenting Ethiopia as a distressful zone, currently Ethiopian government, any concerned body and all organizations work on tourism and cultural development should have to promote for, strengthen and re-build ongoing brand of unique culture, life style, history and adventure. To do so any of the concerned body may consider the following statements as an input for their brand promise development or they may use it! These are:

- A safe, exotic, diverse, laid-back, yet adventurous African destination with a remarkable friendly, religious and hospitable people that want to get to know the tourists.
- A beautiful nature that offers everything from wild jungles to pristine paradise of religious place, from cool to the hot desert and world lowest place.
- Experiences for all kinds and lifestyles: From exiting outdoor-adventures (desert to forests), to enjoyable big city activities, cultural ceremonies “crazy” parties in authentic peoples of Ethiopia from south to the north,

and breathtaking cultural visits to ancient temples, churches and mosques in all corner of the country.

- An excitingly safe and transformational, adventure to an exotic and beautiful African pearl with a laid-back atmosphere, a friendly people, and a diversity of travel activities.

Also despite Ethiopia have ample of icons who could do a lot for re-imagining effort in all corner of the world still they are not utilized effectively. So, the following recommendations were given by identifying the brand ambassadors.

The first type, of brand ambassadors which will be a potential for Ethiopia could be, nation's Diaspora. Because according to Dinnie, the Diaspora can be seen as an already existing network of possible brand ambassadors which the nation can use to promote itself [58]. The second type, of brand ambassadors that Ethiopia could be used for re-imagining the state through destination branding are, the sport stars. Because first it is a potentially cost-effective way of promoting a nation [58]. Second sports stars may function as brand ambassadors without being officially named because the public sees them as being representatives of their country. The third possible brand ambassadress could be internationally known companies such as air line and maritime. Because: first the air line carries the flag and other thing to the rest of the world, Second air line has the potential of developing and experience of culinary tourism by providing Ethiopia food and drinks to their customer which going to force or influence the customer to come and see Ethiopia. Third by providing information in a very magazine which gave to customers as currently did. The fourth brand ambassadors could possibly, famous artists, actors, scientist, authors and international designer and models etc. Because: first they could potentially have an opportunity to present in international media they may describe about Ethiopia in relation to the interview. Second they may have their own admires so that they may seek to visits and look the country. Third if they are willing it is the most cost effective way of promoting any sectors especially tourism sectors. Fourth they can explain about their country with their, music, fiction, etc. last but not list the Fifth brand ambassadors are the politically assigned ambassadors itself located in all countries because, they have a great role regarding to describing about the national security and national safety procedure, the peace and other thing. Also as Dinnie stated, nations have traditionally employed brand ambassadors very discreetly despite they went largely unnoticed [59]. Having this, the ordinary citizens can be perceived as brand ambassadors too when they are abroad or interacting with foreigners in their own country [59].

Currently Ethiopia has a strong religious appeal and cultural appeals. As a result, new products (new but authentic identity) such as spiritual and "retreat" holidays could be better to use to counterfeit, backfire and contradicts the negative perceptions and clichés that are very hard to change and widespread image that people have about the Ethiopia.

Finally there should be common concusses between private and government sector to work to gather by abandon its belief that destination branding is the sole responsibility of the government. as the same time government should have to open the door for the private sector to work together for marketing of Ethiopia for the rest of the world and there should be consistency on branding and marketing because it is a key aspect of successful branding.

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