COMMUNICATION APPROACHES FOR PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN HOMABAY COUNTY, KENYA

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children Emmanuel, Andrew and Joegreek.

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the aim of finding out the communication approaches used for promotion of tourism in Homabay county. This is based on the fact that Homabay county is rich in tourists' attractions, but continue to receive very few tourists; Kenya also aims to meet the requirements of its vision 2030 as far as the tourism sector is concerned. Promotion of tourism is necessary to enable the sector generate revenue to the county and improve the livelihood of the people around the area. The study aimed to investigate the communication approaches used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county. The specific objectives of the study were to examine communication channels used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county, to assess communication messages for promotion of tourism in Homabay county and to determine the communication frequency for promotion of tourists' sites in Homabay county. The study was guided by Media Framing theory and adopted mixed research approach. Data was collected from stakeholders of tourism in Homabay County by use of questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. The target population was 1,433 with a sample size of 100. Purposive and convenient sampling was employed. Qualitative data was analysed thematically using manual open coding and NVivo 11 software while quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Four themes emerged: channels of tourism promotion, attraction points for tourists in Homabay county, promotion of tourism and the level of frequency of tourism promotion. 35 of the 80 tourists were referred by a previous tourist to visit Ruma national park, while 10 of them got the message from the internet; 39 of them stated that the tourism promotional information is convincing while 41 of them said it is not. 50 tourists stated that there is need to increase the frequency of promotion of tourism, 12 said no, while 18 did not know. The study found that the channels through which tourism promotion is done include electronic and print media as well as events such as Miss tourism Homabay. It was also established that the promotional messages contained cultural and historical information while highlighting the uniqueness of the sites. The promotion of these sites is however not done frequently and the channels used mainly reach the local tourists leaving out the potential tourists in the international arena. The ministry of tourism Homabay county attributes inadequate promotion of the sites to lack of adequate funds from the county government. The study recommends that the Homabay county government, KWS intensify promotion of the sector by using channels that target both local and international tourists. The promotional messages should be easily accessible, adequate, persuasive and convincing. The frequency of the promotional activities should also be increased and done periodically.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

GoK   Government of Kenya

KTB   Kenya Tourists Board

KWS   Kenya Wildlife Service

NACOSTI   National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation

SPSS   Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SWOT   Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats

UNWTO   United Nations World Trade Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher presents the overall introduction to communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county. Travel and tourism is one of the fastest growing economic activities significant to most countries in the world (Kumari, 2017). Tourism has become one of the largest and the most dynamic industry sectors in the world (Han & Hyun, 2015; Katrakilidis, Konteos, Sariannidis, & Manolidou, 2017; Mowforth & Munt, 2015; Novokreshchenova, Novokreshchenova, & Terehin, 2016). This chapter presents the introduction of communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county. This will lead to benefits such as development in different parts of the county and increase in government revenues.

1.2 Background of the Study

Tourism is defined as the movement of people from one site to another which is located outside their local community with the aim of visiting a tourist destination (Bohne, 2016). Promotion is viewed as an important part of the marketing method. In tourism, it means to try and encourage actual as well as potential clients to travel to a destination by spreading of information (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2015). Promotion aims at identifying the target group to which the promotion is conducted, finding out the most effective advertising, sales support and public relations programs to be planned, and to select the best methods to be used to control and assess the promotion operation (Istiqomah, 2017).

In Finland, the Finnish Tourist Board, a government organization was established under the ministry of Employment and Economy with the aim of promoting tourism through active marketing communication. In order to achieve this, the board carries out product campaigns. The state allocates funds for the promotion of domestic and international tourism (Eyvindson, Repo, & Mönkkönen, 2018). The state budgets for and allocates some funds for tourism promotion, tour operators also participate in international travel fair which results in familiarizing the tourism products and attractions (Tyrväinen, Uusitalo, Silvennoinen, & Hasu, 2014).

In South Africa, the leading tourists' destinations in Africa and also one of the most visited destinations globally (George Assaf, Pestana Barros, & Gil-Alana, 2011), the promotion of tourism is done by Tourism South Africa and the provincial tourism authorities who supplement their efforts (Africa, 2011). The promotion of tourism in Durban, South Africa is done by an official marketing unit known as Durban Tourism (Giampiccoli, Jugmohan, & Saayman, 2014). The marketers of tourism have a responsibility of packaging Durban the best way possible, positioning it in the minds of the potential and actual tourists (Makhaola, 2015). Tourism promotion in Tanzania is done by the Tanzania Tourists Board, which launched an international tourism marketing strategy, where there is a private public partnership aimed at promoting tourism in Tanzania through competitive positioning of the country. This partnership also makes use of more focused approaches to the promotion of both local and international tourism, (Muganda, Sirima, & Ezra, 2013).

Kenya's tourism industry has developed tremendously over the years. After independence 1963 the government and the private sector came together to develop the tourism sector. In 1966 the GoK established the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife whose mandate was to formulate and implement tourism policy in the

country. The government then formulated Session Paper No. 8 of 1969 in order to promote tourism in the country. This paper defined the growth targets that it hoped to achieve and also outlined the areas where the Government would participate jointly with private investors in developing the tourism industry (Mayaka & Prasad, 2012). The Government of Kenya further enacted the Kenya Tourist Corporation Act (Cap 382) which empowers corporations to secure investigation formulation and carry out projects in order to develop the tourism industry in Kenya. Session paper No. 3 of 1975 was enacted by the government to secure future wildlife management. In this paper, the Kenya Wild Life Services under the Ministry of Tourism is charged with the responsibility of conserving Kenya's vast wildlife habitat and resources through policy development and sustainable management of all terrestrial and marine National parks and certain reserves in the country (Litoroh, Omondi, Kock, & Amin, 2012). Tourism development objectives in Kenya are spelt out in the National Development plans and session papers, these aim at implementation of aggressive promotion and marketing strategies. In 1997 Kenya experienced a slump in the Tourism industry following the terrorism attack in the American embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. This was followed by terrorism (perceived or real) and post-election violence in 2007 which has affected Kenya's tourism industry.

After independence the Government of Kenya (GoK) realized the great potential that the tourism industry had and moved to upgrade the infrastructure, superstructure as well as other facilities that aid tourism, (Kangogo, Musiega, & Manyasi, 2013). Kenya is still one of the leading tourists' destinations in Africa in spite of the competition from other destinations in the continent (Sindiga, 2011). After independence, there was a spectacular growth in the tourism industry which was

characterized by strong government involvement and active partnership with the private sector.

For the purpose of planning and development of the tourism industry in Kenya, tourism is divided into eight tourists' circuits, these include: Western, North Rift, South Rift, Central, Nairobi, North Eastern, Coast and Mt. Kenya. The western tourist circuit, which is where Homabay county falls under, consists of twelve sub-circuits including: Trans-Nzoia, Bungoma, Kakamega, Vihiga, Busia, Nandi, Kisumu, Siaya, Homabay, Migori, Kisii and Nyamira. In the past, tourism efforts in the Homabay county have been guided mainly by the national government and the Non-Governmental Organizations. While those efforts have been productive, the increase in tourism activities within the Homabay county, there are still a number of potential touristic sites that have not been given the recognition that they deserve. These sites can earn revenue for the county and improve the lives of the locals by providing job opportunities.

According to the Homabay county government strategic plan for the year 2013, there is need for improvement in various possible tourist areas including well marketed sites. The strengths weaknesses opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis for the year by the county government reveals that some of the strengths that the county has include, among others, natural resources, the presence of Lake Victoria - the second largest fresh water lake in the world, attractive scenery, a rich cultural heritage among the communities. One of the weaknesses highlighted is lack of advertising of the touristic sites as well as potential touristic sites, other weaknesses include lack of proper public transport, lack of proper planning and poor communication in tourism market as a result of language barrier.

Tourism is an active and economically viable industry that requires the ability to continuously adjust to the needs and wants of customers such as their satisfaction, safety and enjoyment of the industry; these keep changing(Ogah, Adah, & Osho, 2018).

Homabay county is rich in tourists' attractions. In spite of the various attractions in Homabay county, these sites continue to receive very little tourists as a result of limited publicity.

Homabay county is located in the country's western tourists circuit, which is rich in tourists' attractions, these are however not known to potential tourists (Nyamweno, Okotto, & Tonui, 2016). According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2015), the western tourists circuit had the lowest visitation rates of 3.39% to 4.77% from 2010- 2014 (Kimunya, 2016). This is a big difference compared to Nairobi tourists circuit which increased in visitations from 29.4% - 34.2%, and Coastal tourists circuit which had increase from 43.8% -50.9% during the same period. In the year 2019, in the category of the number of visitors to national parks and game reserves, Ruma national park, grouped with other parks and game reserves received the least number of visitors, of 61,400; this has been the trend for the past five years. This is against Nairobi national park which received the greatest number of visitors; 196, 700 visitors; and has been at the top for the past five years. The above figures confirm that in spite of the presence of tourist destinations in Homabay county, many still continue to flock certain destinations that have been traditionally visited over the years, such as the Coastal and Nairobi Circuits (Ndivo, Waudo, & Waswa, 2013); (Mayaka & Prasad, 2012); (De Sausmarez, 2013).

In one of the dailies dated July 2, 2017, there was an article entitled 'Homabay's tourism gems lie hidden due to lack of marketing.' It highlights the various tourists' destinations in the region. The development of this sector cannot, however be fully achieved without proper promotional skills. Tourism is a vital sector in any economy and is a driving force for economic development; it should therefore be aggressively promoted in order to increase the level of awareness among tourists and potential tourists. Homabay county prides itself in a variety of tourists' attractions including but not limited to a number of islands with white sand beaches, cultural and historical sites.

In the face of worldwide stiff competition, intangible nature of tourism services and need of pre-purchase information for potential tourists, promotional measures in tourism industry play key role in the performance and development of this industry. This can be done through promotion. Thus the need to study the communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study investigated if the discrepancy between the presence of tourists' destinations in Homabay county and their awareness is associated with the failure of tourism stakeholders in Homabay county to use appropriate communication approaches in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

Homabay county located in Western Kenya Tourism Circuit, is rich in tourists attraction, ranging from historical sites, L. Victoria, the largest fresh water lake, beaches, Ruma national park, among others, this makes it viable for tourism activities. In spite of their presence, these attractions are not known to potential tourists (Nyamweno et al., 2016). This lack of awareness has resulted to limited

publicity and denied the county government revenue. From literature perspective, several studies have been conducted on tourism promotion; however few of them have been on Homabay county. Little attention, in terms of tourism promotion, has also been given to the county by the media and bodies responsible for promotion of tourism.

According to the National Tourism Blueprint for 2030, the western tourists' circuit is considered one of the emerging tourism destinations in Kenya, (GOK, 2017a). However according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2015), the western tourists circuit had the lowest visitation rates of 3.39% to 4.77% from 2010-2014. Despite the presence of the tourists' destinations Homabay county continues to receive few visitors, many tourists still continue to flock certain destinations that have been traditionally visited over the years, such as the Coastal and Nairobi Circuits (Ndivo et al., 2013); (Mayaka & Prasad, 2012); (De Sausmarez, 2013). According to the ministry of tourism Homabay county, there has been a declining trend in the number of tourists visiting the county. In the years 2017, 2018 and 2019, the county received a total of 3,757, 3,612 and 3,200 tourists respectively. This trend influenced the need for this study.

Tourism is a vital sector in any economy and is a driving force for economic development. Development of tourism is enhanced through promotion (Jones, 2022). Tourism is one of the major income earners in Homabay county after fishing and Agriculture. Promotion of the tourists' destinations in the county will play a big role in the generation of revenue to the county. There is therefore need to create more awareness on the opportunities that exist in the tourism sector (Strategy, 2013). Tourism in the region cannot develop without proper promotional strategies laid

down to reach potential tourists; and also persuade and convince them to visit the destinations.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate the communication approaches used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

1.4.1 Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i)   To examine communication channels used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county

ii)   To assess communication messages for promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

iii) To determine the communication frequency for promotion of tourists' sites in Homabay county.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to address the following questions:

i)   What are the communication channels used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

ii)   Which are the communication messages used for promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

iii) What is the communication frequency for promotion of tourists' sites in Homabay county?

1.6 Scope of the Study

In terms of content, the study investigated the communication channels used for promotion of tourists' destinations by the various stakeholders in Homabay county. The study also investigated existing message that is used to promote tourism sites in Homabay. In this question the study was concerned with establishing if there is information communicated about tourism in Homabay county, the accessibility of this message, adequacy of the promotional message. The study also explored the frequency of communication of tourism promotional messages in Homabay county. In terms of geographical scope, the study covered selected tourists' sites in Homabay county. These include Simbi Nyaima, Nyamgondho shrine and Tom Mboya mausoleum. It was also carried out in Homabay county government offices, and at Ruma National Park, which is the only nationally recognized tourists' destination in the region. In terms of methodology, the study adopted a mixed research approach, case study design, with a sample size of 100 comprising of employees of Homabay county, custodians of the selected tourists' sites, employees of Ruma national park and tourists. Data was generated using semi structured interview guides, document analysis and questionnaires.

1.7 Justification of the Study

Tourism is a strategic sector for development and contributes to 5% of world economic activity and approximately 6%-7% of direct and indirect jobs internationally (Ekanayake & Long, 2012). However, it also presents challenges to policy-makers in terms of adequate conception and implementation of tourism strategies. It is one of the most important economic sectors and the source of foreign exchange earnings of some developing countries (Cole & Morgan, 2010).

Several studies have been done on communication strategies on tourism development. Researchers like Sahin & Sengün (2015) conducted a study on 'The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Marketing and Communication Strategy' in Denmark; Kumar (2014) on 'Role of Media in the Promotion of Tourism Industry in India; Jones (2022) researched on 'Marketing Communication Plan for the Cameroon Ministry of Tourism'. In Kenya Mesa (2013) conducted a study on 'The Effectiveness of Exhibition Events in Promoting the Tourism Industry in Nairobi City County.' Those studies are worthwhile but none has been done on communication approaches for promotion of tourism, specifically in Homabay county. Review of literature revealed that there is limited research on promotion of tourism in Homabay county. Related studies have been conducted on tourism in the western tourists' circuit. Many studies on tourism promotion in Kenya have mainly focused Coastal and Nairobi circuits.

Homabay county, located on the Western part of Kenya, is endowed with various tourists' attractions, however it continues to receive very low visitation rates between 2010- 2014, it received visitation rates of 3.39% to 4.77% (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2015). To improve this number, there is need to embark on aggressive promotion of various tourists' destinations in the region. Tourism can be promoted when there is effective communication with the potential and actual tourists (Mhilu & Lyimo, 2019). Tourism promotion is highly dependent on effective communication approaches, because travel decisions are made by tourists based on availability information about the tourists' sites among other factors such as attractions, accessibility, accommodation, activities and amenities. Communication approaches play a big role in shaping tourism into a vibrant industry

by promoting the attractive feature of the tourists' destinations; hence is crucial for the success of the tourism sector.

Kenya aims to remain globally competitive and meet the requirements of Vision 2030 as far as the tourism sector is concerned (Mayaka & Prasad, 2012). It is committed to tourism development, as clearly spelt out in the National Development Plans and Session Papers(Karoki, 2011). To improve the sector and achieve Vision 2030, the Government of Kenya together with all stakeholders should therefore invest in applying appropriate communication approaches for promotion of tourists' sites. This justifies the interest in the promotion of tourists' destinations in the country.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

Delimitations are features that narrow down the scope of a study and describe its boundaries in terms of context, content and methodology (Ahas, 2014). In terms of context, the study was confined to Homabay county, specifically it was carried out on the staff of Homabay county, ministry of tourism; in Ruma national park with the chief wardens and his deputy; also with custodians of selected potential touristic sites in Homabay county, that is Tom Mboya mausoleum, Simbi Nyaima and Nyamgondho shrine. Homabay county is rich in tourists' attractions making it exiting for domestic and international tourism. The participans were drawn from minister and director of tourism of Homabay county, chief wardens Ruma national park, custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites and tourists. This is because they are the key informants and offered valuable information in line with the area of study. In terms of content, the study was confined to the answers from the research questions. In terms of methodology, the study adopted mixed approach since the aim

of the study was to obtain different but complementary from quantitative and qualitative data, for a deeper understanding of the research problem. The research was conducted between July 2020 and July 2021 a period of one year. The researcher used a case study design and generated data through interviews and questionnaires from 100 participants. Furthermore, Homabay County Integrated Development Plan was analyzed.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to Homabay county leaving out all the other counties in the republic of Kenya. It could have been more illuminating to get insights from other counties. Still the study did not cover all tourists' sites in Homabay county, but only a few selected sites; this is also limiting since more information could have been acquired if all the tourist destinations in the region could have been covered. The sample size for the study was limited to 100 respondents, and this is limited in terms of breadth. However, to make up for this limitation, the researcher was rigorous and the data generated was in depth in nature to ensure the findings were significant. The approach adopted was mixed, this allows for comparison of qualitative results and quantitative findings, resulting in rich and comprehensive data. The design was instrumental case study. Data was generated through questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. Time limited the number of visits to the tourists' destinations as well as the number of interviews with the selected stakeholders and the time allocated to the respondents depended on their availability. The researcher however managed to generate the necessary data. In terms of content, the study was limited to the answers from the research questions. The limitation pointed above notwithstanding, the study is still valid and makes a worthy contribution in the field of communication.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This study is important to the various players in the tourism industry including the county government of Homabay, the National Government, local communities around tourists' destinations, tourists, researchers in the tourism industry and other tourism stakeholders. The findings of the study will be significant to the Ministry of tourism, sports and social services; department of tourism as it will gain insights on how to align strategies for tourism promotion in the county in order to attract more tourists and remain competitive. As a result of creation of awareness on the existence of these sites, there will be an increase in both local and international tourists, consequently, the Homabay county government will benefit through increase in revenue collected from licenses and permits issued.

The study is also significant to the national government as it will benefit from taxes paid by tourists and license fees charged on other tourism related businesses. The local community will also benefit from the findings of this study through creation of jobs and business opportunities for example through selling of wares to tourists. Investors and entrepreneurs in tourism related businesses such as those in hotel industries will also find this study useful since the presence of tourists will provide market for their investments.

The study is also of value to researchers as a basis for further research in the area of tourism. The students and academicians will use this study as a basis for further research. The study therefore makes a contribution to the literature and largely to the study of communication.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Communication Approaches: A communications plan that expresses the goals and methods

of an organization's outreach activities, including what an organization wishes to share with the public and whom the organization is trying to reach.

Tourism Promotion: Creation of awareness to the public about the existence and importance of a tourism product.

Tourism: The temporary movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work for recreational, leisure, or business purposes. It is also the business of attracting, accommodating, and entertaining tourists, as well as the business of operating tours.

Tourist: is any person travelling to a place within a country other than his usual place of residence for a period of not less than 24 hours or one night for a purpose other than the exercise of a remunerated activity in the place visited. The motives for such travel may be leisure (recreation, holidays, health, studies, religion, and sports): business, family, mission, meeting (UNWTO 1981).

Tourism Circuit – A route in which at least three major tourists' destinations are located such that none are in the same town or city and at the same time they are not separated by a long distance.

Tourism Stakeholders: A group or a people with an interest or concern in the tourism industry. They can affect or are affected by the happenings in the tourism sector**.**

Communication Channel: A medium or carrier of messages. It is simply the route or means of transporting a message.

Communication Frequency: the number of cycles through which the movement of messages is repeated.

Communication message: The content in the message that is sent to the target audience.

Tourism industry: These are sectors of the economy that provide products and services consumed by tourists.

Tourism Product: The experience offered to an individual who participates in tourism activity.

1.11 Summary

Tourism being one of Kenya's foreign exchange earners, it is important to increase its promotion, especially in areas that have potentially rich touristic destinations such as Homabay county. The need to promote tourism opportunities in Homabay is necessary given the fact that there currently exists only one nationally branded tourist site that is recognized, which is Ruma National park; most local and international tourists also tend to visit famous and traditional tourist destinations such as the coast region, unaware of the existence of the tourists' destinations in Homabay county. The development and promotion of these sites in the region will go a long way in attracting both local and international tourists.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

In this chapter, the theoretical framework and review of literature related to the research are discussed. It discusses how tourism can be promoted through various channels. Media Framing theory has also been reviewed. The chapter has also an in-depth analysis of communication of information about tourism, various channels of communication, and the frequency of communication for promotion of tourism in Homabay county; especially in relation to the potential tourists' sites in the county.

Tourism is defined as the as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business and other purpose not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (Coshall, Charlesworth, & Page, 2015).

Tourism is widely regarded as the world's largest industry and it plays a very significant role in national and regional economies. It is also multidimensional and the words Travel and Tourism are often used interchangeably in the definition of tourism. Tourism is also the processes, activities, and outcomes arising from the relationships and the interactions among tourists, tourism suppliers, host governments, host communities and surrounding environments that are involved in attracting and hosting visitors (Vodeb, 2012).

2.2 Promotion of Tourism

Pomering, Noble, & Johnson (2011) observe that promotion can be done by conveying information about a product or service by using the media. Promotion provides information, leading to the success of a marketing program (Gallarza, Gil-

Saura, & Holbrook, 2011). As such organizations use promotion in order to attempt to persuade, remind and give information about their brands or products to their customers. Tourism holds an important role as a major contribution for the economy of a country (Untari & Satria, 2019).Similarly, Bharadwaj, El Sawy, Pavlou, & Venkatraman (2013) observes that growth in the tourism sector is an indicator of economic development because tourism can generate significant foreign exchange earnings. Therefore the economic advancement of a country is dependent on, among other factors, effective promotion of tourism.

According to Leung, Law, Van Hoof, & Buhalis (2013) media provides a gateway to and connection with various individuals including development partners and prospective tourists; it can be used for promotion can be through crisis centres, media centres and information services. Therefore the media plays a very important role in linking up potential tourists to other tourism stakeholders such as the national as well as county governments. Promotion of tourism can be done when there is effective communication with potential or actual tourists (J. Park, 2015). For example the county governments' effective communication of its promotional messages to potential tourists will result in increased visitation rates.

According to Untari & Satria (2019) a communication strategy includes all elements of communication such as the channels, the message, the communicators, the target audience and the influences that are put in place in order to ensure maximum achievement of the communication goals. As such the choice of strategies of communication laid out by various tourism stakeholders is very crucial and needs proper planning and strategy selection, consequently, selection of a wrong strategy leads to fatal results and lack of tourists.

Bourne (2016) posits that communication strategy is what determines the success or failure of communication activities. For the tourism industry to succeed there should be effective communication about tourism products to its consumers. One of the factors that can provide motivation and determine the success of a marketing program is promotion (Font & McCabe, 2017). Therefore, for effective promotion of tourism, governments and other tourism stakeholders should apply effective communication strategies; this will result in flourishing of tourism activities.

Communication requires a reciprocal relationship between the delivery of messages and recipients namely communicators and communicants (Gallarza et al., 2011). Therefore, promoters of tourism should provide avenues through which they can reach the potential tourists and also receive feedback from them. Untari & Satria (2019) posits that promotion in tourism aims at informing potential consumers of tourism products of existence of such products and services. The major promotion channels used in the tourism sector are direct marketing, advertising, personal selling, public relations, sales promotion, event marketing, and internet marketing (Untari & Satria, 2019)

In the face of stiff competition among the various touristic destinations around Lake Victoria, effective promotional measures are essential for the development of the potential touristic sites. It is from this important ground that this research is geared towards communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county. The tourism sector in Homabay county can only grow if the tourists' sites are promoted and people are made aware of the value of these sites, this call for advertising, especially through the media, since it reaches a wider audience both locally and internationally. Insufficient promotion of the touristic sites constitutes one of the major reasons for not developing the tourism industry in the county; this is because of the need for the potential tourists to know about the attractions,

services, facilities, their destinations as well as accessibility. This can be done through various promotional measures, effective communication of the potential touristic sites which can go a long way in promoting the sites. Besides increased competition among various tourist destinations and the expansion of the tourism business, there is need to develop proper promotional approaches in order to reap the benefits of these potential touristic sites in Homabay county.

Development of close relationship with the various stakeholders ensures that the county can effectively disseminate the key touristic information and achieve its objectives. For this purpose, the information currently communicated about tourism was investigated, the channels through which they are communicated and the frequency of communication for promotion of tourists' destinations in the county was also be considered.

2.3 Channels of Promotion of Tourism

For promotion of tourism to be effective, appropriate channels should be employed; these include both published and visual media. Wilson & Riley (2012) distinguish between published and visual media. Published media include the newspapers, magazines, trade and professional press and the Internet. Visual media on the other hand includes television (terrestrial and digital) radio cinema, billboards, transport and direct mailing. Photographs is one way through which advertisement can be done, though before doing this one needs to carry out research to determine the potential customers. In this regard, the promotion of tourism requires careful selection of both published and visual media by destination marketers. Blaga (2013) posits that the manner in which tourism organization develops a message, chooses the target audience and selects the media through which the message is passed to the

desired audience determines how effective the communication system is. Therefore, during the promotion of tourism the message should be apropriately developed and the channels of communication carefully selectedby the tourism promoters in order to reach the potential tourists.

With the ever-increasing global growth in tourism opportunities, promotions in the tourism industry are endless. However not many destinations achieve success. One of the major parts of the problem is inadequate promotion of the touristic sites. According to Debski (2013) the message is sent via certain communication medium such as an advertisement on television, and it should be persuasive to the customer, evoking the desire to visit the destination. The tools in the promotion mix are direct marketing, advertising, public relations and publicity, online advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling (Debasish & Muralidhar, 2013).

It is necessary to activate the role of the marketing mix in enhancing the tourist attractions (Armstrong, Adam, Denize, & Kotler, 2014). Promotional activities are also categorized as sales promotion, advertising, personal selling, and public relations (M.-C. Neacsu, Negut, & Vlasceanu, 2014). Consequently, tourism promoters such as the national and county governments employ the use of various components of the promotional mix, together with other promotional techniques, in order to achieve the desired visitation rates.

There is need to provide more attention for the current tourists' attractions, more effort also need to be exerted in order to achieve sustainable tourism development and enchant the potential tourists' attractions (Kantarci, Başaran, & Özyurt, 2017). New methods need to be found for promotion of tourism in the potential tourists' attractions in order to attract the tourists and make them benefit from the services provided in those places.

According to Aldebi & Aljboory (2018) promotion of tourism involves use of appropriate distribution channels, including all the direct and indirect channels which facilitate the arrival of tourists to the tourists' attractions. They state that of such channels are the travel and tourism agencies, tourist guides, and road, air and maritime transport companies, not leaving out tourism websites, internet, social networking sites, like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp among others. Tourism stakeholders who are responsible for its promotion such as the national and county governments should employ the use of appropriate distribution channels for towards tourism promotion.

Studies by Aldebi & Aljboory (2018) concluded that in order for the promotion of tourism to be effective, there are certain elements that must be available in it. These are; a clear vision on the targeted group of people, adherence to ethics and avoiding exaggeration during advertisements, provisions of the relevant tourists' services by the relevant service providers among others. The common elements for promotional mix therefore are advertising, public relations, sales promotion and personal selling.

2.3.1 Advertising

Advertising is defined as any paid form of non- personal presentation of goods, services, or ideas by an identified sponsor. Traditional media such as radio, magazines, television, newspapers, direct mail, books, transit cards (advertisements on taxes and buses), and billboards were commonly used to transmit messages to consumers. According to Avraham & Ketter (2016) television is the most powerful advertising medium and it reaches a broad spectrum of present and prospective customers Advertising which is one of the major marketing communication channels in the field of tourism is determined by the features of the tourist product and the

advertising itself. Debasish & Muralidhar (2013) posit that tourism is a service industry and unlike the traditional goods industries, needs development of informative advertisements that have a great ability to persuade existing and potential tourists to make a purchase. Advertising is therefore used by destination marketers to persuade potential tourists to purchase a product or service or visit a location.

Promotion of tourism requires the development of advertisements that are not only informative, but are also able to persuade the existing and potential tourists to make a purchase (Font & McCabe, 2017). It is therefore not just enough to have various tourism services, effective advertisement is crucial for the success of tourism activities. Avraham & Ketter (2016) posits that the greatest benefit of advertising lies in its ability to reach a larger number of customers at a given time period. Some of the strategies for advertisements that can be employed in the tourism industry electronic and print media such as television, billboards the internet, travel guides and brochures. Engaging tourists trough these platforms can increase visitation rates in tourists destinations. This can be engaged through incorporation and involvement of the target publics, fostering and strengthening customer relationships and brand loyalty as a result (Avraham & Ketter, 2016).

2.3.2 Public Relations

Public relations is used in tourism to influence that manner in which customers think about tourism products. Avraham & Ketter (2016) observes that most tourism businesses spend half the funds put aside for advertisements for on public relations The role of the public relations department is to create a long term relationship and a favorable image of an organization in the minds of its consumers and stakeholders

(Bujdosó & Dávid, 2013). The role of public relations is therefore very important in most tourism businesses as it can be used to establish a favorable image of the organization to potential tourists as well as creation of long term relationship with them.

Loda (2014) defines public relations is "the deliberate planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and the public". In tourism, public relations can be achieved through an organization employing a variety of programs that are intended to promote and protect the image of the organization, for example through exhibitions product or destination literature, or the issue of articles about the organization or its products (Austin & Pinkleton, 2015). As such tourism stakeholders that are responsible for marketing a destination should employ use of various public relations strategies in order to influence potential tourists to establish and maintain a good relationship with tourists.

In the tourism industry, the use of public relations has greatly increased and most tourism businesses spend half the money allocated to advertisement purposes on public relations (Shamsan & Otieno, 2015). This is because public relations is a powerful tool and can sometimes have more influence on a potential client than advertising (Hasbullah, Hatta, & Arifin, 2018). Therefore the role of public relations in maintaining consumer base in tourism cannot be ignored.

2.3.3 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion are "those marketing activities that provide extra value or incentives to the sales force, distributors, or the ultimate consumer and can stimulate short-term sales" (Esu & Ebitu, 2010). In tourism it can be defined as a set of

association techniques which offer customers an enhanced incentive to buy or remain loyal to a particular organization or brand (Bujdosó & Dávid, 2013). Sales promotion can therefore be used by destination marketers to create interests in particular tourism sites. It also creates awareness on existence of a tourists' destination.

Shamout (2016) observes that sales promotion involves a broad range of activities whose aim is to influence the purchasing power of customers by increasing the initial product or service for a given period of time. As a result, tourists are exposed to tourism products, for example they are made aware of the presence of certain tourists destinations. In tourism, promotions of sales include travel intermediaries and company personnel who sell products and services to the customers (Shamout, 2016). Tourism stakeholders responsible for promotion of various destinations should provide promotional information that will stimulate demand by convincing tourists to visit touristic destinations.

2.3.4 Direct Sales

Direct marketing involves companies reaching consumers directly as opposed to other communication channels (Shamout, 2016). It includes a personal presentation, direct mail marketing, telephone marketing, and internet marketing. Destination marketers such as the relevant government bodies can take advantage of this approach to reach out directly to tourists. Given the fact that direct sales involves an interpersonal influence and exchange of information, it provides tourist a rare opportunity for the tourists to get feedback from promoters of tourism.

It is necessary to send out promotional materials that evoke in tourists the desire to visit destinations. (Hasbullah et al., 2018) observes that direct sales plays a critical

role in stimulating first purchases, increasing sales volumes, and developing lasting customer relationships. Undoubtedly, before a tourist thinks of visiting a tourist destination, the desire to do so must be stimulated, through personal selling, destination marketers such as governments as well as non-governmental organizations can reach out directly to potential tourists through direct sales.

(Vasilev, 2018) posits that companies use direct marketing to reach individual consumers directly as opposed to other communication channels. Therefore customers who are not easily reached through other promotional methods can be reached. This allows for tourism promoter to determine tourists' needs allowing for provision of those needs, resulting in repeat visits.

2.3.5 Internet Marketing

Internet marketing as an umbrella term which encompass the common used internet marketing methods like e-mail marketing, web advertising, on line branding, social media, use of search engines and newsletters for marketing hospitality services; and it is widely used as information exchange system in the digital age (Mwarania, 2012). The internet is therefore a valuable tool that can be used to create tourism awareness as it helps to create online presence. The choice of internet marketing method chosen by various tourism promoters determines whether the promotion bears fruit or not. Unlike traditional forms of promotion, internet marketing has a longer life span and is therefore suitable for long-term sustainability of a project.

Wang, Yu, & Wei (2012) observes that social media communication has an impact on the consumer buyer behavior in that it has a direct impact by conformity with peers online and an indirect effect by reinforcing product involvement. Electronic Word -of-Mouth (eWOM) reaches a larger amount of people across that world; and

it might be more powerful in terms of a range of influence than traditional word-of-mouth due to its reach, ease of use, speed, and anonymity (Bronner & De Hoog, 2011), as cited in (Lange-Faria & Elliot, 2012). This approach is therefore able to reach a large number of tourists with speed. Tölkes (2018) also states that eWOM has a characteristic of global reach, travels with speed and is easy to use. Therefore promotion of tourism can be done by the consumers of tourism products such as tourists. Destination promoters and managers of various tourism sites should therefore ensure that visiting tourists nice experiences as they can spread word which can either attract or repel potential tourists. Satisfied customers will act as ambassadors who will carry the message about a destination to their families and friends.

Tripathi (2017) observes that the internet has revolutionized the state of marketing and promotion; and it can be used by a business to create a competitive advantage by boosting its market performance. Online marketing has become popular and many organizations promote their products and services over the internet (Hänninen & Karjaluoto, 2017). The role of the internet can therefore not be ignored while planning for tourism promotion. Search engines such as Google are used by tourist to find trusted information about tourists' destinations as observed by Navío-Marco, Ruiz-Gómez, & Sevilla-Sevilla, (2018) who state that an increasing number of people are making use of online search engines, to search for information that forms the basis of their purchase decision-making.

The internet has an impact on marketing tourism (S. Park & Nicolau, 2015); it also affects the tourists in accessing information about a product and influences a potential tourist's decisions in buying a product or service Akhmetshin et al., (2018).

2.3.6 Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is also referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM) communication. It is one of the informal types of communication that can be used for the promotion of tourism. It refers to "communication undertaken voluntarily between people, concerning the quality or characteristics of products, services and organizations" (Fill, 2009). When tourists are satisfied with the services they receive, they become loyal to the brand and spread this information by word of mouth to their families and friends who spread it to their families and friends and so on.

Lange-Faria & Elliot, (2012) define interpersonal communication as "oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, regarding a brand, product or service". Interpersonal communication therefore takes place among people who have no intention of benefitting commercially. Tourism stakeholders such as custodians of various tourists' sites and facilities should ensure that they treat tourists who visit well as this will lead to the spread of information by word of mouth from satisfied customers. Promotion by the WOM (word of mouth) is very effective as customers tend to trust information delivered in this manner. Marketers can reap big if they have the strongest word-of-mouth that generates their trust and liking for a tourism service (Todorova, 2015).

Promotion Mix Elements

Advertising	Public relations	Sales promotion	Direct sales
Commercials-printed, radio/tv broadcasted, Catalogues, magazines, Brochures, flyers,Posters, tourist maps and guides banners, internet sites, audio-video materials (CD, DVD, stick USB, Movies)	Conferences, press release, articles, shows, speeches, Seminaries Year books, sponsorships Slogans, special events, tours, lobby	Games, challenges, gifts, lotteries, various manifestations, trips, Demonstrations, samples, coupons, Loyalty cards, bundles, Free offers, discounts	Commercial presentations, business meetings, incentives, trade fairs and exhibitions, Direct marketing

Fig 2.1 Promotion Mix Elements

Source:(M. N. Neacsu, 2014)

Promotion is one of the factors that determine how successful a marketing program is. In tourism, these sites can be attractive, but if the potential tourists have never heard of it and are not sure they will have a good experience there, they will never visit the destination. Promotion provides information (Bronner & de Hoog, 2014) and the sites and motivation to visit them (Amin & Priansah, 2019).

2.4 Communication Message for Promotion of Tourism

The tourism industry relies heavily on effective marketing communication as the presence of tourist site alone is not enough. Icoz, Kutuk, & Icoz (2018) observe that the success of marketing communication depends on the choice of messages that are chosen to reach out to the target market; these messages should trigger the decision to buy a service. Promotion in tourism helps to draw the attention of the potential

tourists, modify the behavior of the existing buyers and influence them to visit a destination Tang, Choi, Morrison, & Lehto (2009). According to Böhme, Christin, Edelman, & Moore (2015) the message is everything transmitted by someone in the form of symbols perceived and accepted by the public in a series of meanings. Therefore for promotion of tourism to be successful, the message conveyed to the audience should be constructed accordingly. No matter how good tourists destinations are, the potential tourists will not understand the message concept if the structure of language arrangement is not proper.

Gallarza et al., (2011) observes that many marketers get confused when it comes to choosing the approach to be applied when it comes to tourism promotion. Some of the factors that influence visits by tourists include promotion, tourism attribute, consumer image, needs and lifestyle. The information about a specific destination which is mostly demanded by tourists is considered as an important means of promotion for tourism industry (Hasan, 2015). Destination marketers should therefore take time to construct messages that can persuade and convince potential tourists to visit a tourists' destination. The purpose of promotion is to inform, persuade and remind clients of the existence of a product (Böhme, Christin, Edelman, & Moore 2015).

Tourists are still very affected by and interested in the materials obtained from conventional media, especially television (Hasan, 2015). Therefore, the media can be used to relay tourism promotional materials. Promotion contains marketing activities that spread information, persuade, and remind the potential clients to willingly accept, buy and be loyal to the offered products (Sahin & Sengün, 2015). Tourists can therefore be persuaded to visit attraction points willingly. This can be

done by placing relevant information to remind potential tourist about tourists' sites and also influence them to visit those destinations.

According to Nwankou Doublex (2012), a tourists' destination is said to be successfully managed if the demands of tourists' are supplied. For tourism promotion to be effective, certain elements must be available it, one of the elements is ease of access to the information that is required, this information must be accurate, documented, updated, and useful for tourists. The promotional message must also be constructed in such a way that it shows creativity and innovation in the wording. The delivery of the message to the targeted population must also be done with a lot of creativity and innovation (Aldebi & Aljboory, 2018).

In order to modify a customer's behaviour, there are three types of promotion that needs to be done, first is informative promotion, which they state that are the most effective at the earlier buying process stages like attention and comprehension. Secondly, there is persuasive promotion, which effective at the middle level buying process stages, these help with influencing attitude, attention and purchase. Lastly, there is a reminder promotion, which comes after the usage of the service. Promotion therefore plays a very big role in destination advertising and can help to modify the behaviour of tourists by ensuring repeat visitors (Aldebi & Aljboory, 2018).

Persuasiveness of the communication is what determines the success of a promotional message conveyed to the audience (Klassen, Creswell, Plano Clark, Smith, & Meissner, 2012). The message is everything transmitted by someone in the form of symbols perceived and accepted by the public in a series of meanings (Srihadi, Sukandar, & Soehadi, 2016). Therefore, an idea may be good, but unless it is organized using the correct language structure, the audience will not understand

the concept. Messages for promotion of tourists' should therefore be constructed in such a way that the tourists understand it.

2.5 Frequency of Communication for Promotion of Tourism

The frequency of communication of a message is very important, the more frequent the message is, the more convinced a potential tourist can be, resulting in visit to tourists' destinations. Integrated tourism is defined as that which is explicitly linked to the localities in which it takes place and, in practical terms, has clear connections with local resources, activities, products, production and service industries, and a participatory local community (Brata, Husani, & Ali, 2017).

Promotion is one of the factors that determine the success of a marketing program as it provides motivation (Wijayanti, Damanik, & Fandeli, 2017) and information (Eastman, Smalley, & Warren, 2019). Therefore, the management of tourists should conduct promotion of these destinations frequently and periodically. This will result in increase in awareness on the existence of these sites resulting in increase in tourists' arrivals. Mastika & Nimran (2020) observes the appearance and skills of tourism promoters has a great impact on the overall satisfaction of the tourists. In essence, how frequent a tourism promotion is done is not enough for the success of a promotional activity, tourism promoters should ensure that they offer first class service that will result in having satisfied clients.

The competitiveness of a tourists' site has in the recent past become a very important issue among tourism managers and planners Gunawijaya, Gulfira, & Ansori (2019). This therefore means that destination managers need to organize promotional activities frequently in order to reach as many potential tourists as possible. This can be done by providing testimonials from visitors who have toured

attraction sites and also showcasing aspects of tourists' destinations through display of photographs (Font & McCabe, 2017).

The role of promotion in development of tourism cannot be overlooked as it involves efforts to communicate the potential of tourism destinations to potential clients. Marketing communication is strategic alternative solution in promoting a business to consumers in winning a very tight competition (Velázquez, Saura, & Molina, 2011). Tourism managers and destination marketers should therefore organize promotional activities periodically and frequently. They should provide adequate information about the appealing attractions in order to successfully place the sites top in the minds of the consumers.

2.6 Subdivisions in the Tourism Industry

There are various types of tourism structures as follows; ethnic tourism which includes travelling for the purpose of observing culture observing the cultural expressions and life-styles of truly exotic people, like visiting native homes, attending dances and ceremonies and possibly participating in religious rituals; Cultural Tourism: which involves having experience and in some cases participates in a lifestyle that is vanishing, and which lies within human memory, for example costume festivals, folk performances, arts and crafts among others; Historical Tourism which involves travelling to places that emphasize past glories, like museums and cathedral circuits; Environmental Tourism, normally geographical in nature and involves traveling for the purpose of "getting back to nature".

Tourists' attractions include but are not limited to popular sites, such as beaches and cultural sites; hospitality sector which include provision of accommodation, food and beverages to the tourists, transport sector which focus on transportation of

tourists in and around tourists' destinations; and meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector which focuses on events management, such as exhibitions (Moutinho, Ballantyne, & Rate, 2011). Similarly it includes destinations such as waterfalls, rock art, and national parks among other natural wonders; Recreational Tourism including sports, sun bathing and other social contacts in relaxed environment and Business Tourism which centres on participation in conventions, meetings, seminars and form of travel (Tunde, 2012).

The products of tourism are a range of goods and services, which are an 'operating sector' of the tourism industry; and are selected for use by tourists during their tour. This includes the sectors that represent what is considered by the general public as the concept of 'tourism' (Mammadov, 2012).
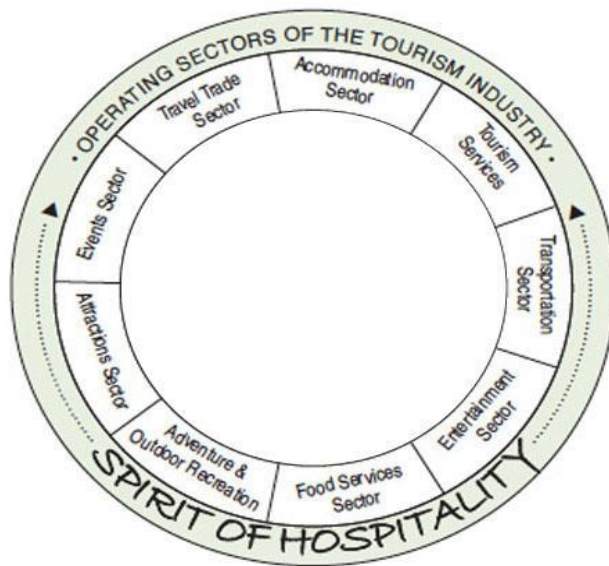
Fig. 2.2 Tourism Operations Sector

Source: Goeldner &Ritchie, 2012.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Media Framing Theory. This concept was first posited by Gregory Bateson in 1972. This theory suggests that the manner in which a message is framed, or presented to the audience can influence the choices they make about how to process that information. The manner in which a message is constructed can persuade readers to behave in a certain way. This theory provides insight into how to frame a message in order to effectively promote tourism. According to this theory, how an idea is presented (called 'the frame') affects the decisions that people make about how to process that information. Framing can be defined as a process in which some aspects of reality are selected, and given greater emphasis or importance so that the problem is defined, its causes diagnosed, moral judgments are suggested and appropriate solutions and actions are proposed (Entman, 1993). The manner in which promotion of tourism is planned and done will determine the response of tourists and potential tourists on whether to visit or not visit tourists' destinations. Therefore, the content or communication message if well stated can lead to promotion of tourism. Message framing refers to how information is conceptualized by people and how meaning is attached to that information (Chong & Druckman, 2007). The concept of framing refers to the manner in which a message is constructed and organized as well as the immediate effect that the message has on the receiver (Shah, McLeod, Gotlieb, & Lee, 2009).

Framing of a message includes the channels though which it is done. If the right channel is used then the message will reach the intended targets, in this case tourists and this will influence them tour proposed sites. The way in which a message is framed affects the way it is interpreted by the receiver or how persuasive it is to the receiver, as framing operates through the mechanism of activating a person's

knowledge structure, which they use for interpretation of information (Entman, 2002) ; (Scheufele, 2000).

Message framing is done by using that which is regarded as important by the receiver, and therefore when the information is called out, its importance is increased (Entman, 1993). It is a process in which a message sender intends to influence an (uncoerced) message receiver's evaluative judgments regarding a particular object. Intentional messages are persuasive because they can influence a person's attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behavior (Moyer-Gusé, Tchernev, & Walther-Martin, 2019). The message should therefore be persuasive enough to encourage and convince the potential tourists to visit tourists' destinations (Sniderman & Theriault, 2018).

This study was guided by the concept of persuasion within message framing literature. Persuasive communication is more comprehensive than advertising, which is one way. This type of communication includes verbal, non-verbal, and imagery components (Rodriguez, Martinez-Roget, & Pawlowska, 2013). Communication for tourism promotion includes use of various channels such as television, internet, billboards, that portray messages that are persuasive. In persuasive communication the communicators aim at convincing the audience through message transmission (Hanifah, Wahyudi, & Nurbaeti, 2016). In order to succeed in communication, communicators need to modify their approach in order to suit their audience (Rodriguez et al., 2013). Persuasion can affect a person's mental state through steps that seek to change attitudes, leading to behavior change (Gorlevskaya, 2016). In tourism promotion, attitudes of tourists can be modified by persuading them to visit tourists' destinations. Persuasion differs from getting adherence in that the latter

focuses on changing behavior without changing attitudes (Warren, Becken, & Coghlan, 2017).

This concept fits my study as there is need to persuade existing and potential tourists to visit touristic and potential tourists' sites in the county. How frequent this message is communicated is also very important, the more frequent the message, the more convinced a potential tourist can be, resulting in visit to potential tourists' destinations. The process of choosing an effective communication channels for persuasion must be adjusted to the content's characteristics and the purpose of the message content to be conveyed to the audience. For tourism promotion to succeed there must be persuasiveness of the communication context (Bolatito, 2012).

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The variables applied in the study are independent, intervening and dependent variables. These variables enabled the researcher in the analysis and interpretation of the data. The independent variable predicts an outcome on the dependent variable; the dependent variable depends on the independent variable and is the centre of study; the intervening variable influences how the independent and the dependent variables relate. In this study, the independent variable is the approaches of communication used for improved promotion of tourism, the dependent variable is the promotion of tourism, and the intervening variable is the government policy on tourism.

Communication Approaches are the main elements for tourism promotion. They influence prospective tourists to choose to visit a tourists' destination. They include the channels used, like advertising, sales promotion; direct marketing, public relations among others. The promotional message also plays a major role in the

convincing potential tourists to visit a destination, for example how convincing the message is. Another element is the frequency of relaying the promotional messages. These factors affect the destination awareness, the volume of tourist arrivals and the volume of repeat visits and increase in revenue. In this study the key essential concepts that influence promotion of tourism are channels of communication, promotional messages and frequency of communicating promotional message. With proper channels of communication, adequate and convincing promotional message that are frequently relayed, promotion of tourism can be effectively done, this in turn results in reception of more tourists.

Independent Variables

Communication Approaches

Dependent Variable

Communication channels
- Advertisement
- Internet marketing
- Direct marketing
- Personal selling

Promotional Message
- Ease of access of information
- Adequacy of the message
- How convincing the

Frequency of Communication
- Frequent promotion
- Consistency in promotion

Promotion of Tourism
- Destination awareness
- Increase in tourists' arrivals
- Increase in repeat visitors
- Increase in revenue

Fig 2.3 Conceptual framework

Source: Researcher (2021)

Promotion of tourism involves use of appropriate distribution channels, including all the direct and indirect channels which facilitate the arrival of tourists to the tourists' attractions. Some of the channels of communication include advertisement, internet marketing, direct marketing and personal selling (Aldebi & Aljboory, 2018). Promotion plays a very big role in destination advertising and can help to modify the behaviour of tourists by ensuring repeat visitors (Tang et al., 2009). This message needs to be easily accessible, adequate and convincing. The frequency of communication of a message is very important, the more frequent the message, the more convinced a potential tourist can be, resulting in visit to tourists' destinations. The communication therefore needs to be frequent and consistent. The government policy on tourism can also play a role in improving tourism activities in the county. The government could reduce the cost of domestic tourism in order to encourage locals to visit various tourists' destinations, the government could also increase the number of tourists' destinations in each sub county in the county.

2.9 Knowledge Gap

Warren et al.(2017) conducted a study on the effectiveness of exhibition events in promoting the tourism industry in Nairobi City County, Kenya. During the study, cross-sectional descriptive design was used. A search was conducted on 384 participants of exhibition events. The study took place at KICC, the Sarit Expo Centre, and Radisson Blu Hotel in Nairobi County. The findings of the study revealed that exhibition events are effective in creation of additional tourism demand and increase in visitation rates. Further these events can create a country's tourism brand awareness and also act as means to advertising a country's tourism offering. While the study was conducted in Nairobi county, the current study was conducted in Homabay county. The second gap filled by the current study is that it

investigated communication approached used for tourism promotion and not only use exhibition as a means of tourism promotion.

Zhang, (2015) conducted a study on 'The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Marketing and Communication Strategy' in Denmark. The study was based on a survey implemented on the students of Atilim University. The technique of data collection was survey analysis. 624 forms were issued to students in 6 faculties. The results of the study show that social media has influences in tourism sector both in positive and negative

ways, since the decision of young people to visit a tourists' destination is greatly affected by comments and personal experiences of other users on social media. One of the gaps filled by the current study is contextual, while the study was conducted in Denmark; the current study was conducted in Kenya, in Homabay county. The second gap is that the current study is investigating the communication approaches for tourism promotion.

A study was also conducted on tourism promotion using online and offline marketing strategies by hotels in Panchkula, Haryana, India by (Warren et al., 2017). The study focused on the hotel industry in Panchkula (Haryana, India). Qualitative research via conversations was carried out to establish if the hotels are more inclined towards on nine marketing strategies or offline marketing amongst tourism businesses. This study is different from the current study which was conducted in strategies. It was established from the study that the scope of online marketing in India is immense although there are certain parts of the country wherein the traditional form of marketing is more favored Kenya with focus on approaches of communication for promotion of tourism.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

Research methodology refers to the way in which data was collected during a study (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020). This chapter focuses on the research methodology that was used in the study. It discusses the rationale of the research methodology employed, which is directed by the objectives of the study.

3.2 Research Approach

The approach used in the study is mixed. Mixed approach involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Mixed approach is chosen to help understand and compare quantitative results and qualitative findings; it also results into rich and comprehensive data. Qualitative research seeks to understand human and social problems by seeking a detailed view of the respondents at the site where the participants experience the issue or problem under study (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). Qualitative data collection was used in order explains better, in details, the views of the stakeholders, like the Homabay county government officials and the representatives from the communities surrounding these sites, on the efforts they have put towards the promotion of tourism in the county and how this can be improved as well as how the touristic sites can be promoted. This approach is flexible and seeks to generate and analyze holistic data using sufficiently rigorous, trustworthy and ethical methods and techniques (JO Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Consequently, the researcher sought the views of the various tourism stakeholders on the issue of communication approaches for tourism promotion in Homabay county. Qualitative researchers tend to generate data in the field at the site where the participants experience the issue or problem under study; leading to up-close

information which is gathered by actually talking directly to the participants within their contexts (Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). The researcher therefore went to Homabay county government offices, to KWS offices at Ruma national park and to the selected tourist destinations in Homabay county in order to acquire up close information on communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

Quantitative approach on the other hand is an inquiry variable, measured in numbers, and analyzed following statistical procedures, in order to determine the truthfulness of the predictive generalizations of the theory (Kothari, 2008). The study acquired quantitative data from tourists visiting sites in Homabay county in order to establish the channels through which they learned about the tourists' destinations in Homabay, how adequate the promotional message was and the frequency of the promotional message. Mixed approach was chosen since it allows for comparison, validation and confirmation quantitative results with qualitative results.

Triangulation Design: Convergence Model was used in the study. This design is used to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem (Morse, 1991). This design brought together the different strengths and non-overlapping differences of quantitative methods such as large sample size, trends and generalizations; with those of qualitative methods such as small sample, details and in-depth information (Patton, 1990). The researcher collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and separately and then converged the different results by comparing and contrasting them during the interpretation**.** The convergent model has been used in order to end up with valid and well substantiated conclusion about a single phenomenon.

QUAN Data collection → QUAN Data analysis → QUAN results

QUAL Data collection → QUAL Data analysis → QUAL results

Compare and contrast → Interpretation QUAN + QUAL
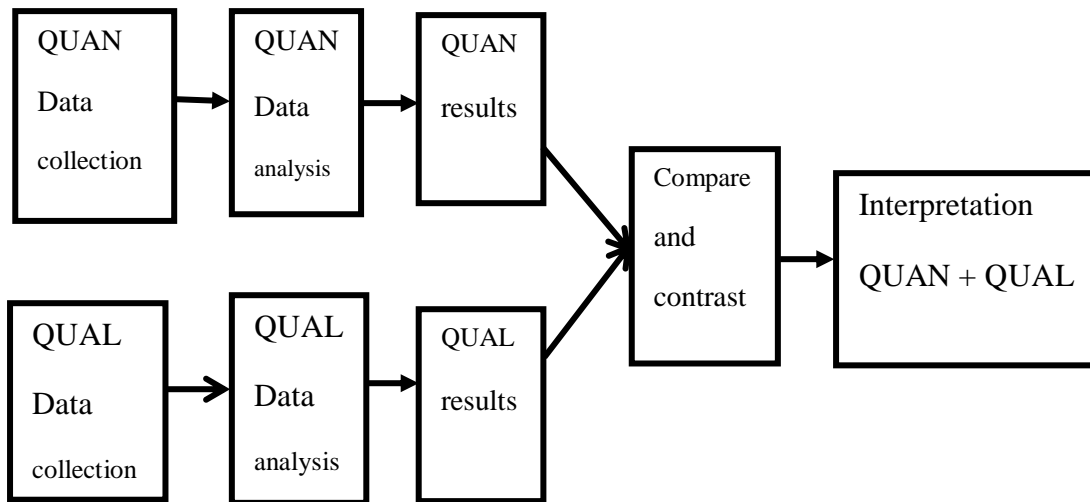
Fig. 3.1 Triangulation Design: Convergence Model

      Source: Researcher (2021)

3.3 Research Design

The study was a case study which is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence (Patton, 1990). Case study design was used since focused on in depth study of communication approaches for tourism promotion in Homabay county. This investigation took place within real life context. There are three types of case study namely intrinsic, instrumental and multiple case studies (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007); (Yin, 2009). Specifically, instrumental case study was adopted for the study; the case in instrumental case study plays a supportive role and facilitates our understanding of something else (Stake, 2013). Homabay county was used as an instrument to studying communication approaches for promotion of tourism. The county therefore plays a supportive role to the understanding of communication about tourism. My

focus was on: The communication channels used in the promotion of tourism, the existing promotional message about tourism and the frequency of communication for promotion of tourism by the stakeholders in Homabay county. Case study design was deemed appropriate for this study since it stresses on in depth information on communication approaches for tourism promotion, thereby enabling one to conduct an intensive study.

3.4 Study Area

The study was carried out in Homabay county in Nyanza region on the Western part of Kenya, along Lake Victoria, the world's largest fresh water lake. Bordering Homabay county to the North are Kisumu and Siaya counties, to the East are Kisii and Nyamira counties and Migori county boarders it to the South. Homabay county is one of the 47 counties in Kenya and it covers an area of 4,267.1 Km2 inclusive of the water. According to the 2019 National Census in Kenya, the county has a population of 1,131,950. The county's main activity is fishing and Agriculture. Tourism is also a major income earner; however, its full potential has not been harnessed. There exist a number of potential tourists' destinations with rich historical and cultural backgrounds as well as beautiful scenery and a number of beach resorts in the county. If developed these could attract both local and international visitors.

Specifically, the study was carried out in Homabay county government offices, at Ruma national park, and around the communities where there are selected potential touristic sites - (Simbi Nyaima in Kendubay, Nyamgondho shrine in Nyandiwa area in Gwassi, and at Tom Mboya mausoleum in Mbita). The researcher chose Homabay county because due to the presence of unique features which can be very rich in attracting tourists.
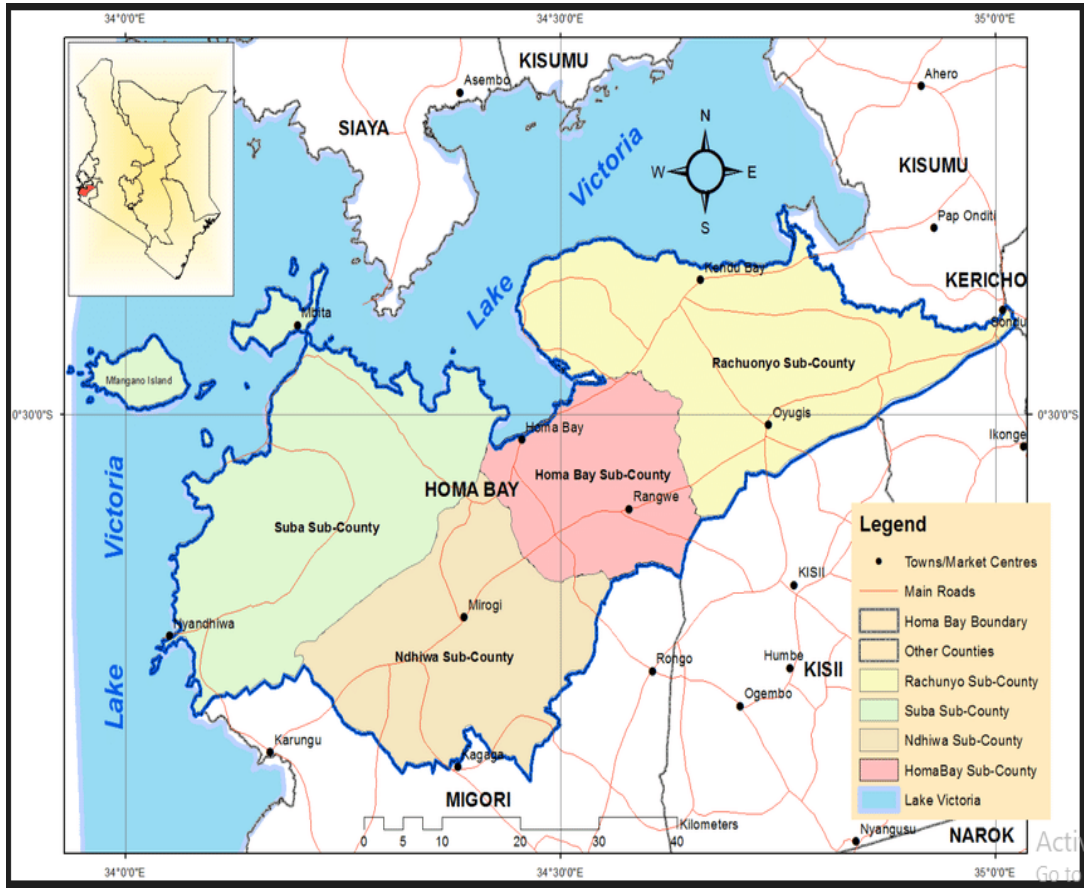
Fig 3.2 Map of Homabay county

3.5 Target Population

Research population as an aggregate of all cases that can conform to some designated set of specifications and the entire set of relevant units of analysis or data (Kothari, 2008). A population is the whole group of topics, people, or events of interest to the researcher from which the researcher wishes to investigate (Denscombe, 2017). The study population comprised minister of tourism and director of tourism in the ministry of tourism of Homabay county, custodians of the selected potential tourists' destinations, chief warden and his assistant at Ruma national park who deal with tourism promotion and all tourists visiting these sites during the months of July and August, 2021; this is the peak season for tourism at

Ruma national park. This population consists of tourism stakeholders who provided information that is relevant for answering the research questions.

Table 3.1 *Target Population*

Target Group	Target Population
Ministry of tourism of Homabay county	2
Custodians of the selected sites	3
Ruma national park employees	2
Tourists	1426
Total	**1433**

3.6 Sample Size

A sample can be defined as a subset of the research population, the process of sampling involves selecting a sub-set of the population and studying it in order to obtain information regarding a phenomenon (Denscombe, 2017). The population can be defined as the full set of possible data sources while sample is selecting specific data sources from that population; studying the whole population has more advantage and produces more reliable data than a sample (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). However, only three tourists' sites were selected since the region is expansive and the sites spread far apart. A sample size is the number of units that will be selected into the research study (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). The study targeted a total of 1433 respondents derived from the four groups of participants as follows: 2 respondents from the Homabay county government; they comprised of the minister for sports, culture, tourism and social services Homabay county and the director of tourism in the ministry. Other respondents were 3 custodians, one from each of the potential tourists' sites selected, which is the Nyamgondho shrine, Simbi Nyaima and Tom

Mboya mausoleum, 2 employees of the Ruma national park, the chief warden and his deputy.

The total number of tourists targeted in the study is 1426, this is the total number of tourists expected to visit Ruma national park during the months of July and August 2021 2021, which is the peak season. This number is arrived at by averaging the number of tourists for the past three years during the same season. To obtain the sample size for tourists the researcher has used Yamane (1967) simplified formula. A 95% confidence level and P = .5 are assumed for Equation

n= $\frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$. Where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision.

In this case, N=1426, and e=0.1, n= $\frac{1426}{1+1426(0.1)^2}$.= 93

As such, the researcher administered questionnaires on 93 tourists from the target population of 1426.This gives a sample size of 93.

For the other target groups comprising 2 employees in the ministry of tourism Homabay county, 2 employees of Ruma national park and 3 custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites, the entire target population was used in the study. This resulted in a total of 100 participants in the study. This being a case study, the number of participants is small in order to allow the researcher to get in-depth information, and different viewpoints from the various participants.

3.7 Sampling Method

Sampling entails selection of a given number of subjects from a defined population which represents the population. The study employed non probability sampling techniques which refers a collection of sampling approaches which have

distinguishing characteristics that subjective judgment can play a role in selecting the sample (Babbie, 2012).The study employed use of purposive sampling; it involves selection of units in the sample based on characteristics that have been pre specified by the researcher so that the sample will have same distribution characteristics assumed to be existing in the population (Babbie, 2012). The study targeted respondents who are known to have the information that will serve the purpose of this study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006), these are the key informants.

The employees in the ministry of tourism were purposively sampled since they are the ones who deal with matters of tourism in the county. Hence, the study targets participants who are known to have the information that will serve the purpose of this study, by virtue of their stations and duties (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The researcher selected the minister of sports, culture, tourism and social services from the Homabay county and the director of tourism. The rationale for this choice is that they are familiar with matters of tourism in the county and the promotion of these sites forms part of their duties within the ministry. They therefore provided rich and a variety of in-depth information, attitudes and views (Dörnyei, 2007). The chief warden and his deputy at Ruma national park were also sampled purposively. This is because they are the ones who deal with promotion of tourism at the park. Ruma being a national park and nationally recognized tourists' destination in the region can offer information on promotional activities for tourism. The custodians therefore have a wealth of information and can provide a rich and varied source of data.

Convenience sampling was also employed in the study; it involves building a sample on the basis of finding convenient or available individuals (Richards, 2003). This technique ideal since it facilitates recruitment of respondents with ease (Sim, Saunders, Waterfield, & Kingstone, 2018). Custodians of the selected potential

tourists' sites were selected conveniently as the researcher visited the sites. Convenient sampling was applied here since the researcher sought to recruit them based on their availability on the selected sites during the time of data collection (Richards, 2003). They are the ones who have first-hand information on the rate of visitation of these sites. They also interact with tourists and get to hear their opinions on tourism products in the region. On top of this they represent the views of the local community. Their view in the study is therefore very crucial. Tourists were also selected conveniently as they visited Ruma national park. The tourists were issued with questionnaires as they arrived at the park. They are the consumers of tourism products and offered information on how they got to learn about tourism in the region and suggest ways of promotion of these services. The samples represent different perspectives in the process under investigation, hence the selection of the various categories of participants.

3.8 Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected using interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. These instruments were used to collect data, in line with the research questions.

3.8.1 Interviews

In order to explore the responses of the various participants and gain detailed and comprehensive information on the area of study; including their views and attitude towards the same, the researcher conducted semi structured interviews. They allow deeper exploration of responses by participants (Alshenqeeti, 2014); and are advantageous in that they provide in-depth data which are not possible to get using questionnaires (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Interview is a technique of generating data that involves gathering data through direct verbal interaction between

individuals. They also allow deeper exploration of responses by participants by probing and exploration (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

The researcher interviewed the minister of tourism, sports culture and social services, Homabay county and the director of tourism, Homabay county (Appendix 2); the chief warden Ruma national park was also interviewed (Appendix 3); and the custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites were also interviewed (Appendix 4). These are tourism stakeholders in Homabay county and therefore provided vital information on the approaches of communication used to promote tourism in the region and internationally.

The interviews were conducted in different venues; for example the interviews for officials from the Homabay county government took place at the Homabay county government offices. Those for the employees of Ruma national parks took place at the offices of these employees while those of the custodians of the selected tourists sites took place around the selected sites: Simbi Nyaima, Nyamgondho shrine and Tom Mboya mausoleum. The interviews were done once with each respondent and lasted between 30 to 45 minutes; this duration is approximated to be adequate for obtaining the required information from the respondent. Through these interviews the researcher was able to identify the issues that emerge from the responses. Use of semi-structured interviews, to some extent, provided a similar guide for interview with the different stakeholders and identification of general issues that may emerge.

3.8.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is defined as a list of questions to be asked by the researcher and prepared in such a way that the questions are asked in exactly the same way to every respondent. It contains questions that are developed in order get appropriate

information for analysis (Chapman, McNeill, & Mcneill, 2005). Use of questionnaires is preferred here as it reduces variability of results since the respondents are given the same questions; this makes coding, analysis and interpretation of the data easy (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). The questionnaires were administered to the tourists (Appendix 1) by the researcher with the help of a research assistant. During the administration of the questionnaires the researcher ensured provision of clarity to the respondents on questions that might have been unclear or misunderstood.

The questionnaires were sectioned into five parts; the first section addressed the demographic information of the respondent. The second, third and fourth sections each addressed the objectives of the study. The questionnaires contained closed-ended questions with pre-determined answers to enable the participants to choose from the pre-determined answer options. The researcher used closed ended questions as they allow for standardization of responses (Fowler Jr & Mangione, 1990). Questionnaires were used to collect data from tourists who visited the Ruma national park during the duration of the study.

3.8.3 Document Analysis

Documents are an important source of data in a research (Bassey, 1999). Documents have an advantage of enhancing the credibility, they are therefore usually used for the value in corroboration of data from other sources (JO Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). The researcher analyzed the Homabay county integrated development plan to seek strategies laid out by the county government towards promotion of tourism.

Homabay County Integrated Plan

According to the Homabay county integrated plan (2018 – 2022) the county 'sits in a prominent position to be a lead destination in the Western Tourism Circuit and is home to Ruma National Park which is the only park where unique and rare species like the roan antelope can be found. The county also hosts events and sites of mythical interest like the Tom Mboya Mausoleum, the Mfangano Rock Art, Oyugis Bird Sanctuary, Homa Hills Hot Spring and Simbi Nyaima. There are over 18 islands such as Rusinga and Mfangano, peninsulas and bays some with unique fauna and flora and an impressive array of physical features with great aesthetic value. There is need to improve these tourism sites to bring in revenue to the county. It also boasts of breath-taking scenery and forested landscape leading to and around the Lake Victoria coast line, especially within Mbita and Suba, such as is the case with the Sikri peninsula. There are also opportunities for sports and cultural tourism especially as relates to the way of life of the Luo and the Abasuba whose traditional boat racing and artifacts continue to attract a lot of local and international tourists.'

Tourists' attractions have been categorized as Nature and Wildlife, Culture, Heritage and Community-Based Tourism, Agro-tourism, Eco-tourism. Some of the major tourism attraction sites include Ruma National Park and Homa Hills. The county local residents are usually involved in cultural events that boost tourism. The main wildlife found in the county of Homabay include Topi antelope, hyenas, Roan antelopes, giraffes, buffaloes, hippopotamus, crocodiles and various species of snakes. Lately, zebra and rhinoceros have been introduced to Ruma National Park.

The main wildlife conservation area in the region is Ruma National Park which is gazetted and protected wildlife conservation area managed by the Kenya Wildlife

Society. Other conservation areas that are not protected includes lakes shores, river banks, hill tops and forests with inhabitants like hippopotamus, monkeys, leopards and antelopes. These hill tops could serve as potential tourist attraction sites for the county. According to KNBS 2015, Ruma National Park recorded 3,313 local tourists/residents and 444 nonresident tourists in the year 2014. This is 88.18% of resident against 11.81% non-resident tourists.

From the above findings, it is evident that Homabay county is rich in tourists' attractions. Local residents comprise majority of those who are involved in tourism activities compared to non-residents. This is an indication that promotional activities in the county target mostly the local community, leaving out the international market. Ruma National Park is also the only wildlife conservation area that is protected by the Kenya Wildlife Society. The other potential tourists' attractions are not protected and are not structured. This limits the number of tourists who visit these sites. According to the county the integrated development plan, there is need to improve these tourism sites to bring in revenue to the county.

3.9 Data Analysis

After the collection of the data, "data cleaning" process was done by the researcher, by identifying responses that were incomplete and removing them; and using only responses that were complete and accurate in order to improve their quality.

The qualitative data was analyzed thematically; recurring themes were identified and related to the context of the entire communication process. The process of data analysis entails ordering and organizing raw data so that useful information can be extracted from it (Gall, Gall, Borg, & Mendel, 2007). It is the organization of the research data in a way that is systematic (Wilson 2010). During thematic analysis, themes that are relevant to the study are researched and categorized under the

research questions. The analysis of the data was done both manually and using NVivo 11 software. First the data was transcribed; it was then labeled and categorized depending on the concepts in the interviews and in the document – the Homabay county integrated development plan. The researcher aimed at identifying the concepts and exploring the relationship between them. This process was inductive in nature allowing for themes to emerge from the data. For further analysis, the transcripts were uploaded into computer software NVivo 11 for further analysis. During this process chunks of data from sentences formed the units of analysis and phrases from the sentences being coded were used as the names of the codes. The codes were then grouped into nodes, which are umbrella units for the questions. Several nodes were formed; similar nodes were then merged and redundant ones discarded. A report was then produced showing findings in form of themes with illustrations from raw data and tables.

Quantitative data was analyzed numerically: first this data was coded and assigned numerical values. The data was then reviewed and explored by the researcher in order to try and identify trends and data distribution. The data was then recorded and finally analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS 23.0). The results were presented using frequency distribution tables and percentages. Comparison of qualitative findings to the quantitative result was done and the interpretation given.

3.9.1 Validity
Validity is a measure of how well a research instrument measured a particular concept. It is the extent to which the study actually investigates what it claims to investigates and reports what actually occurred (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019); (Bassey, 1999). To ensure that the study is valid, all efforts were made to ensure that the

questions in the questionnaire were constructed in line with the research objectives, research literature, and conceptually sound results obtained by other scholars about communication approaches in tourism promotion. The researcher provided a detailed account of the research process as advised by (J Jwan, 2010). The researcher gave the research instruments to the experts in department of Information Communication and Media Studies (INFOCOMS), Rongo University to ensure validity as advised by (Bolarinwa, 2015).

3.9.2 Reliability (Dependability)

To ensure reliability, the researcher reviewed the key concepts in the study by exercising triangulation, providing a chain of evidence and member checking in order. In relation to this, the data was generated from four sources (Officials from the Homabay county government, officials, employees of Ruma national park, custodians of tourist sites and tourists. The researcher employed the use three techniques of data generation (semi structured interviews of the selected participants, questionnaires and document analysis). This allowed for exploration of different aspects of the phenomenon hence generating very rich data.

To ensure that the findings of the study are free of both internal and external influences either of the researcher(s), participant or institutions(s) the researcher kept a 'thick description', by paying

attention to finer details as advised by (JO Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). The researcher also ensured that the questions in the research tools are constructed in line with the research objectives. The researcher ensured the data was reported accurately, a researcher should not misrepresent the accuracy of data since lack of objectivity distorts conclusions (Sim et al., 2018). To ensure reliability of the research

instruments, the researcher employed the use of open ended questions and also recorded interviews during the process of data collection. This allowed the researcher to probe further for a better understanding of the phenomenon.

Objectivity is how neutral the researcher is and to what extent s/he influences the findings of the study (Gillham, 2000). The findings of this study were presented in their true form to avoid distortion of conclusions. The researcher ensured that the entire research process is accurate, detailed and clear, by seeking clarification and giving the same where necessary. This resulted in accurate data that can be generalized to other contexts.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethics is defined as the moral principles that guide research from its inception though to its completion and publication of results (Broom, 2006). A major ethical dilemma is that which requires the researchers to strike a balance between the demands placed on them as professional scientists in pursuit of truth, and their participants' rights and values potentially threatened by the research (Cohen et al., 2007). The following are the ethical considerations that I looked into in the course of the study.

The researcher negotiated access by seeking permission from the university to carry out the study and also acquired a legal permit from National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) a commission mandated with approving scientific research in Kenya; before embarking in generation of data.

The participants were provided with accurate and detailed information about the research and their consent sought before any research activity took place as advised

by (Bassey, 1999); (Burgess, 2005); (Gillham, 2000). The researcher ensured the protection of the participants rights during the

research process by keeping their identity and names anonymous and ensure the boundaries surrounding the shared secrets are protected (Hammersley, 1997). They were also informed of the facts of the research, so that they fully understand the nature of the project, allowing them freedom to choose whether to participate in the investigation or not (JO Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). The information acquired was private; and only used for the purpose of this study. During the process of data collection, I upheld ethics by guarding against putting participants at risk, and respecting vulnerable populations (Hammersley, 1997). The questions in the questionnaires and the interview schedules were framed in an ethical manner.

3.12   Summary

This study examined the communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay County in order to establish the channels that are currently used for the promotion of tourism in the county, information that is currently communicated toward promotion of tourism, and the preferred channels of communication by tourism stakeholders for promotion of tourism in the county. The rationale behind the study is that tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, and Homabay county is richly endowed with a variety of features that are tourists' attractions. However, the county loses its revenue potential since these sites are not promoted adequately.

The study used a mixed methodology in an attempt to answer the questions highlighted above. The method involved use of interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. The stakeholders who were interviewed officials from the

Homabay county government, custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites, employees of Ruma National Park and tourists. The study took place in Homabay county offices, Ruma national park and around selected potential tourists' sites namely; Simbi Nyaima, Nyamgondho shrine and Tom Mboya mausoleum.

Effective communication approaches for promotion of tourism in Homabay county can go a long way in improving the revenue potential of a country. In Homabay county tourism potential exists, however the onus is on the stakeholders to realize its full potential.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

This chapter begins with the general information on the number of respondents who participated in the research, their age, gender and level of education. It then looks at data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The results are presented on topical manner as follows; Information channels for promotion of tourism, communication message for promotion of tourism, frequency of communication for promotion of tourism. The findings are based on the objectives of the study.

4.2 Response rate

The study had a response rate of 87%. During the study a total of 86% of respondents participated while 14% did not. A total of 4 categories of participants took part in the study namely, tourists, 2 Homabay county government officials, 2 Ruma national park employees and 3 custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites. A total of 93 questionnaires were administered to the tourists, and 80 questionnaires were received back. A response rate of 60% is recommended, the response rate was therefore deemed adequate for the study (Orodho, 2003).

4.3 Demographic Data

This section provides a summary of a number of demographic variables as discussed below.

4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

Gender of respondents was considered in order to explore the representation of the different gender in consumption of tourism products. The participants of the study

were both male and female. 68 of the participants were male while 32 were female. This is indication that the consumption of tourism services in Homabay county is dominated males compared females.

Table 4.1 *Gender of the Respondents*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	68	72
Female	32	28
Total	**100**	**100**

4.3.2 Age of Respondents

The respondents who took part in the study were requested to indicate their age brackets which they did as represented in the table below. This aspect was considered during the study in order to establish the ages of those who visit tourists' destinations in Homabay county.

Table 4.2 *Age of the Respondents*

Age bracket	Total number	Percentage
18 – 29	18	18
30 – 39	38	38
40 – 49	32	32
50 and above	12	12
Total	**100**	**100**

From the table above, the largest age group of those who took part in the study are those aged between 30 – 39 years old, they were 38 in number, followed by those aged between 40 – 49 who were 32. This is an indication that the tourism sector in Homabay county is dominated by those in their prime years, and occupy the most productive ages. These age groups also form the category of majority of those in employment, they therefore have disposable income to enjoy tourist activities. This category is followed by those aged between 18 – 29 who were 15 in number. This age group comprise mostly of those just out of high school or college, the number is relatively small since most of them are not yet in employment hence do not have disposable income. The category with the least number of respondents were those aged 50 years and above who were 10 in number, this shows that those who least consume tourism services in Homabay county are those of advanced age. Majority of these respondents have retired and are therefore maybe do not have disposable income to enable them enjoy tourism in the region.

4. 3.3 Nationality of the respondent

It was necessary to find out the nationality of the respondents in order to establish the various countries from where the tourist came, whether from within the country, the continent or beyond. All the respondents who took part in the study were locals, from Homabay county in Kenya. This shows that the tourism in Homabay is consumed by locals. Local tourism is therefore active in Homabay county compared to international tourism. This could be as a result of inadequate promotion done to the international market.

4.4 Description of the Study

This study required a sample of employees of Homabay county government, custodians of the selected tourists' sites and tourists who visited Homabay county

during the period of the study. A total of seven individual interviews was carried out with the following respondents; the minister of tourism Homabay county, the director of tourism Homabay county, the chief warden Ruma national park, the assistant chief warden Ruma national park, the custodians of the selected potential tourists' sites namely Tom Mboya mausoleum, Simbi Nyaima and Nyamgondho shrine. A total of 93 questionnaires were also administered to tourists who visited Ruma national park during the duration of the study. Homabay county intergrated development plan was analyzed in order to seek strategies laid out by the Homabay county government towards promotion of tourism. The participants from Homabay county government, minister of tourism and director of tourism were interviewed since they are responsible for matters tourism in the county government. The chief warden and his deputy at Ruma national park were also selected because they are the ones who deal with promotion of tourism at the park. The custodians of the selected tourists' sites were also selected for the study since they are the ones who have first-hand information on the rate of visitations of these sites. The tourists were selected since they are the consumers of tourism products and offered information on how they got to learn about tourism in the region and suggest ways of promotion of these sites.

Qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed concurrently and separately and then the different results converged by comparing and contrasting them during the interpretation. This resulted in a valid and well substantiated conclusion about the issue of communication for tourism promotion in Homabay county. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically, the approach used by the researcher was inductive in nature and this allowed for the emergence of the themes from the data. The units of analysis were chunks of data obtained from the transcripts which were categorized

depending on the themes that emerged. These categories were then grouped into themes. The researcher aimed at identifying the concepts that emerged in the interviews in order to explore the relationships that exist between them. Quantitative data was analyzed numerically: first this data was coded and assigned numerical values; it was then recorded and finally analyzed using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS 23.0). Comparison of the qualitative findings and quantitative results was done and the interpretation given.

From the analysis of the data, four themes emerged; they included channels through which tourism promotion is done, attraction points for tourists in Homabay county, promotion of tourism and the level of frequency of tourism promotion. The above themes are discussed in relation to the research questions.

4.5 Communication Channels for Promotion of Tourism in Homabay county

The study aimed at establishing existing communication channels are used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county. The findings revealed that various channels have been employed towards the promotion of tourism in the county.

4.5.1   Electronic Media Used in the Promotion of Tourism in Homabay County

The study revealed that various media was used in the promotion of tourism in Homabay county. This communication has majorly been done through T.V, radio, the internet and production of a compact disc (CD). These efforts have however been limited on the part of the county government. When asked about the efforts that have been put towards communicating these destinations, one respondent, employee 1 from Homabay county government admits that the county government

has not done so much but says that there is information on these sites in the Homabay county government website.

He says,

> We have not done much, but if you go to the Homabay county website and look for potential tourism destinations you will find the ones that I have mentioned, so what we need to do now is to do a lot of marketing, profiling. The county government has also produced a CD which displays most of these potential tourist destinations.
>
> (Respondent 1)

His response is echoed by employee 2 of the county government who responds by saying that they have a CD talking about these sites, the islands. Another respondent, custodian 2 of Simbi Nyaima says that he has heard about the promotion of these sites through radio and television. He goes further to mention T-shirts and diaries as other channels through which this information is communicated. Custodian 3 of Nyambondho shrine cited lack of commitment on the part of the county government to promote tourism in Homabay county stating that the promotion of the site though sometimes initiated always seem to die a natural death. One of the respondents had the following to say concerning the promotion of the sites.

> There are certain documentaries that have been run to try and open up the place to the world, at the same time they promote local tourism. There are mostly TV stations that have come here; we have an archaeological site nearby, where Dr Leaky did the excavation, in order to promote these sites, we could take photos and write about them. All this is part of the history. (Respondent 2)

When asked through which channel the information about the sites is communicated he says, that they are mostly communicated through TV and newspaper, at times

radio too. Besides the television and radio, it was discovered that the County government has used other means of promoting the potential tourists' destinations in the region. Like they have been using calendars, diaries, t-shirts, key holders and the county has produced a CDs to communicate to market our sites.

4.5.2 Events for the Promotion of Tourism in Homabay County

It was established that the Homabay county government has organized certain events such as Abasuba cultural days and Miss tourism Homabay to help propel the promotion of tourists' destinations in the region. One of the respondents, says the following when asked about the efforts put by the county government to help promote tourism in the region.

> The first thing one needs to do when you want people to know about a place is making them accessible, we did stock taking for each attraction site we made sure that we prioritized, we needed to channel some funds to upgrade them, then we made access roads then we started to market through different media; we took the photos and printed them on some of our promotion items. Some of the sites that benefitted are the Homabay hot springs, the birds' sanctuary where we have the flamingos, the Ondago swamp. We have miss tourism which is organized to promote the attraction sites and also put the name of the county up there. (Respondent 1)

The county government has done mapping, profiling, and has also secured some sites like Oyugis birds' sanctuary. Some sites have also been renovated like Tom Mboya mausoleum has been properly renovated by the county government The Homabay county officials are also empowered through trips abroad, like to Europe and other countries and one of the things that they are going to do is to meet investors; one of the areas they look into tourism. It was established that the county government of Homabay has gone a step further to establish a department in the

diaspora that will assist in the promotion of tourism abroad with an aim of attracting investors, as stated by employee 1 of Homabay county government.

4.5.3 Documentaries on Tourism

The study further established that there was a documentary which had been produced by the Homabay county government in form of a CD that highlights the potential touristic sites in the county. This documentary has been produced in the form of a CD, however so far only one CD has been produced. This shows how inadequate the promotional messages are produced and the need for production of more documentaries. Employee 2 of Homabay county government states that there is need to do a lot of intensive marketing and promotion services to enable the county government get tourists to come to Homabay county. He continues to say that there are documentaries that currently exist on tourism in Homabay county, but explains that they are produced by different stakeholders and not just the county government.

"There are some on the KWS office, but they are not produced by the county government, but by different people, different stakeholders and associations." (Respondent 2)

Another respondent custodian 1 denies having seen any documentary highlighting potential touristic sites in Homabay county, he says, so far he has not seen any.

The table below shows the results of quantitative data analysis. The respondents were to select the channels through which they heard about tourism in Homabay county.

Table 4.3 *Tourists' Responses on Communication Channels for Tourism Promotion*

I heard about Homabay county through:	No. of respondents	Percentage
Referal by a previous tourist in Homabay county	35	43.75
The internet (for example social media, direct email marketing)	10	12.5
Sales promotion through travel agents	14	17.5
Advertisement in the media like television and radio	10	12.5
Public relations activities like exhibitions, destination literature	11	13.75
Total	**80**	**100**

The findings reveal that majority of tourists who visited tourists' sites in Homabay county were 35 (43.75%) were referred by a previous tourist. This category was closely followed by those who were influenced through sales promotion, 14 (17.5%). 11 (13.75%) of tourists visited tourists destinations as a result of public relations activities like exhibitions and destination literature. This is in agreement with (Shamout, 2016) who states that sales promotion involves a broad range of activities whose aim is to influence the purchasing power of customers by increasing the initial product or service for a given period of time.

The categories with the least numbers of tourists were those who heard about the tourist destination through the internet and those who were influenced through

advertisements in the media like television and radio, each having 10 (12.5%) of tourists. Promotion of tourism should involve use of appropriate distribution channels, including all the direct and indirect channels such as tourism websites, internet, social networking sites, like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp among others, which facilitate the arrival of tourists to the tourists' attractions as stated by (Esu & Ebitu, 2010) . The study agrees with these scholars.

  This shows that promotion of tourism in Homabay county is largely done through interpersonal communication through referrals. The channels least used for promotion are the internet and the electronic media like television and radio.

   This shows that the promotional activities rarely reach the international market, leading to low visitation rates from the international community.

Fig 4.1 Tourism promotion channels

Source: Researcher (2021)

4.6 Communication Message for Promotion of Tourism in Homabay county
The study sought to establish the tourism promotional message in the county. It was established that the messages produced focused on culture, history and unique features in these sites.

4.6.1 Unique features in the promotional messages

The study found out that there are numerous destinations in the region with unique features in the region. They include sites with cultural and historical attachments as well as those with scenic sites. Some of them include Tom Mboya mausoleum, the Abasuba peace museum in Mfangano, Simbi Nyaima and Nyamgondho shrine just to mention a few. One of the respondents, employee1 from Homabay county had this to say,

> We have several destinations; in fact, we have divided them into three regions. We have Simbi Nyaima which has a healing water and we have flamingos there, we have Ondago swamp which has flamingos, Abundu hot springs where you can boil your eggs within just a few minutes, and then when you approach Homabay from Kisumu via Sondu to Oyugis, we have the birds sanctuary with the pelican birds, these are seasonal birds, next to Oyugis birds sanctuary, we also have the hyena's caves. We also have Gor Mahia shrine which has also a very rich history, at Kochia Kagan, we have a lot of culture, and we have the Ramogi traditional dancers. We have tens of islands as well as Nyamgondho wuod Ombare shrine in Nyandiwa Gwassi, this and Simbi Nyaima has a lot of similarities. (Respondent 1)

These views were shared by employee 2 of Homabay county. He had this to say:

> Other potential tourists' destinations in the region include Tom Mboya mausoleum in Rusinga island, Mawanga rock art sites in Mfangano, the archaeological sites in Rusinga Island where they found the remains of the earliest man, the hot springs in Homa hill, and we have the pelican birds' sanctuary in Oyugis, the flamingos in Rachuonyo as well as the Abasuba peace museum in Mfangano Island.   In Homabay we are privileged to be the only place where you can find the rare rone antelope in Kenya, it is also known as the last retreat of the rone antelope, not only in Kenya, but also in the whole of Africa.   (Respondent 2)

The following findings reveal that indeed Homabay county is rich in destinations that have the potential to attract tourists. If these sites are well communicated, they can attract tourist and help generate revenue to the county.

4.6.2 Historical information about the sites

The study further established that there is historical information attached to the sites. It was established that most of the respondents were conversant with the historical information attached to the sites. For example, in Tom Mboya mausoleum, the history of Tom Mboya can attract many tourists.

Custodians 1 of Tom Mboya mausoleum had this to say,

> This is Tom Mboya mausoleum. Tom's friends from abroad thought they should build something in his memory. It has been designed in the shape of a bullet that killed him. It was built in his memory; inside you can see some of his collections. (Custodian 1)

These sentiments were also shared by a resident of custodian 2, over Simbi Nyaima.

> It is believed that a woman travelled from Gwassi Nyandiwa, and that she was the daughter of a rainmaker. When she arrived there, she was chased away by all except one woman, whom she asked to leave with her, but not look back. After walking almost, a hundred meters, the rain started falling, and continued falling heavily until the entire area submerged and all the people died. The place derives its name from the word "Simbi", meaning many huts and Nyaima meaning to drown because of the many houses that were submerged in the lake. (Custodian 2)

4. 6. 3 Cultural information about the sites

It was established that there is cultural information and heritage attached to the sites, employee 2 of Homabay county government mentioned the rich culture found in Simbi Nyaima and Nyamgondho shrine.

The water in Simbi Nyaima is believed to be medicinal, able to cure skin diseases, some religious factions also use the water, they call it holy water, they sprinkle it on people when praying for them, most people get healed that this is holy water.   (Respondent 2)

Custodian 1 of Tom Mboya mausoleum also highlighted the cultural and historical information surrounding the tourist's site. He says that some people believe that if they go to Tom Mboya mausoleum and the Gor Mahia shrine they can get blessings. He also had this to say;

The Tom Mboya mausoleum site was built in memory of the late Tom Mboya who was assassinated, and that the friends and family members wanted something that could be used to remember him over several generations, so that generations would remember him. (Custodian 1)

Custodian 3 of Nyamgondho shrine also cited the unique features at the destination and the cultural attachments to it.

At the Nyamgondho shrine there are footprints of animals on rocks along the shores of Lake Victoria. These are believed to be of the animals that the mysterious woman, who is believed to have surfaced mysteriously from the lake, was picked by a fisherman, Nyamgondho, and they later got married. The woman is believed to have gone back into the lake following dispute with the husband. (Custodian 3)

The table below shows the results of the quantitative data analysis.

Table 4.4 Tourists' Responses on *Communication Message for Promotion of Tourism*

Level of agreement to the questions	Yes	%	No	%	Total (100%)
It is easy to access information about destination in Homabay county	40	42.5	46	57.5	**80**
The promotional information about tourism in Homabay county is convincing	39	48.75	41	51.25	**80**
There is adequate information about tourism in the promotional messages that I have come across	33	41.25	47	58.75	**80**
I have come across promotional information that increased my awareness of sites in Homabay county	47	58.75	33	41.25	**80**

The above findings show that 46 (57.5%) out of 80 tourists disagree to the fact that it is easy to access information about tourists' destinations in Homabay while 34 (42.5%) agree to this. This shows that majority of the tourists who visit tourists destinations in Homabay do not easily access promotional messages, there is therefore need to increase the accessibility of this information. This is in agreement with the views of (Riley & Van Doren, 1992) they state that tourists are still very affected by and interested in the materials obtained from conventional media, especially television.

The information about a specific destination which is mostly demanded by tourists is considered as an important means of promotion for tourism industry (Law, Leung, & Buhalis, 2010). When asked if the promotional information about tourism in Homabay county is convincing, 39 (48.75%) tourists say yes to this while 41 (51.25%) say no. 47 (58.75%) of the 80 tourists disagree that there is adequate information about tourism in the promotional messages that they have come across while 33 (41.25%) say yes to this. This implies that there is the presence of promotional messages that reach some tourists; however this information is not adequate, and maybe is not persuasive enough to convince the potential tourist. The findings agree with the views of (Debski, 2013)who says that message is sent via certain communication medium such as an advertisement on television, and it should be persuasive to the customer, evoking the desire to visit the destination. 47 (58.75%) out of the 80 tourists say that they have come across promotional information that have increased their awareness of destinations in Homabay county while 33 say no to this effect. The findings therefore concur with the views of the above scholar since the sites are still largely unknown, there is therefore need to increase the promotional information.

The table below shows a summary of the attraction points for tourism in Homabay county

Table 4.5 *Attraction Points for Tourists in Homabay County*

Culturally/ Historically	Scenic sites
▪ Tom Mboya mausoleum is the center for acquiring blessings by community members ▪ Abasuba peace museum in Mfangano Island ▪ healing water in Simbi Nyaima ▪ Ramogi traditional dancers.	▪ several islands –Rusinga, Mfangano, Takawiri, Soklo Kipenji ▪ Unique fishing villages ▪ birds sanctuary with the pelican birds and Flamingos ▪ hot springs e.g Abundu ▪ rare rune antelope ▪ the archaeological sites in Rusinga Island

The findings of the study concur with these sentiments as 33 (41.25%) respondents agreed that there is adequate information about tourism in the promotional message that they have come across. This is a small percentage and probably explains the reason why the tourists' sites are still unknown. There is need to avail adequate materials that convey messages for promotion of tourism. This is in agreement with the views of (Riley & Van Doren, 1992) they state that tourists are still very affected by and interested in the materials obtained from conventional media, especially television.

The information about a specific destination which is mostly demanded by tourists is considered as an important means of promotion for tourism industry (Law et al., 2010). According to the findings, only 33 (41.25%) agree to the fact that there is adequate information about tourism in the promotional messages. The messages

maybe are not persuasive enough to convince the potential customers. The findings agree with the views of (Debski, 2013)who says that message is sent via certain communication medium such as an advertisement on television, and it should be persuasive to the customer, evoking the desire to visit the destination. The findings therefore concur with the views of the above scholar since the sites are still largely unknown, there is therefore need to increase the promotional information.

4.7 Frequency of Communication for Promotion of Tourism in Homabay county

The study also sought to find out the frequency of communication for promotion of tourism in Homabay county. The officials interviewed admittedly acknowledge that little, if any, had been done to promote tourism in the county. This is possibly due to lack of funds as earlier indicated.

Employee 1 of Homabay county had this to say when asked how frequent the county government undertakes activities that promote tourism in Homabay county.

> We have a CD that we have produced some time back, already in place showing potential touristic sites in Homabay county. We have so far only produced one, we don't do it frequently, we managed to produce only one, that's why I am saying we need to do a lot of intensive marketing and promotion services to enable us get tourists to come to Homabay county. (Respondent 1)

However, custodian 3 of Nyamgondho shrine says that she has not come across information communicated about tourism in Homabay county, she says,

"No I have not heard any. If it were so I would have heard that it exists, people come from many place, but I have not heard any placed in Homabay county being advertised." (Custodian 3)

Table 4.6 Tourists' Responses on *Communication Frequency for Promotion of*

Tourism

The promotion of tourism is done	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%	Total (100%)
The marketing information is availed consistently	35	43.75	24	30	25	31.25	**80**
There is need to increase the frequency of promotion of tourism in Homabay county	50	62.5	12	15	18	22.5	**80**
The frequency of promotional message is adequate	29	36.25	40	50	11	13.75	**80**

According to the above results 50 (62.5%) tourists agree that there is need to increase frequently of promotion of tourism in the county, 12 (15%) said no and 25 (31.25%) did not know whether this was necessary. This shows that tourism promotion is not done frequently and there is need to increase its frequency. These finding are consistent with the views of (Morrison, 2013) who state that promotion plays a very big role in destination advertising and can help to modify the behaviour of tourists by ensuring repeat visitors. Promotion of tourism can be done when there is effective communication with potential or actual tourists (Madondo, 2016). 35 (43.75%) of the 80 tourists stated that marketing information about tourism is availed consistently, 24 (30%) said no to this while 25 (31.25%) did not know. The

big number of those who are unable to take a stand on these questions shows inadequate flow of information, leading to indecision on the part of the respondent. This shows that communication with potential or actual tourists is not done effectively. There is therefore need to increase the frequency communication for tourism promotion. Organizations use promotion in order to attempt to persuade, remind and give information about their brands or products to their customers (Pomering et al., 2011). This message needs to be easily accessible, adequate and convincing. 25 (31.25%) of the respondents are neutral when asked whether marketing information on tourism is availed consistently. This shows that the messages are not availed consistently, resulting in limited promotion of the tourists' sites. The findings are therefore in agreement with the findings of the above scholars.

4.7 Challenges faced by Homabay county in the promotion of tourism

It was discovered that the ministry of tourism in Homabay county government has faced various challenges in the attempts to promote tourism in the region. Some of the problems faced inlude lack of advertising by the Kenya tourist board as well as inadequate funds. When asked whether there are certain sites that she feels have the potential to attract tourists but they have not been developed, one of the respondents in the ministry of tourism says the following:

> Actually, that's been a problem not only in Homabay county, but also in the western circuit, you will notice that the Kenya tourists board they don't advertise or market us so much, we have a lot of potential, a lot of tourism products like wildlife, beach, culture, but they have not channeled somuch funds to put them to the scale where they can compete with other. They are potential but have not been developed to their operational level, like we have

no site where we can collect revenue from. Ruma belongs to the national

government, in respect to county government we don't have full sites where

we can get revenue from but they are all potential, it will depend on how we

will package our services however small the site is for tourists to come to

these destinations.

(Respondent 1)

The challenge that the ministry of tourism has to deal with is about funding, the

ministry does budgeting for tourism development, but rarely gets adequate funding

from the county government. Sometimes the funds allocated to the ministry is

diverted elsewhere where members of the county assembly feel are more important.

The ministry of tourism feels that it's important for us to get investors to help in

regard to the promotion of tourism in the region.

4.8 Summary

In this chapter data has been discussed and presented according to the research

question. The data presented shows demographic information of the respondents and

the response rate   of the study. The areas discussed are the channels for

promotion of tourism where electronic media, documentaries and events for tourism

promotion were highlighted. Besides this the messages for tourism promotion was

discussed where unique features of the potential tourists' sites, their rich historical

and cultural information are the areas looked at. Finally, there is discussion of the

frequency of communication for promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

Channels through which tourism promotion is done include media such as radio and

television. Use of print media is also used, like calendars, diaries, T-shirts and key

holders. There are also organized events such as miss tourism and the Abasuba

cultural days. There is also delegation to

the diaspora by the Homabay county government. Those who visited the county were majorly influenced through personal selling like travel agents and referrals by previous tourists.

The tourism promotional messages comprised of cultural and historical information attached to the sites. It also highlighted the scenic sites available in the county. In spite of the availability of this information, tourism is still low in the region, an indication that the message is not targeted to a large potential market, especially the international market.

The frequency of the promotional messages is low. The officials interviewed admittedly acknowledge that little, if any, had been done to promote tourism in the county. The promotional activities are not organized periodically. This can be attributed to inadequate funds allocated to the sector as earlier indicated, the officials who were interviewed indicated that they faced a huge challenge of lack of funds. This is because some tourist sites belong to the National government and available funds are diverted to other sectors in the County Government at the expense of promoting tourism. Additionally, Kenya Tourism Board, which is mandated in marketing the tourist sites is yet to give more focus and attention to tourism sites in Homabay county.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations made as well as suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings.

This section presents a summary of the findings based on the research objectives. These were to establish existing communication channels used in the promotion tourism of Homabay county, to identify existing communication messages for promotion of tourism in Homabay county and to determine the communication frequency of tourists' sites in Homabay county, Kenya.

The findings reveal that various channels have been employed towards the promotion of the potential touristic sites in the county. This includes electronic media such as television and radio. Use of print media is also used, like calendars, diaries, T-shirts and key holders. There are also organized events such as miss tourism and the Abasuba cultural days. There is also delegation to the diaspora by the Homabay county government. Those who visited the county were majorly influenced through personal selling like travel agents and referrals by previous tourists.

The tourism promotional messages comprised of cultural and historical information attached to the sites. This message highlights the heritage of the people of Homabay. It also highlighted the scenic sites available in the county. In spite of the availability of this information, tourism is still low in the region, an indication that the message is not targeted to a large potential market, especially the international market.

The frequency of the promotional messages is inadequate. The custodians of the selected sites interviewed responded that little, had been done to promote tourism in the county, this is because even though they occasionally come across the promotional messages, it is done once in a while. The officials of Homabay county interviewed admittedly stated that they had done little toward this effect. They cited inadequate funds as a factor that has contributed to this situation. Majority of the tourists also agreed to the fact that there is need to increase the frequency of promotion of tourism in the county.

5.3 Conclusion

From the first objective, various channels have been employed towards the promotion of tourism in Homabay county. Various electronic media such as television and radio; as well as print media such as calendars, diaries, T-shirts and key holders have also been used. Events such as miss tourism and the Abasuba cultural days are also organized. There is also delegation to the diaspora by the Homabay county government to market the region beyond the country. Those who visited the county were majorly influenced through personal selling like travel agents and referrals by previous tourists. In spite of these efforts the country continues to receive low visitation rates especially from international tourists. The study therefore concludes that the channels used for promotion of tourism in the region mainly target local tourists especially from the county. Interpersonal communication is the most commonly used channel for tourism promotion in the region.

The second objective sought to assess communication messages for tourism promotion. The findings of this objective revealed that the promotional messages for tourism promotion comprised of cultural and historical information attached to the

sites. They also highlighted the scenic sites in the region and the heritage of the people of Homabay. In spite of the availability of this information, tourism activities is still low in the region. The study concludes that the messages do not convey adequate information and are not persuasive enough to convince the potential tourists to visit the county. The message is not targeted to a large potential market, especially the international market.

The third objective sought to determine the communication frequency of tourism in the county. It was established that frequency of the promotional messages is inadequate. The respondents, including the minister of Homabay county government and the director of the same ministry admitted that they had done little in terms of frequency to promote the county. Others responded in the same way. The study concludes that the frequency of promotion of tourism in Homabay county is inadequate. This can be attributed to inadequate funding as earlier stated by the Homabay county officials interviewed.

5.4 Recommendations

The study explored the approaches of communication used for tourism promotion. The study gives the following recommendations on how to overcome the challenges encountered with regard to tourism promotion:

i) Tourism stakeholders in Homabay should employ the use of multiple channels that can reach both local and international tourists in order to promote tourism in the region. This helps to cover the shortcomings of either one channel when used in isolation.

ii) The messages for promotion of tourism should be convincing and persuasive enough to encourage the potential tourists to visit tourists' destinations in Homabay county.

iii) The tourism stakeholders in the Homabay county should intensify promotion of the sector by increasing the frequency of communication of tourists' activities, especially through channels that can reach international tourists in order to attract not just local, but also international tourist.

iv) Tourism stakeholders in the region should employ the use of multiple channels of communication that can reach both local and international tourists.

The frequency of communicating promotional messages should also be increased by tourism stakeholders in Homabay county and done periodically in order to increase awareness on the existence of these sites. This in turn will lead to attraction of more tourists to the region.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

This study was confined to Homabay county. Future studies can be conducted in other counties to get a deeper understanding on communication approaches for tourism promotion. Further research can also be done on the communication challenges hindering effective promotion of tourism in Homabay county.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Questionnaires for Tourists

My name is Jacinta Nonkwe, a Master's student in Rongo University, Department of Information and Communication, conducting a study titled, **'Communication Approaches for Promotion of Tourism in Homabay County, Kenya'.** You are requested to be one of the respondents of this study. Your responses will be used for purposes of this study only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please feel free to fill in your responses in this questionnaire as you may deem appropriate.

Thank you.

1. **Section A: Demographic Information**

Please tick where applicable

1.1 Nationality …………………………………………………………………..

1.2 Indicate your gender: male [ ] Female [ ]

1.3 Indicate your age

a) 18 – 30 years [ ]

b) 30 – 40 years [ ]

c) 40 – 50 years [ ]

d) Above 50 years [ ]

1.4 Country of permanent residence ……………………………………………

1.5 Occupation …………………………………………………………………..

Section B: Specific Information

Communication Channels for Tourism Promotion

Though which channel did you hear about Homabay county? (Tick the most appropriate response)

I heard about Homabay county through:	Tick here
Referal by a previous tourist in Homabay county	[ ]
The internet (for example social media, direct email marketing)	[ ]
Sales promotion through travel agents	[ ]
Advertisement in the media like television and radio	[ ]
Public relations activities like exhibitions, destination literature	[ ]
Total	

Communication Message for Promotion of Tourism

Respond by indicating yes or no

Level of agreement to the questions	Yes	No	Total
It is easy to access information about destination in Homabay county	[ ]	[ ]	
The promotional information about tourism in Homabay county is convincing	[ ]	[ ]	
There is adequate information about tourism in the promotional messages that I have come across	[ ]	[ ]	
I have come across promotional information that increased my awareness of Homabay county	[ ]	[ ]	

Communication Frequency for Promotion of Tourism.

Is the promotion of tourism in Homabay county done frequently? Tick where appropriate

The promotion of tourism is done	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
The marketing information is availed consistently	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
There is need to increase the frequency of promotion of tourism in Homabay county	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
The frequency of promotional message is adequate	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

APPENDIX 2: Semi Structured Interview Schedules for Homabay County Government Officials

1. How can you, in brief, describe Homabay county?

2. Does the county government engage in promotion of tourism in the county? (Yes) (No)

3. Who is in charge of tourism promotion in Homabay county?

4. Through which channels do you promote tourism in Homabay county?

5. Which promotion mix tools do you employ in tourism promotion.

6. What communication message do you pass during the promotion of Homabay county?

7. List any distinctive tourist attractions that exist in Homabay county.

8. How frequent do you undertake promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

9. Has tourism performance improved the county government was established?

10. What are some of the ways that tourism promotion in Homabay county can be improved?

APPENDIX 3: Semi Structured Interview Schedules for Officials of Ruma National Park.

1. Do you believe promotion of tourism in Homabay county done optimally? Explain

2. Does the Kenya Wildlife Service engage in promotion of tourism in the county?

3. Through which channels does the promotion of tourism in Homabay county take place?

4. What is the nature of messages conveyed for promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

5. How can the promotion of tourism in Homabay county be improved?

6. What are some of the tools you employ in the promotion of tourism?

7. How frequent do you undertake promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

8. What are some of the measures that the National and County government can undertake to enhance tourism in Homabay county?

9. Do you think tourism promotion in Homabay county is at the level where it should be? Explain your answer.

**APPENDIX 4: Semi Structured Interview Schedules for Custodians of the
Selected Potential Tourists' Sites**

1. Have you ever heard of promotion of tourism in Homabay county?

2. If yes, through which channel was the promotion done?

3. What is the nature of the communication message for tourism promotion?

4. What communication message do you pass during the promotion of Homabay county?

5. List any distinctive tourist attractions that exist in Homabay county.

6. How frequent does the promotion of tourism in Homabay county take place?

7. Briefly explain how tourism promotion can be improved.

APPENDIX 5: Nodes from Qualitative Analysis

<Internals\\custodians\\Custodian 1> - § 1 reference coded [2.71% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.71% Coverage

Yes, I have, the information about tourism is mostly communicated through TV and newspaper, at times radio too

<Internals\\custodians\\Custodian 2> - § 1 reference coded [1.86% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.86% Coverage

   Yes I have heard about some sites even in the radio

<Internals\\custodians\\Custodian 3> - § 2 references coded [3.80% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.73% Coverage

   No I have not heard any

Reference 2 - 3.07% Coverage

   I used to hear Tom Mboya's place, but I have not heard lately, this used to be through the radio

<Internals\\interviews\\Director> - § 1 reference coded [5.66% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 5.66% Coverage

no site where we can collect revenue from. Ruma belongs to the national government, in respect to County government we don't have full sites where we can get revenue from but they are all potential,

<Internals\\interviews\\MINISTER> - § 3 references coded [5.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.95% Coverage

Kenya tourists board they don't advertise or market

Reference 2 - 0.59% Coverage

have **not channeled so much funds**

Reference 3 - 4.04% Coverage

a budget for tourism development for about 18million, but unfortunately these funds were diverted elsewhere because our members of the County assembly feel they want to do something else that they feel is more important.

<Internals\\interviews\\Director> - § 1 reference coded [1.57% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.57% Coverage

 don't do it frequently, we managed to produce only one

<Internals\\interviews\\MINISTER> - § 2 references coded [1.32% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.33% Coverage

have not done much

Reference 2 - 0.99% Coverage

need to do now is to do a lot of marketing, profiling.

<Internals\\custodians\\Custodian 1> - § 7 references coded [9.53% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.64% Coverage

both electronic and print,

Reference 2 - 0.34% Coverage

documentaries

Reference 3 - 0.44% Coverage

mostly TV stations

Reference 4 - 0.42% Coverage

 internet will do

internet will do a great deal in marketing this place because it will reach a large group of people.

TV, probably because a large number of people watch TV,

 radio, so that many people get to hear about it. This will spread and people will come from all sorts of places and entice people to come to this place."

media –radio Ramogi,

internet those who read the newspaper are very few, radio is very common here, you can reach most locals, but for you to capture the international, you have to use the TV and the internet.

the **radio**, so that many people get to hear about it.

 media –radio Ramogi,

radio.tv channels have also visited the area, KTN, NTV, Citizen TV also came, Oxford university press also came.

book, t-shirts

media

TV, probably because a large number of people watch TV, and also there will be the visual, pictorials of this particular region it will help market the place."

CD that we have produced

documentaries

department of the County government in Diaspora

television and radio

calendars, diaries, t-shirts, key holders and the county has produced some

CDs

documentary

Homa Bay County government website

CD

made access roads

photos

organized **events such as miss tourism**

mapping, profiling, and has also secured some sites like Oyugis birds' sanctuary

Tom Mboya mausoleum has **been properly renovated**

 fence the Ondago swamp so that the flamingos don't get scared and fly back to Lake Nakuru.

trips like to Europe and other countries and one of the things that they are going to do is to meet investors

APPENDIX 6: Letter of Introduction

Rongo University College,

P.O. Box,

 RONGO.

Dear respondent,

I am a graduate student at the school of Information, Communication and Media Studies, Rongo University College, undertaking a MSc. Communication Studies. As part of the fulfillment of my degree I am required to carry out research. I intend to carry out research on, Communication Approaches for Promotion of Tourisn in Homabay County.

I therefore request you to voluntarily participate in answering the question in the questionnaire or interview. All the information you will provide will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance,

Yours sincerely,

JACINTA NONKWE BWANA

Researcher

APPENDIX 7: Sample Information Sheet

My research is Communication Approaches for Promotion of Tourism in Homabay County. My interest is on the channels, the content and the frequency of communication for promotion of tourism.

If you participate in this study, it will shed light on the issue. Data will be collected through interviews, document analysis and questionnaires. Any information that you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Should you wish to withdraw from the study, you are free to do so at any time.

JACINTA NONKWE BWANA

School of Information, Communication and Media Studies,

Rongo University-Kenya.

APPENDIX 8: Consent Form

I consent to participate in this study and it is my understanding that I may withdraw from it at any time.

NAME: ....

ADDRESS: ....

SIGNATURE: ....

DATE: ....

APPENDIX 9: University Permit

RONGO
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Email address: graduatestudies@rongovarsity.ac.ke   P.O. Box 103 - 40404
RONGO

Our Ref: IC/PGC/1016/2012   **Date:** Tuesday, April 20, 2021

The Chief Executive Officer,
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation,
off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623-00100,
Nairobi-KENYA.

Dear Sir,

RE: RESEARCH PERMIT FOR MS. JACINTA NONKWE BWANA -IC/PGC/1016/2012

We wish to inform you that the above person is a bona fide graduate student of Rongo
University in the School of Information, Communication and Media Studies pursuing a
Master of Science in Communication Studies. She has been authorized by the University to
undertake research titled; *"Communication Approaches for Promotion of Tourism in
HomaBay County, Kenya"*.

This is, therefore, to request the commission to issue her with a research permit to enable
her proceed for field work.

Your assistance to her shall be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Dr. Edward Anino
DEAN, SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

RONGO UNIVERSITY
THE DEAN
2 0 APR 2021
**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**
P. O. BOX 103 - 40404, RONGO

Copy to: Vice Chancellor
              Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and Student Affairs).
              Dean, Information, Communication and Media Studies
              HoD, Communication, Journalism and Media Studies

Appendix 10 :NACOSTI Research Permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 154275

Date of Issue: 20/May/2021

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Ms.. JACINTA NONKWE BWANA of Rongo University, has been licensed to conduct research in Homabay on the topic: COMMUCATION APPROACHES FOR PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN HOMABAY COUNTY KENYA for the period ending : 20/May/2022.

License No: NACOSTI/P/21/10654

154275

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

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THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is Guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

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Appendix 11: Map of Homabay County