Master thesis in Business Administration
A PROPOSED MODEL FOR COUNTRY BRANDING
An Experimental Application on Nigeria

Author: OGUNDIPE SAMUEL JOHNSON
Supervisor: Jörgen Elbe Ph.D
Examiner: Dr. Sabine Gebert-Persson
Subject: Business Administration and Management
Credits: 15 hp
ABSTRACT

In the era of globalization, countries compete with each other for attention, respect and trust of potential consumers, investors, tourists, media and governments of other nations. Branding is the most powerful tool that a nation can utilize for effective differentiation strategies and for creating competitive advantage over other nations. Unfortunately, not every nations or destination marketers have a broad understanding of the concept of branding and how a country can be successfully branded. Hence, this study has proposed a model that could be used as a valuable guide for country branding. Also the model is recommended for countries struggling with image crisis; on the mission to improve the image internationally.

Nigeria is a good example of countries with image crisis; it is one of the most populated countries in the world with a population of about 160 million inhabitants and growth rate of 2.553percent annually. Despite the abundant resources (e.g. coal, petroleum, natural gas etc.) that the nation is endowed with, it is quite disappointing that the population below poverty line is still at the alarming rate of 70percent of the total population. The mismanagement and poor leadership of the nation characterised by corruption, fraud, embezzlement of public fund etc. has culminated into serious image crisis that is slowing down the potential for investment and economic growth. However, there has been series of image rebranding campaigns but no tangible achievement has been recorded. It is quite questionable though, if image rebranding will provide the kind of future that Nigeria envisaged, considering the socio-political situation and the economic imbalance; compounded by the obvious fact that the nation has no known brand.

Therefore, this paper argues that there is need to redirect the effort invested on image rebranding to the creation of a unique and competitive brand for the country. It was established from the study that a nation’s brand is capable of improving the reputation of the nation as well as stimulate the expectation of the target audience. However, it was also established from the study that a wrong approach to branding could mislead the target audience and attract negative publicity. Hence, as a contribution of the study to the field of branding, a model was proposed as a functional guide for country branding. Also, considering the abysmal performance of Nigeria’s image in the international community and to strengthen the argument that brand creation is required for the country; an experimental application of the proposed model was conducted using Nigeria as the case country. The first phase of the model suggested a major improvement in the society; this is required to further enhance the strengths of the country and to motivate the much needed community participation and confidence in the brand creation. It is the conclusion of the study that a strong nation brand can offset the image problem if it is built on something concrete, genuine, and uniquely identifiable with the country, capable of connecting to the cognitive psychology of the target audience.

Keywords: Branding, Image Crisis, Rebranding, Tourism, Destination Image, Developmental Planning, Sustainable development, Country Branding Model, Nigeria.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I give my most profound appreciation to the almighty God for the wisdom, strength, and grace to complete this master’s degree program. I specially thank my beloved wife (Ogundipe Mayowa) for her encouragement and perseverance, I also appreciate my loving children (Ogundipe Sylva & Ogundipe Gold) for been so good children and making their mum happy even when am away from home. I am so grateful to my parents and sibling for their spiritual counsel and encouragement.

I thank my supervisor (Jorgen Elbe) for his professional guidance and support during the writing process. I also thank all the member of staffs of the Dalarna University and other students that have contributed to my achievement at one point or the other during my study. I thank my teacher Karla Boluk for standing in the gap for me when I was faced with challenging situations and away from school for almost an academic year.

I give my sincere appreciation to my dear friend (Olugunna Micheal) for being so good to me throughout my study year, only God can repay your good deeds. I also thank all my friends in Borlange; Olatunji Muyiwa, Adeola Samuel, Great Hermann Ezeala, Mr White, and my pastor for their encouragement and brotherly support. I give much appreciation to my friends outside Borlange; Ajimati Matthew, Suleiman Nadabo, Lanre Festus, Hon. Okorie Matthew, Niyi Makinde, May-gret & Leif Axell, Tom, Monica, Katie and the entire member of the city church in Vaasa Finland, for being so good to my wife and children during my stay in Sweden.

Finally, I thank all the DMOs that participated in the study; the information you provided contributed immensely to the success of the paper and I owe you all a million gratitude 😊

This day: 29th May 2012.
ABSTRACT
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
CONTENTS
List of Figures and Tables
List of Abbreviations

1 INTRODUCTION............................................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS..................................................................................................................... 2
  1.2 RESEARCH AIM.................................................................................................................................. 2
  1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.................................................................................................................. 3
  1.4 STUDY DESIGN .................................................................................................................................... 3
  1.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD.................................................................................................................. 3

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK...................................................................................................................... 4
  2.1 THE CONCEPT OF BRAND AND BRANDING .................................................................................. 4
      2.1.1 Explaining why Branding fails from misconstrued Terminologies: Branding, Rebranding or Renaming? .................................................................................................................................................. 5
      2.1.2 Why Re-Brand the Brand: understanding the purpose is KEY ............................................... 6
  2.2 DESTINATION BRANDING: A COUNTRY LEVEL PERSPECTIVE ................................................... 9
      2.2.1 Why is Destination Branding Necessary? ..................................................................................... 10
      2.2.2 Benefits of Destination Branding ............................................................................................... 10
      2.2.3 Developing Brand Attributes: Prerequisite for Successful Branding ......................................... 11
      2.2.4 Challenges of Destination Branding: Country Level Perspective .............................................. 12
      2.2.5 The Structure, Funding and Roles of DMO .................................................................................. 13
  2.3 DESTINATION IMAGE: AN IMPORTANT PHENOMENON FOR SUCCESS ........................................ 16
      2.3.1 Addressing the issue of image Crisis on a country level ............................................................ 18
      2.3.2 The role of Tourism in Country Branding and Sustainable development .................................. 21
  2.4 SUMMARY ............................................................................................................................................. 22

3 METHODOLOGY.......................................................................................................................................... 25
  3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN ............................................................................................................................. 25
  3.2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ....................................................................................................................... 26
  3.3 SAMPLING ........................................................................................................................................... 28
  3.4 COLLECTION OF DATA ....................................................................................................................... 29

4 FINDINGS AND RESULTS.......................................................................................................................... 31
  4.1.1 Research Theme one: Structure, Funding, Roles and Challenges of DMOs ............................... 31
  4.1.2 Research theme 2: Image Transformation Process ........................................................................ 33
  4.1.3 Research theme 3: Required Criteria for Rebranding Success .................................................... 36
  4.1.4 Research theme 4: Role and contribution of tourism in the Image renewal process .................. 37
  4.2 THE PROPOSED MODEL FOR COUNTRY BRANDING ........................................................................ 38
      4.2.1 PHASE 1: REFORMATION ........................................................................................................... 39
      4.2.2 PHASE 2: REORIENTATION ..................................................................................................... 42
      4.2.3 PHASE 3: REPOSITIONING ....................................................................................................... 43
  4.3 EXPERIMENTAL APPLICATION OF THE MODEL ON NIGERIA ....................................................... 43
      4.3.1 Nigeria: an overview .................................................................................................................... 44
      4.3.2 Assessment of Nigeria: The Reformation Phase ......................................................................... 46
      4.3.3 Brand creation in Nigeria: The Reorientation Phase ................................................................. 51
      4.3.4 Communicating the Nigeria Brand: Image Repositioning Phase ............................................. 53
5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1: TO IDENTIFY THE WEAKNESSES OF THE PREVIOUS REBRANDING CAMPAIGN OF NIGERIA

5.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2: TO ESTABLISH THE ARGUMENT THAT BRAND CREATION CAN CONTRIBUTE A GREATER INFLUENCE ON COUNTRY’S IMAGE THAN A REBRANDING CAMPAIGN

5.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3: TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENTAL PLANNING OF NIGERIA AS A NATION

5.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4: TO IDENTIFY THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN COUNTRY BRANDING AND IN NIGERIA

5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY

6 REFERENCES

7 APPENDIX
List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1: The basic organizational structure of destination at country level……..14
Figure 2: Destination Profile.................................................................16
Figure 3: Factors influencing the formation of consumers' tourist image.........18
Figure 4: Sustainability Assessment - The Three Sphere of Sustainability……22
Figure 5: Proposed Model for Country Branding.......................................39
Figure 6: Location of Nigeria in World Map................................. (Appendix)
Table 1: Some common Motivations for re-branding...............................7
Table 2: Typical roles and responsibilities of DMOs................................14
Table 3: Profile of the interviewed DMOs.............................................31
# List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANTOR</td>
<td>Association of National Tourist Offices &amp; Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDEC</td>
<td>Cultural Diplomacy in the Global Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRISE</td>
<td>Centre for Research on Inequality, Human security &amp; Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMAI</td>
<td>Destination Marketing Association International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMO</td>
<td>Destination Marketing Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFCC</td>
<td>Economic and Financial Crimes Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATF</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEPA</td>
<td>Federal Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGN</td>
<td>Federal Government of Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IATA</td>
<td>International Air Transport Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFC</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NISER</td>
<td>Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>National Science Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTDC</td>
<td>Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTO</td>
<td>National Tourism Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONP</td>
<td>Online Nigeria Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROI</td>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTO</td>
<td>Regional Tourism Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST-EP</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism as an effective tool for Eliminating Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nation Environmental Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSD</td>
<td>United Nation Statistic Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>United Nation World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United State Dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USP</td>
<td>Unique Selling Proposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

“The Image we have of another country says a lot about how we view it as a tourist destination, a place to invest or a source of consumer goods” (Frost 2004-no page).

Destination branding, although challenging, was regarded as the most powerful tool that should be utilized by destination marketers for effective differentiation strategies (Gerald 2010). The image of a destination is however an important component of destination branding (Blain et al 2005). Greaves and Skinner (2009) identified two types of images involved in branding; projected image and received image. According to Gunn (1972), there are 2 levels of image formation, the first level is the organic image (based on several information sources) and the second level is the induced image (influenced by promotional activities and actual experience of tourists). However, the perceived image of a destination determines the expectation of the tourist and is an important success factor in destination marketing (Leisen 2001). Crisis is one major factor that damages the perception that tourists have of a destination (Barnes 2009). Natural disaster, health related issues and human evoked crisis are the three major types of crisis on tourist destination according to Romila (2008). The crisis that arises as a result of natural disaster gains international pardon within shorter time compared to the crisis (e.g. terrorism) that arises from human unpleasant activities (Sönmez 1998). During crisis, the mass media plays a major role on what is received by the international community (Barnes 2009). Therefore, Romila (2008) suggested a damage control marketing campaign in order to manage, monitor and influence the image of the destination that is presented in the media.

Nigeria is one good example of nations that have experienced damaged international reputation and a long standing image problem that resulted from unpleasant human activities. As a matter of fact, there has been several issues of image crisis in Nigeria that erupted from unstable political situation, civil war in the 60’s, biases of the global system towards African continents, corruption in the system of governance; most noticeably in the fallacious electoral process, amongst others (Egwemi 2010). Even recently, there has been series of terrorist activities credited to some religious sects regarded as boko haram (literarily translated as western education is forbidden) that threatens the business environment and the unity of the Nigerian state (Owuamanam et al 2012). Also, internet scam by some Nigerian youths popularly known as yahoo boys (Agunbiade & Ayotunde 2011), and ethno-religious and inter-ethnic violence has attracted strong negative publicity (Osaghae & Suberu 2005; Coleman 2001). However, there were several positive stories of Nigeria, for example the 1999-2002 world value survey rating Nigeria as the happiest country in the world(Ortega no date; AllAfrica Reader 2010), the prominent role of Nigeria- ECOMOG in the peace keeping mission of the Liberia civil war between 1990 and 1996 (Adebajo 2002), the leadership position in the AU-ECOWAS mission to Senegal (Vanguard 2012), and also the claiming of the historical championship as the first African, non-European team to win the Olympic gold medal (FIFA world cup 2012).
In order to project a good image of the country, series of rebranding has been conducted; the most recent is the campaign titled “Nigeria, good people great nation” (Nworah 2006). However, the outcome of the campaign has not been favourable (BBC Documentary 2009). Considering the economic viability of Nigeria in term of resource endowment (Muhammad-Lawal & Atte 2006; Ogunleye-Adetona 2010), such image crisis will only limit the growth potential of the nation and hinder future sustainability (Azikiwe 2009). The last rebranding campaign raised lots of criticism from the public because of inefficiency and the supposedly wastage of resources (Ajao 2009; Egwemi 2010; Agbese 2009). Also, many academic scholars have written various articles criticizing the failures of the rebranding campaign and expressing their outrage over the uncertainty of the future (e.g. Aregbeshola 2009; Egwemi 2010; Nworah 2006). However, those articles were particularly focused on criticism rather that recommendation for future improvement. Also, none of the articles highlighted the importance of tourism in country branding. Considering the opinion of Kerr (2006) that tourism is the most tangible aspect of national brand, the absence of tourism in the rebranding planning could be regarded as a huge flaw. Hence, in contrast to the regular image rebranding in Nigeria, this study suggests the creation of a nation’s brand as a much more effective way to improve the country’s image; as a matter of fact, Nigeria has no known brand at the moment. Therefore, this study will develop a model for country branding and an experimental application will be conducted on Nigeria.

1.1 Research Questions

- How can a nation transform negative publicity and international reputation during image crisis?
- What are the needed criteria that a nation must fulfil before it can be successfully branded?
- What impact or contribution can tourism make to build a good destination brand image and to ensure sustainable development of a nation?

1.2 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to develop a model for country branding. This is intended to be a general model that can be applied to all countries but it is also recommended for countries that have been undergoing a long term image crisis. Hence, an experimental application of the model will be conducted on Nigeria.
1.3 Research Objectives

- To identify the weaknesses of the previous rebranding campaign of Nigeria;
- To establish the argument that brand creation can contribute a greater influence on Nigeria’s image than a rebranding campaign;
- To identify the role of tourism in country branding and in Nigeria;
- To contribute to developmental planning of Nigeria as a nation.

1.4 Study Design

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach. The reviewed literature on the concept of branding, destination branding, destination image, image crisis, and the role of tourism in branding were used as secondary sources. The primary data collection was done through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 7 national level DMOs. The interviewed DMOs are those that have had experience on image crisis and brand creation; the purpose of the DMO selection is to investigate the impact of country branding on image improvement and to learn from the practical experiences of the DMOs. In addition, the database of the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) and Association of National Tourists Offices & Representatives (ANTOR) was used to obtain detailed information and relevant statistics of the contacted DMOs.

1.5 Data Analysis Method

The data were analysed by carefully comparing information obtained from the different interviews using a mix of thematic and comparative analysis method. The recorded interviews was transcribed verbatim, this was to avoid missing any vital information from the respondents. Also, information obtained in the interviews was traced to any theoretical root in the literature review so as to facilitate the analysis and to help draw up as accurate as possible conclusions. The result of the interviews was grouped into 4 themes based on the research questions and detailed analysis was done under each headings.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Brand is the sum total of all user experiences with a particular product or services, building both reputation and future expectations of benefit” (Miletsky & Smith 2009, p. 2)

According to Clifton (2003) some of the brand managers have shallow knowledge of the concept of branding and take it with levity. The same can be said in commodity branding and destination branding. However, considering the sensitivity of the concept, it is important to have an in-depth understanding in order to avoid confusion. Therefore, this study will search relevant theoretical sources to provide concrete but comprehensive information about the misconstrued branding concept in this chapter. In addition, the literature review will include the Concept of place branding on a country level perspective, The purpose of branding a destination, Image problem in the context of tourist destinations, how to address the issue of image problems on a national level, how to plan and build a successful destination Image/brand, and the role of tourism in country branding and sustainable development.

2.1 The concept of Brand and Branding

David Ogilvy defined Brand in what could be said to be a layman interpretation as “the consumer’s idea of a product”. It was closely defined by John Philips, the president of RCG Consulting Corporation, as “a product that provides functional benefits plus added values that consumers value enough to buy”. A much more generally adopted definition was provided by the American Marketing Association, defining Brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, logo, or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from that of the competitors”. However true the above definition may seems, it was disregarded by Ravi Arapurakal, the brand management council of the AT & T Asia Pacific, claiming that Brand “is not” and should not be mistaken with the logotype, symbol, or even the product itself. The argument was based on the assumption that brand is a pattern of thought of the consumer associated with the product name which influences the way the product is perceived and consequently drives the consumers attitude and decisions (Kaptan & Pandey 2010).

Interestingly and even more explicitly stated was the claim of Prof. Lesley de Chernatony in his book titled “from brand vision to brand Evaluation”, that there is no such thing as “a brand” but in actual sense, there is a spectrum of brand interpretations (De Chernatony 2001). As a matter of fact, brands have become objects of immense social importance (George 2006), and to say the least, the core value driving customer’s purchase decision rather than the actual product and/or service purchased (Mohsin 2009).

The complexity of the term “brand” has made it difficult to arrive at a singular definition or consensus that could be widely accepted by all academic scholars.
However, this study strongly advocate to brand managers (of product, service or even tourist destinations) to look beyond sloganeering and/or advertising campaign when thinking of branding or rebranding program. Brand should rather be seen as what forms the collective image/reputation of the core offerings of the management, which of course, should be a formulation from a variety of interpretations by the consumers; of which is derived from previous experiences of the consumers. Hence, brand planning should incorporate sound but practical consumer knowledge; the brand managers should endeavour to understand the different views of the consumer and come up with a package of delivery that is capable of influencing the perception of the consumer, in term of quality and service expectation that will distinguish the product from others, and that clearly convey the promise (or brand message) of the destination about the product in alignment with the need of the consumers.

2.1.1 Explaining why Branding fails from misconstrued Terminologies: Branding, Rebranding or Renaming?

According to Ian Ellwood (Cited in Davis & Baldwin 2005) branding is about understanding your business to create stories. Davis & Baldwin further explained that such stories should be an established dialogue that will connect to the emotional state of your brand audience in order to generate a sustainable relationship between the organization and the audience. In agreement to the above ideas of branding, Emerald insight staffs, regard the concept of branding as a cognitive operation meant to create and sustain a win-win relationship with customers, but more importantly, stress the need to develop a name and image that will stand-out in the competitive market place; such that will be attributed to the product unique tangible and intangible characteristics. (Emerald Insight Staff 2004)

However, Melewar and Small identified four elements of a brand that should be considered in branding, namely; brand name, brand visual (logo, colours), sound element (jingles, music) and brand personality (how the brand speaks and behaves) (Melewar and Small 2007). The elements (based on the opinion of Melewar and Small) could be regarded as incomplete or lack ingenious ingredient if the statement of Ogilvy is considered that “the result of your campaign depend less on how we write your advertising than how your product is positioned” (Gerard 2008), this statement provokes an argument that product positioning is a more powerful element of branding than the visual and sound elements that are commonly present in commercial advertising. Clifton gave a candid opinion about positioning in branding by stressing that organization should focus branding on delivering sustainable competitive advantage in order to enjoy a unique position in the market place. Though, it was also supported in Clifton’s work that the visual (and verbal) elements of branding should not be neglected but should be allowed to play the role of representing the brand identity that will stick in people’s mind (Clifton 2003).

Considering the above interpretations of branding, one would easily agree with Chernatony and colleagues that regard “renaming” or “redesigning” as a narrow
attempt to rebranding; one that might not yield desired result (Chernatony et. al 2008). Other scholars (for example Sullivan 1990, cited in Powell & Balmer 2007) however pointed out that sensitivity to customer’s attitude and product repositioning are key elements to be carefully considered in rebranding projects (Powell & Balmer 2007). Further information on why firms, corporations and tourist destinations embark on branding or rebranding will be provided in subsequent sections of this paper, this is meant to more clearly explain why branding or rebranding projects fails and to provide useful hints to brand managers when, how and why their organizations should think of rebranding, because, it is not every situation that requires immediate rebranding or not every problems can be solved by rebranding as argued by Staurt & MuZellec’s (2004) (Cited in de Chernatony et. al 2008)

Considering the different opinions from academic scholars on the concept of branding and rebranding; this study argues that branding is not a one-way subject and should not be treated as such. Hence, any manager involved in rebranding with the motive of changing the product name or redesigning is just limiting the concept and may fall into the pits of unpleasant surprises and wastage of limited resources. Therefore, the conclusion of this study on the subject matter is that rebranding or branding programs can fail when there is limited knowledge of the concept before embarking on the campaign, when there is improper investigation of the problem that warrant the campaign and when there is no link between the campaign and the actual or changing needs of the target audience. Brand managers should hereby approach any rebranding project with open mind and broad interest; the situation should be observed from the destination’s point of view, the target consumers, as well as all stake holders involved. However, it must be stressed at this point that this study is not against redesigning, renaming, reinventing, product renewal, advertisement or any form of branding or rebranding campaign, but rather view them as “part-of-a-whole” approach and would be myopic if it is the overall impression or picture of the managers for the branding project. Hence a good branding or rebranding exercise should be a timely but balance action between an inside-out and outside-in approach (see Wit 2005 for more information on inside-out/outside in theory) i.e. the firms should clearly understand the market environment, which of course, involve the customers, and align that to the core competence of the firm in order to find a suitable position in the market for branding. Such branding should however stress and incorporate all the vital intangible elements (communication, effectiveness, positioning, marketing, reputation, identity and personality) into one corporate whole that will be concise and convey an easy to follow story, capable of appealing to the emotional state of the consumers, while, at the same time, be uniquely identifiable, sustainable and able to compete successfully in the market place.

2.1.2 Why Re-Brand the Brand: understanding the purpose is KEY

Leslie de Chernatony and colleagues, in their review of several literatures, highlighted four popular reasons why rebranding may be carried out and how;
brand underperformance, merger and acquisition, response to competitive pressure, and brand image improvement were identified as key reasons that may propel firms to undergo rebranding but nonetheless the trio gave their candid opinion that rebranding is not always the solution to all problems. Managers were advised to critically assess the potential benefit thereof and properly investigate the reason that is motivating the rebranding if it actually is worth the trouble (De Chernatony et. al 2008). In addition to the above opinion, Miller and Muir added two yet interesting reasons which were either as a result of a change of direction in the organization or as a result of Scandal or image crisis. (Miller & Muir 2005) The table below is obtained from the work of Miller & Muir (2005); it contains the motivating factors for rebranding and practical examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for re-branding</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To over-haul the brand, giving it a fresh start</td>
<td>Eurodisney renamed Disneyland Paris after a slow start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To recover from a crisis or scandal</td>
<td>valuJet became Airtran after a plane crash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As part of a de-merger or spin-off</td>
<td>Arthur Anderson de-merged into Anderson and Accenture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As part of a merger or acquisition</td>
<td>Sandoz and Ciba-Geigy merged to form Novartis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To harmonize brands internationally</td>
<td>Marathon was re-branded Snickers in the UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To rationalize a product portfolio</td>
<td>Unilever re-branded Olivio spread under Bertolli banner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support a new direction for the business</td>
<td>British Petroleum re-branded BP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table lacked detailed information about internal restructuring that took place in those examples cited so no comprehensive conclusion could be drawn as to what happened within those companies during the rebranding phase; for example, during image scandal of ValuJet, simply changing the name to Airtran will not gain the trust of the flying passengers, people would be more interested in what led to the plane crash and what was done afterwards to prevent future
reoccurrence than just simple changing of names. However, one can argue from the opinion of de Chenartony and colleagues that there are varieties of reasons that could prompt rebranding each with different causal effects, which means that there should not be just a single way to rebrand; the “how” depends entirely on the “why”.

Therefore destination (DMOs) must clearly understand “why” they are going into rebranding before they could effectively select the most suitable option of “how” the rebranding would be undertaken. The options available in academic literatures are: renaming of the brand, redesigning, strong advertising and re-aligning the marketing mix with the brand concept, re-inventing the brand and/or innovation of new idea into an existing brand, internal branding and marketing to motivate and instil self-reliance and confidence of the brand on the employees of the organization, re-visiting the organization purpose, structure, culture, and corporate values, redefining brand strategy and positioning, and recreate brand vision to meet the need of the contemporary market (this is because market is dynamic and so should the brand vision). Talking of advertising, public relation was stressed to possess more effectiveness in communicating the new brand ideas than the conventional advertisement because it is believed to be a two-way dialogue rather than the conventional advertising that gives no room for interactive environment between the firm and the target audience. (Miller & Muir 2005; de Chernatony et. al 2008) However, in the case of large target audience, public relation that involves direct contact with customers may be too expensive and unrealistic even though it possess more value and perceived impact than the traditional advertising, thus presenting a paradox of cost and value. In order to overcome or limit the cost and complexity associated with direct public relation, Rogers (2003) proposed the use of opinion leaders so as to reach greater audience with less number of people.

Considering the risks associated with Rebranding, it was advocated by Miller & Muir (2005) as well as Staurt and MuZellec’s (2004 ) that rebranding should only be taken after weighing the potential benefits against the effect it would have on the existing customers. As a matter of fact, Muller and Muir (2005) out rightly pointed out that rebranding will lead to a fall in market share claiming that some customers would be alienated in the process.

The reviewed literatures has cleared any doubt on the complexity of rebranding and as a result, it would be difficult to come to a specific conclusion in this study on what particular rebranding program is good for specific causal factor. Nevertheless, it could be argued that renaming the brand, redesigning the symbols or changing the advert might be less effective compared to the recreation of the brand vision to meet the need of the contemporary market, and, redefining brand strategy and positioning. Having said all, brand managers are advised to always bear in mind that rebranding is not a one size fit all program and not every situation could be resolved by rebranding, therefore properly investigating the situation will aid the managers to grasp the root of the problem before a decision is made on how to make resolution and which rebranding option is most suitable.
2.2 Destination Branding: A country level Perspective

Branding destination has not gained much scientific interest like the conventional product branding (Park & Petrick 2006). Perhaps, because destination branding is relatively recent; the first book published in this research area was in 2002 compared to the conventional product branding that has been in marketing debate for more than five decades (Pike 2005). Some literatures argue that the shallow interest in the destination branding domain was as a result of the complexity of the field; owing to a pool of reasons, for example, continual changing of visitor’s behaviour and existence of interdependent stakeholders (Buhalis 2000 cited in Gerald 2010). In most cases, it is almost impossible to manage and coordinated the autonomous stakeholders under a single framework of management (Giannopoulos et al 2011). Also, there is always difficulty to assign single meaning to the tourism destination products by the different markets and market segment involved (Fyall & Leask 2007). These make destination branding a challenging field, yet, to stress the importance, experts has viewed tourism destination branding as the most powerful tool that should be utilized by destination markets for effective differentiation strategies. (Gerald 2010) Therefore understanding the meaning and usage of destination branding is indispensable.

Destination branding was defined by Anholt (2009) as the destination’s competitive identity and international competitiveness that differentiate the destination from others and makes it memorable. A more comprehensive definition was provided by Blain et al (2005) as “the marketing activities that support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphics that both identifies and differentiates a destination; that convey a promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; and that serve to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of a destination experience, all with the intent purpose of creating an image that influence consumer decision to visit the destination in question as opposed to an alternative one (Blain et al 2005, p. 331-332).

It is obvious that the above definitions of destination branding overlap each other because both are pointing in the same direction of what the concept is all about. The words in Italic represent important elements of the definitions and the overlaps. From the overlaps, it could be argued that the main idea of destination branding is wrapped around Image and identity creation, and the ability to differentiate a destination from others, but more importantly, the destination should be memorable and have a reputation capable of influencing the consumer’s decision to patronise. But it could be pointed out that marketing activities stated in the second definition is not limited to the field of tourism (should include other aspect of the nation as well) because visitors to the destination would be interested in many other things that the destination has to offer; the ability to cohesively manage such activities may be a formidable challenge in a free society because of the autonomy enjoyed by the stakeholders in different sectors of the national economy. However, this study supports the definition of Blain et al. because of the consideration it gives to the consumer’s perception and also, because it is in
alignment with the already established debate in the conventional consumer goods branding; which makes it (the definition) more trusted and reliable.

2.2.1 Why is Destination Branding Necessary?

“In the era of globalization, countries compete with each other for attention, respect and trust of potential consumers, investors, tourists, media and governments of other nations” (Giannopoulos et al 2011 no page).

Taken the above as the starting point; it could be argued that competition is unavoidable in a globalised world. Therefore, rather than avoiding competition, nations should exploit it to trigger innovativeness and showcase her competitiveness in order to win attention. In the work of Sumaco & Richardson (2011) it was stated that the purpose of Destination branding is to create preference and differentiation; Moilanen & Rainisto (2009) however stressed that destination branding is necessary in order to emphasize destination competitiveness and attract businesses, investment, a skillful workforce, inhabitants and visitors to the destination in place of other destination. And from the definition of Blain et al (2005), the purpose of destination branding could be deduced as follows; to create a unique identity, to connect to the consumer’s emotional state, and to create a brand promise that can be identified with the destination. Anholt (2006) highlighted yet another interesting reason why nations consider branding; to revive their dying and out-dated image, and also to renew a bad international image, he also claimed that some nations are unknown to the right audience and need to be introduced through branding (Anholt 2006). Overall, the purpose of destination branding can be summed up as the creation of competitive identity that will make the destination a preferred choice over others, and a unique image that will stick to the mind of the target audience. These reasons should be the ultimate goal of destination managers; to organise all branding activities towards achieving those ends.

2.2.2 Benefits of Destination Branding

This section will provide theoretical evidence of the benefits of destination branding from two different authors. Aside the fact that branding is a means of creating competitive advantage in the present globalization age, it also increase the possibility for the destination; to attract foreign investments; to support the interest of the exporting industry; to strengthen the growth of the tourism industry; promote public diplomacy; and build a genuine sense of identity and self-esteem of the citizens. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009)

However, Baker identified twenty benefits of destination branding which he organized under three headings as; benefits to customers, to destination marketers and, benefits to local communities. One interesting benefit to customers highlighted is that a brand image reduces uncertainty and fear of unsatisfactory experience, and also provides a perceived sense of added value to customers. To destination marketers; it provides greater strategic focus, enhances unity of purpose and facilitate communication with stakeholders, gives possibility of higher return on investment (ROI), and serve as a medium to correct wrong
perception of the destination. To the local community; it promotes civic pride and advocacy, locally made products will thrive, it could motivate cooperation and healthy competition amongst stakeholders and, increase job availability and employment opportunities for the local community. (Baker 2007)

2.2.3 Developing Brand Attributes: Prerequisite for Successful Branding

“Consumers usually associate a brand name with a particular attribute, some benefits, a specific usage situation, a logo, ad features or characteristics”. (Roedder-John et al 2005; Carlson and Bond 2006, both cited in Visentin et al 2010-no page)

The above statement clearly highlighted the factors that motivate consumer’s identity with a brand and what stimulate consumer preferences. Since branding is about differentiation and preference; it is important for any destination that is interested in branding as a source of creating competitive advantage to utilize the identified factors in the above statement as the unique selling proposition (USP). However, benefits and usefulness of brands have been discussed earlier in this study; so, this section will focus on attributes of Brand that a destination should develop in order to enjoy a successful branding. Visentin et al (2010) listed 11 attributes that are paramount to consumer’s choice of brand, these are; differentiation, uniqueness, distinctiveness, usefulness, meets the need of the market, high-quality, esteem, popularity, known, awareness and familiarity. Risitano (2005) Highlighted 5 important elements of brand building and image formation which are necessary for brand communication and positioning strategy; brand culture, brand character, brand personality, brand symbol, brand slogan and brand name. Also, Anholt (1990) highlighted 6 elements that are paramount to nation’s brand built around the nation’s competence, these are: exports, governance, tourism, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, and people. He (Anholt) quoted that the strength and weakness of each country is based on what he termed as “Hexagon” and further stated that tourism may play a vital role in the research arena of nation branding (Anholt 1990 cited in Giannopoulos et al 2011) However, Moilanen & Rainisto (2009) claimed that the tangible, intangible, psychological and sociological features are attributes that customers want to be identified with. They also included brand attractiveness as elements for creating competitive advantage and promoting destination’s uniqueness, and explained that the elements of brand attractiveness are culture, environment, social development, the place atmosphere and the images related to its brand.

The WTO also highlighted 6 important elements that are valuable to destination branding measures, these are; attractions, public and private amenities, accessibility, human resources, image and character, and price (WTO 2007) (please note that all the terms used are explained in the list of abbreviations). Image is the perception of the consumer about the destination and important factor that determine their decision, it is hereby important for destination branding managers to first develop the attributes on which the image is built rather than trying to exploit the consumers by some advertising campaign that are not in alignment with the consumer’s need. Therefore, this study apprise the listed
attributes by the authors as a platform on which branding should be built. Hence, destination managers are advised to look into these check lists and develop each area as a complementary prerequisites to branding campaign; which must adhere to the platform built, and include a promise based on the capacity of the destination in order to avoid promising beyond what the destination can offer.

2.2.4 Challenges of Destination Branding: Country Level Perspective

Country branding is a complex phenomenon, unlike the conventional product branding, because of the numerous stakeholders involved who function autonomously to compete for their individual share of the market. But for country branding to be successful, all the stakeholders need to cooperate together in a legislative environment in order to have a unified direction in an integrated purpose to achieve the overall strategic interest of the destination (Buhalis 2000). Coordinating The different stakeholders is indeed quite challenging, and even more challenging is how to secure a comprehensive long term financial resource; having the required political support; making the interest group committed; solutions of identity; paying attention to the experts; and cooperation on a public-private level (Public-Private-Partnership) (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009; Dwyer et al. 2009 also supported Public-Private-Partnership).

Destination needs a strong collaborative relationship amongst the stakeholders to achieve a successful branding; this non-negotiable requirement can be authenticated by the case study research of Wang & Krakover (2008) on Elkhart County in Indiana. The study investigates the relationship environment amongst tourism industry stakeholders in order to reach practical conclusions for successful implementation of collaborative destination marketing. The perspective of the individual stakeholder in the industry was regarded as a major determinant of the kind of relationship that will exist. If a destination is clustered with narrowly focused stakeholders that concentrate on satisfying personal interest, then the outcome is a competitive relationship environment but it will be a cooperative relationship if the stakeholders think from a broader perspective to achieve the overall benefit of the destination and as such perceive competition as external objective rather than within the destination. Interestingly, both competition and cooperation exist simultaneously within a destination but the destination can even achieve a stronger competitive edge over other destinations and improve its attractiveness if the involved stakeholders embrace the potency of network strategic operation and function in a coopetitive relationship (Wang & Krakover 2008). The big challenge is how to bring all the stakeholders under a single framework of management and how to establish a unified strategic thinking.

As a result of the limited resource available to the national organization involved in coordinating tourism activities; which is the most visible and tangible aspect of national branding (Kerr 2006), Elbe et al. (2009) advocated a facilitating strategy that will place the national tourism organization (Usually the DMO; please note that DMO and their activities will be explained in detail in the subsequent headings) in a central position for the mobilization of resources and also to encourage active involvement of the stakeholders in the planning and collective marketing activities of the destination (Elbe et al. 2009). From the four approaches
to stakeholder’s management (collaboration, involvement, defensive and monitoring) Sheehan & Ritchie (2005) strongly advised that collaboration and involvement are the two most adopted strategies of the DMOs and with a high possibility of success in the destination branding (Sheehan & Ritchie 2005). For a DMO to be successful in the coordinating effort, it must endeavour to gain practical but moral confidence of the involved stakeholders and be perceived as a legitimate entity whose service will be continually needed for a more productive functioning of the individual stakeholders as well as the destination at large. This will however motivate the stakeholders to be actively involved with the DMO and the resultant situation will be an integrated community of stakeholders. Therefore, DMOs should pay much attention to relationship building in order to establish a network of stakeholders as that is the platform on which the legitimacy can be strengthened (Elbe et al. 2009).

2.2.5 The Structure, Funding and Roles of DMO

To succeed in today’s competitive world, every business establishments require strategic marketing to create awareness to the target audience and to maintain a strong competitive advantage against competitors; in this regards, tourism is not an exception. Marketing activities in tourism at the country level is however organized and managed in three distinctive levels which are; national tourism organization (NTO), regional tourism organization (RTO) and the local tourism organization (RTO). The major objective of the organizations in many countries is to create a unified strategic plan for the development and marketing of the country as a tourist destination (Pike 2008) and the national tourism organization decides the overall strategic direction of the tourism industry, the kind of image the country should be marketed, and the promotion activities that suit the desired image (Kamann 2008). However, the role of the tourism organization differs in different countries depending on the political structure of the tourism industry as well as the marketing organizations.

The Tourism bodies are popularly referred to as Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) but often times; the DMO at the national level can also be regarded as the national tourism office. In Finland for example, the DMO is government owned ministry, that provides policy advice for government on tourism developmental issues and also coordinate the activities of the private sector in the industry (Saraniemi 2009). The DMO at the national level oversees all the tourism activities of the nation. To be successful, the DMO must establish a strong mutual relationship with the sub national actors and also the private sectors whose activities are invaluable in communicating the image of the destination across the national border (Wang 2006). It should be noted that the national tourism organization will be simply regarded as DMO throughout this study.
Table 2: Typical roles and responsibilities of DMOs – National, provincial/regional, local (Kamann 2008, p. 16)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role/Responsibility</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial/regional</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destination promotion, including branding and image</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaigns to drive business, particularly to SMMEs</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbiased information Services</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation/facilitation of Bookings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destination coordination and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor information and Reservations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and education</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business advice</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product ‘start-ups’</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events development and Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractions development and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy, Research and Development</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below is a typical example of the organizational structure of the destination at the country level.

![Organizational structure diagram](image)

**Figure 1: The basic organisational structure of the destination at the country level (Saraniemi 2009, p. 27)**

The structure is used in Finland tourism industry and not necessary used elsewhere. There is no universally acceptable structure of the national tourism organization and this is evident in the different names of the organization at
different destinations/countries (e.g. authorities, commissions, boards, tourist organizations, bureaux, tourist offices, corporations, departments, councils, ministries, etc). Other factors that influence the structure are; relationships of the organization to national governments, budget levels available for the management, tourism policies, goals, objectives, responsibilities and foreign office locations. (Morrison et al 1995) The most influence on the structure is perhaps the kind of relationship that exists between the organization and the government as well as the source of fund. For example; Kamann (2008) identified 5 major structures of DMO in Europe which are; government agency, public-private partnership non-profit, public-private partnership for-profit, private non-profit organization and private for-profit organization. It was however stressed in her study that the most commonly adopted structure is the public-private partnership; which is in agreement with the argument of the contemporary literatures in the field of tourism (e.g. Moilanen & Rainisto 2009; Dwyer et al 2009; Elbe et al 2009; Buhalis 2000) and also reveals the motivating factors for the kind of structures that exist.

As earlier stated, securing a long term financial resources is a challenge to the DMO (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009). To be successful, DMO should not depend on only one source of funding; that is the more reason why the public-private partnership was advocated; to ensure continuous flow of fund for major projects and to establish strong and effective mutual relationship for the healthy growth of the industry. Traditionally, the largest percentage of the DMO funding is obtained from government who always regard the funding as investment and as such expect some return (Sheehan and Ritchie 1997). Other sources of revenue of the DMO include; Hotel/room taxes, promotional participations, membership dues, advertising, event hosting, state/provincial grants, and contract services but hotel/room taxes has the highest percentage of revenue for the DMO. (Sheehan and Ritchie 2005) Kamann (2008) also confirmed that central government played a major role in financing the DMO and added municipalities, private sponsors and EU financing as the source of fund to the DMO especially in the EU.
The above is an excerpt from the DMAI research conducted on 195 DMOs around the world. The study showed that majority of the DMOs are independent not-for-profit organization and only a fifth of all the DMOs are government agency. This report is not entirely the same with the study of Kamann (2008) on the structure of DMO that claimed that most of the DMOs (in Europe) are public-private partnership. However, the claim of Sheehan and Ritchie (2005) was confirmed that the highest revenue is obtained from hotel room taxes because the report showed that 79 percent of all the revenue was obtained from hotel room taxes while the membership dues account for 42 percent of private funding. It is important for this study to understand what the income of the DMO is used for and the report provided information based on the 195 DMAI surveys that 47% of the revenue generated was spent on sales and marketing (mostly on media and advertising) and other expenses are used on personnel and administrative purposes.

2.3 **Destination Image: An Important Phenomenon for Success**

“*The image we have of another country says a lot about how we view it as a tourist destination, a place to invest or a source of consumer goods*” (Frost 2004 no page)

Every country that must succeed as a tourist destination must take the issue of her image very seriously. Jenkins (1999) regarded image as the influencing factor that stimulate expectation in the mind of tourist and also triggers their decision making process. This assumption is in agreement with the definition of image, by Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977); as the personal and stereotypical perception of a place.
shared by a group of people. There are several academic literature, articles and even empirical studies that have proven that the image is constructed in the mind of the tourists based on their individual perception of certain attributes of the destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999; Chon 1991; Goodrich 1978; Hunt 1975; Mayo 1973; Mayo & Jarvis 1981; Woodside & Lysonski 1989 all cited in Leisen 2001). Such assumption can simply be translated that the destination marketer may have no control over the image formation in the earliest stage; popularly known as organic image, as against the induced image formation, which is a more developed image of the destination borne out of actual experience of the tourists and the promotional activities of the destination (Gartner 1993 cited in Banyai 2009). Hence, it is important to identify the market segments with favourable image (organic) of the destination (through marketing research) and build on that (organic image) in the promotional campaign to induce the desired image with the intention of using the target segment for increasing the market size of the destination through positive words of mouth and revisit (Greaves & Skinner 2010). Identifying such segment would help the destination marketer to be more efficient and cost effective in their promotional campaign (Crompton 1979 cited in Leisen 2001).

Gunn (1988) stated that organic image are formed based on the information obtained from different sources such as books, geography, history, education, newspaper reports, magazine articles, television reports, and the opinion of friends and families that were not intended as tourism-specific. Despite the claim that the organic image is not within the control of destination marketer (Gunn 1972), Lichrou et al (2008) came up with certain attributes of the destination that might be appealing to the tourists when a destination is marketed as narratives. According to Lichrou et al (2008); marketing a destination as narratives takes into consideration the physical, structural, social, historical and cultural dynamism of the society for creating meaningful representation of the destination which might construct a clear image of the destination in the mind of the tourist and as such control their expectations. The claim can be further explained that; developing such attributes could enhance the image of the destination hereby giving the opportunity to indirectly control the development of the organic image formation (regarded by Gunn as incomplete image) into a more complex and comprehensive image that is favourable for both the tourists as well as the destination (Fakayee and Compton 1991 cited in Greaves & Skinner 2010). Therefore it is important for a destination to be able to stimulate and influence as much group of tourists as possible to think in similar direction about the destination in order to facilitate marketing and branding activities and to establish a unique comparative and competitive edge over competing destinations (Leisen 2001). Stabler (1988 cited in Jenkins 1999) divided the image formation into a demand and supply side; with the supply side within the control of the marketer (induced) image, while the demand side is beyond the control of the marketer as identified by Gunns (1972) as organic image. These factors are shown in the figure below:
It is evident from Figure 3 that the demand factors are in agreement with the Gunn’s list of attributes of organic image with the exception of the psychological attributes which, according to Jenkins (1999), have been attempted by few academic studies and also difficult to measure. However, Echtner and Ritchie’s (1991) included the psychological characteristics in their model for measuring destination image and quoted the atmosphere, friendliness, beauty of the landscape, religious and historic events, and romance quality of the destination as important psychological attributes for image formation.

### 2.3.1 Addressing the issue of image Crisis on a country level

Crisis can be regarded as any condition to tourist destination and its management that has the potential of causing unpleasant stigma on the image of the destination which could inadvertently give rise to personifying the destination as undesirable, improperly managed, and unsafe place to visit or for investment. (Nelsen 2010 modified) Moreira (2007) declared crises as period of great uncertainty where the leadership of a place had lost the virtue of proper management, or as stated by Glaesser (2003), as period of disorderliness and threats of destruction. (Moreira 2007; Glaesser 2003 both cited in Barnes 2009).

Country Image Crisis can either be as a result of natural disaster (such as earthquake, storm or volcano that damage urban areas or natural environment and tourism infrastructure), Health issues (such as disease and epidemic that affects human or animals which eventually limits access to tourist attractions), or events evoked by human activities (such as wars, internal conflicts and act of terrorism) (Romila 2008). All crises from natural disaster, health related issues and human evoked activities have great deal of negative effects on the image of the country.
and most importantly, the perception of international tourists (Barnes 2009). However Sönmez (1998) affirmed that the crises that arise from natural disaster can gain industry wide and international pardon within a shorter time compared to the Crises evoked by human unpleasant activities. Perhaps, this is because natural disasters are caused by external factors that are beyond the immediate and direct control of the country (Banes 2009). Yet Romila (2008) advocated effective planning (termed as “damage control”) for taming the hazardous impacts and implications of the crisis on the image of the country and stressed that effort should be made to keep the human caused crisis under strict control.

The required conditions for destination development are peace, safety and security (Laws et al 2006). When these conditions are threatened by conflicts in sensitive sectors of national economy such as Social, Political, Economic, Cultural and Environmental (Romila 2008) the resultant situation is widespread insecurity and chaos that will eventually evoke undesirable image and stereotypic connotation on the country from the international community. McNelly & Izcaray(1986 cited in Saleem 2006) and (Barnes 2009) also stated that mass media plays an important role in the way a country image is perceived by the international community; media can help people understand and can also mislead people about a country by exaggerating certain unpleasant occurrence. Ndlovu et al (2009) explicitly stated that a destination risks being tagged with negative image when there is on-going political chaos, natural disasters, terrorism and civil unrest within her geographic boundaries. They further added that tourism crises are triggered by economic downturn and recession, socio-cultural unrest, Contested election results, coup d'état, environmental degradation, technological failures, war, deteriorating international relations and imposition of sanctions (Ndlovu et al 2009). However, human inappropriate activities such as robbery, theft, cheating, corruption, and transport-related accidents that occur randomly without targeting any specific group of people are said to possess the least negative impact on the image of the destination and the possibility of future visitation of tourists (Hang et al 2005 cited in Ndlove et al 2009)

National Image crisis is not undefeatable although many countries still battle with crisis and its impact on their national image to date. Example is the Thailand tsunami of December 26 2006 affecting major western tourists in the country at that time. The future reoccurrence was prevented by the quick responds of the Thai government establishing tsunami local detector and warning signal. Unfortunately the political crisis of December 2008 and April 2009 that caused a sharp drop of 31percent of visiting tourists to Thailand within the 4 months had not been resolved which led to a continuous drop in the visiting Tourists to Thailand as claimed by Barnes (2009). Romila (2008) listed 11 countries that used the damage control marketing and campaign to minimise the impact of their crises. These countries are; South Africa during the Apartheid crime waves, Sri Lanka during a Civil war, United Kingdom during the foot and mouth disease outbreak, United State after the September 11 attack, Israeli peace process since 2000, Turkish tourism recovery after the Izmit earthquake, Australia reaction to the port Arthur Massacre of 1996, Croatia recovery after war with Serbia between 1992 and 1996, The responds of Fiji to the coup of 1987 and the George Speight rebellion in 2000,
The recovery of the Philippines tourism industry after civil war, political crisis and natural disaster during the 1990s, and lastly, Egypt recovery after the terrorism act directed at the tourists between 1992 and 1997.

When a nation is experiencing crisis change is expected. Experts recommended a good and efficient crisis management to battle the crisis and avoid future reoccurrence. Nelsen (2005) introduced 6 stigma management strategies that could be used during country crisis, these are; concealment; this involves hiding the crisis from the public knowledge, Denial; involves defending your destination that a negative occurrence takes place even if it actually did, Disconfirmation; involves an admittance that a crisis did happened but minimising the actual or perceived impact, Acknowledgement; admitting that the crisis took place but shifting blame on factors beyond the immediate control of the destination management, Assurance; accepting the fault of the occurrence and doing things right in order to win the trust of the tourist by claiming to prevent reoccurrence, and lastly, Withdrawal; accepting the occurrence but shutting out your destination from the tourists that were affected by the crisis. As Schlenker (1980 cited in Nelsen 2005) stated; withdrawal could lead to much more negative consequence in the future.

However Saleem (2006) suggested using the media to redirect the attention and focus of the international tourist; in this case a nation should depend on her history, organizational ideology, political capacity, corporate and government influence to infiltrate the media for positive representation of the country. Finally, the World Tourism Organization (2006) gave a 10 step approach to crisis management that a nation can adopt to control the impact of the crisis and influence the media presentation which is a key to the way the international community will perceive the situation. The first step is that a nation should not underestimate the potential harm of any crisis. Secondly; the influence of the media should be taken with utmost importance. Thirdly; the nation should always get ready for crisis and develop a comprehensive crisis plan that will be updated on regular basis. Fourthly, when there is crisis, a Communications Centre should be organized to get people informed and updated of the crisis situation. The fifth step is to create action plan and implement it to put a stop to the crisis and minimise the impact in the media. Sixth; your audience should not be kept in the dark about the crisis. Seventh; the spokespeople or news agency should be well trained on how to present the crisis to the public and international community. Eight; the crisis should be put in context. Ninth; effort should be made to ascertain a positive follow-up coverage. Lastly; the nation should be sincere about the crisis in order to win peoples trust and confidence and to foster a positive relationship with the foreign media (WTO 2006 modified). The WTO (2006) process of crisis management is in alignment with the “Assurance” method of stigma control given by Nelsen (2005), and the “damage control” method given by Romila (2008), and also highlighted the importance of “media” as stated by Saleem (2006). Bringing the opinion of the 4 authors together, this study agrees that the best crisis management approach is transparency, appropriate developmental planning, and taking right but prompt actions to curb the damage, communicating with concerned community and monitoring media presentation to ensure appropriateness of the situation.
2.3.2 The role of Tourism in Country Branding and Sustainable development

According to Becker (2008) tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world competing with oil industry. Godfrey & Clarke (2000) affirmed that the industry has an average growth rate of about 5 percent annually on an international scale. These claims were confirmed by the statistics of the European Commission that tourism industry constitutes about 12 percent of the labour force; a percentage that is relatively higher when compared to other sectors of the economy in the whole of EU (EC 2012). Tourism plays a major role in generating foreign exchange earnings, attracting international investments, creating new jobs, increasing tax revenues, conservative mechanism for biodiversity, and Poverty alleviation especially in the third world countries (a good example is South Africa protected areas where nature based tourism is observed). This is best explained by the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) war against poverty program titled ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism as an effective tool for Eliminating Poverty) (Hall 2007). In country Branding, Tourism plays a vital role; being the most visible and tangible aspect of national branding (Kerr 2006). Tourism is a very good medium for every country to secure a unique position in the international community and an opportunity to stress their unique identity, showcase their authenticity, protect and preserve their culture heritage and historical values, as well as religious believes. Also, as more and more people are looking for opportunity to escape from their day-to-day activities during holidays, tourism serve as a great channel that a country can use to attract visitors and investors by presenting the known and unknown qualities of the country with major goal of making the country more attractive to the target audience through promise of internationally competitive experience packages. Lastly, tourism presents a good chance for a country to correct any wrong misconception or negative image in the mind of the tourist (O’Dell & Billing 2005).

Despite the huge economic importance attached to tourism, Becker (2008) stressed the negative impacts that improper management of tourism has on the environment due to pollution and the destruction of natural resources, the socio cultural degradation, shrinking of biodiversity through globalization and westernization, and excessive usage of tourism and non-tourism infrastructure by the tourists that threatens the survival of the future generation. As a result of the threat that improper management of tourism pose to sustainability, Theobald (2005) recommended that tourism growth should embrace strategic developmental planning approach that must include strong management competence and professionalism in coordinating its activities to ensure smooth operations and maintain sustainability as well as protection of the natural resources. Ateljevic & Page (2009) therefore, advocated that there should be a balance between tourism development and the protection of the environment to ensure sustainability. Hall (2008) proposed that tourism planning should aim at sustainability and as such, takes careful consideration of the three sensitive factors; Social, Environmental, and Economical factors that are directly affected by tourism activities.
Government plays a significant role in planning and policy making in the tourism industry, without the government, hardly can tourism activities survive. For example, the government provides basic tourism infrastructure, help to shape the economic framework of the operations, actively promote and market tourism activities, and set immigration rules on visa matters which is very important for accessibility to the country by foreign tourists. If there is strict regulation by the government on the issuance of visa, it may impede the success of tourism and discourage the interested tourists (Hall, 2008). There is need for an effective planning to manage, coordinate, control and monitor the flow of tourists in, through and out of the country in order to avoid chaos, damage to the environment, and to ensure sustainability (Timur & Getz 2002; Price & Murphy 2002).

In conclusion, tourism is a global industry that involves the trade of resources and promotion of destinations to bring about growth and development in the overall economy of the nation. As a result of the resource consumption; effective planning and management must be implemented to ensure sustainable development, this is no doubt, with many challenges and conflicts amongst the stake holders involved. In order to combat the conflicts, the policy makers in the industry needs to set up strategies and developmental approach that will incorporate every stake holders in the decision making process. Planning should involve how to make the most use of the natural resources without any possible damage to future value of the resources bearing in mind that the sole purpose of tourism is not just to generate income but also to protect natural resources and preserve cultural heritage for the future generations.

2.4 Summary

The purpose of the literature review was to give a broader view of the concept of branding and to obtain opinions from different academic perspectives in order to strengthen the knowledge of the author and to be well equipped for the empirical study, the analysis, and the conclusion of the study. Hence, the literature review served as a platform on which the whole idea of the study was developed; to provide reliable answer to the aim of the study. It was therefore important for the author to carefully select the most appropriate literatures that will be of great value for the study. There was elaborate information on the concept of branding from...
the conventional product perspective; that was necessary because the idea of destination branding emanated from the conventional product branding. More so, the field was well established for decades before the wake of destination branding. Despite many years of academic research, the complexity of this field of study has been a huge challenge that no consensus has been reached in the academic literatures. However, this study supports the opinion that brand planning should not be limited to change in logo, pattern, or advertising theme but should be about creating story that connects to the emotional needs of consumer in order to set a distinctive and competitive position in the market place.

In the section 2.1.1, the reviewed literature, “explaining why branding fails”, was necessitated by the claim of Clifton that many brand managers have shallow knowledge of the concept of branding which was the reasons why the huge amount of money spent on most branding campaigns has yielded no tangible results. Consequently, in connection with one of the objectives of this study to highlight the reasons why previous rebranding campaigns in Nigeria have failed to yield desired results, this section served as the theoretical standpoint to provide answers to the study and more importantly to highlight the possible options available in the literature on how to avoid future failures. The section 2.1.2 was meant to reinforce the previous sections, to explicitly state the reasons “why” or “why not” a rebranding is necessary and “how” branding or rebranding should be conveyed in order to guarantee results. Based on the reviewed literature, the best approach to branding: especially when there is crisis is to first carefully investigate the root of the problem because wrong interpretation of the causal effect could lead to wrong motivations and when motivation or purpose is misplaced, there will be a wrong approach to rebranding which will eventually leads to disaster. It was however advocated in the literature that not all situations required a rebranding, and if a rebranding should be carried out, it should be approached with open mind and not limited to changing advertising themes or renaming. Broader perspectives such as recreation of the brand vision to meet the needs of the contemporary market and redefining brand vision and positioning should also be considerable options.

The section 2.2 was specifically focused on destination branding on a country level perspective. Although many literatures has been reviewed in the earlier section on conventional product branding but those were meant to serve as a starting point based on believe that the destination branding study actually emanated from the product branding. Therefore, understanding the concept of destination branding and the specific problems associated with it was necessary and important for the study. The concept of destination branding was assessed from the view of different literatures and the study concludes that destination branding should not be limited to the field of tourism, different stakeholders should be incorporated into the planning because it was believed that international tourists visiting a destination will not only consume the tourism products but also gain access to other valuables that match their preferences and lifestyle. In conformity to the conventional product branding, the section 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 was meant to highlight the specific reasons why destination branding was necessary and to state the benefits that will be derived from a rightly managed branding. The purpose of the section was to accentuate the importance of destination branding if properly
managed and conveyed, this was necessitated by the quest of the study to provide theoretically acceptable standards to what constitute a good destination branding practice.

The section 2.2.3; “developing brand attributes as a prerequisite for successful branding”, was purposefully conducted to extract specific attributes of a destination that are needed to be developed before branding such destinations could be successful. This was in connection with one of the objectives of the study on the required criteria that a nation must fulfil before it can be successfully branded. Several attributes were obtained from academic literatures and from the opinions of the World Tourism Organization that were appraised by the author as platform on which destination branding should be built. Also, the section 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 focused on the challenges of destination branding at the country level and also the structure, funding and roles of the marketing organizations. The purpose of this section was to help the author have an analytical view of destination branding; a quality that is required to be able to properly present the model for country branding that will be developed in this study. It is the believe of the author that understanding the challenges to destination branding will help equip the case destination on future policy making and planning on branding matters in order to guarantee success. Some of the important topics raised were the difficulty to coordinate the activities of the different autonomous stakeholders and the limited resources available for the marketing organizations. However, it was advised in the academic literatures that partnering with private sectors in a mutual relationship, conducting extensive research for developmental purposes, and educating the employees of the DMOs will ease the tension and challenges to the destination.

The most important motivating factor for this study was to develop a model that will be useful for country branding. However, considering the fact that tourism is the most tangible aspect of nation’s brand, there is need to highlight the importance in brand creation and the role it (tourism) plays on image improvement from different theoretical standpoint. Therefore, an extensive review of literature was required to grasp the essence of destination image formation; to learn how to handle image crisis; and to understand the position of tourism in these regards. The section 3, 3.1 and 3.2 of the literature review was meant for this purpose. The knowledge gathered from the literature review was finally used to prepare an interview guide and was a valuable asset for the author during final analysis, development of the model, and the presentation of the case destination (Nigeria).


3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter will focus on the research practicalities. Information about the research design will be provided. The reason for the choice of research techniques, the sampling method adopted in the study, and the method used to collect data will be analysed. It is important however to stress the importance of this section for the study; The empirical study was carried out to gain practical knowledge from professionals in leadership positions in the tourism industry, most importantly in the area of destination Image development and branding, this is intended to compliment the theoretical study so as to generate as accurate as possible results for the analysis of the case destination.

3.1 Research Design

Research methods are the systematic approach used for the orderly collection of data which is done mainly to obtain valuable and reliable information to provide a genuine answer to the research problem or questions. This collection of data can be carried out using different scientific techniques such as structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews as well as surveys and observations. There are two major types of research approaches namely, qualitative and quantitative research (Pervez & Kjell 2005). Other research methods according to Veal (2011 p. 121) includes, the use of research literature, secondary data, observation, questionnaire-based surveys, experiments, triangulation and the case-study method.

Qualitative research is an unstructured but flexible research for which the researcher is trying to find out the process of getting things done from the point of view of the respondents. Data is usually collected through interviews and observations in qualitative research. According to Veal (2011), qualitative research gives the researcher an opportunity to delve deeply in to the proposed study. On the other hand, a quantitative research is a structured research carried out by using sampling techniques (e.g. surveys) to obtain large amount of data that can be analysed using statistical methods which will enable the researcher to understand the present situation and able to forecast future events or quantities. Unlike the qualitative data where the researcher can manage with small amount of respondents, quantitative research methods requires as much respondent as possible to be able to justifiably quantify the result (Pervez & Kjell 2005).

This study is investigative and requires that the author depend entirely on the knowledge of the audience who are vast in the subject of discussion. As a result of the requirement of this kind of study, it will be meticulous to use a qualitative approach that does not limit the respondents to some structured closed ended questions. This is the reason why this study was conducted using a qualitative research approach in the form of in-depth interview. However, the interview was conducted on the telephone because none of the respondents was in close proximity to the researcher but each interview was recorded on tape so as to monitor and consider the paralanguage and to be able to listen repeatedly to the responses in order to avoid missing important details during the transcription
phase. A set of questions were prepared (See appendix) to serve as a guide for the interview and for all the interviews to have uniformity (i.e. same interview guide was used for all the respondents) but some interviews took different directions as a consequence of different experience of the respondents and in order to give freedom of expression to the respondents. The interview guide include basic contact information of the respondents and important topics of the study such as branding, image building, role of tourism in economic development and all other topics that have been discussed in the literature review. The respondents were given the privilege to express personal opinions and to provide advices on sensitive issues most importantly on the possible way a nation can transform her image during crisis. The interview was conducted with DMOs of 7 countries that will be explained later.

3.2 Interview Questions

In the first 2 questions of the interview, basic personal information, such as name, position in the company and duration of service, were asked from the respondents. The purpose of asking the questions was to know the level of professionalism and experience of the respondents on the subject of discussion. This is needed for the validity of the study because a much more experienced person that have served in a managerial position for many years would be able to provide information from different perspectives and views and such information is expected to be true and accurate.

In the literature review, an in-depth study was carried out on the structure, funding and roles of the DMOs. According to the reviewed literatures; the structure and source of income are the major success drivers of the DMOs which are influenced by the relationship with both the national government and private sectors in the industry. The questions 3 & 9 of the interview guide attempt to assess the relationship between the structure and funding of the DMOs in practice and to understand in what other capacities the DMOs operate. The purpose of these questions was for the author to have a clearer view of the activities of the DMOs from practical stand point, which is needed to provide relevant advice, in the conclusion of the study, on how the DMOs of the case country (Nigeria), and any other country that would apply the proposed model, should be run and managed in order to ensure future success in the tourism industry.

The questions 4, 5 & 13 were targeted at understanding the image of the questioned destinations; how the image was formed, controlled, influenced and measured, the connection between the local and international image perception and how the tourism products are marketed. The discussions of the reviewed literature were in two perspectives. One perspective was the outside-in approach; that involves a series of marketing research to capture the market with favourable image for the destination and capitalize on that in the branding campaign. The other perspective was the inside-out approach that involves developing the various sectors of the nation’s economy to showcase the uniqueness in order to create a competitive position that will influence tourists from around the world. The
knowledge obtained from these questions would be carried on to the analysis of
the study to appropriate the most suitable method in the proposed model.

It was claimed in the reviewed literature that many brand managers have shallow
knowledge on the concept of branding and that explained why many branding
campaign fails, and why they choose a particular method for branding over others.
The question 6, 7 & 8 were therefore targeted at solving the puzzle; to get the
opinion of the interviewed managers on the concept of branding; to know what is
driving them for branding; to learn from them how they have managed to avoid
falling into the pit of branding failure; to know the challenges they encountered as
an organization in coordinating other stakeholders; and to understand the criteria
of the country they considered important for branding. The answers to these
questions will be useful for this study to be able to highlight the weakness of the
previous branding campaigns of Nigeria and will be a guide for the author in the
development of the model that was proposed in the study.

The questions 10, 11 & 12 were simply to reiterate the earlier questions on the
activities of the DMOs; to understand how much success the questioned
destinations have had in the field of tourism and to accentuate the effect of the
political structure of the nation on the tourism industry. These are very sensitive
questions that should be asked in different forms in order to validate the earlier
answers provided by the interviewee. It was clearly stated in the literature review
that; “hardly can tourism survive without the government”. Thus, these questions
were intended to more clearly understand the political involvement in the
interviewed destinations and how it has affected the success or failure of the
industry. Obviously, understanding how political issues were handled in different
countries would help the author to draw up meaningful conclusion for the
politically intense case destination (Nigeria).

According to the opinion of the author, the most suitable destinations to be
interviewed for the study were those destinations that have had image problems
and overcame them. However, it was difficult to know such destinations without
having direct contact with them. That is why the question 14 was asked to know if
the destinations have had image problem in the past, what the cause was and how
it was tackled. The question was therefore used to group the interviewed
respondents into 2. Those that have had image problems and those have not. More
energy was invested on those destinations with image problem experience than
those without such experience. The questions 15 & 16 were supporting questions
to the question 14; they were designed to know exactly what methods were used to
overcome the image problem and how the branding theme of the destination
explain the transition from bad image or perception.

According to the reviewed literature, the amount of knowledge on the concept of
branding will determine how rebranding will be carried out. It was further stated
that not every situation requires a rebranding campaign; effort should therefore be
made by the managers to first investigate the cause of the problem before
determining what method is most suitable to solving them. Hence, question 17, 18,
& 19 were a necessity to help the author understand from practical perspective
“why” and “how” rebranding is done to guarantee success; and more importantly to examine how branding has been conducted by the interviewed destinations.

The question 20 was to know what structure is practiced in the tourism industry of the interviewed destinations and how that affects the success or failure of the industry. Also the question was meant to reiterate the already asked question on the structure of the DMOs. The question 21 is a replica of the earlier question asked on the criteria that the destinations considered important for branding but this is more specific for destinations that have had image problem in the past. The idea is to observe if there is any difference between the criteria for the actual branding campaign and what has changed (perhaps from experience or as a result of image problem) during rebranding. It was in the interest of this study to have some checklists that will be valuable indicators for assessment of countries in determining the strengths and weaknesses that are required for brand creation, therefore it was important to include in the questions that the respondents should provide answers both from tourism and non-tourism perspectives. Also in question 22, the respondents were given the opportunity to give candid opinion on rebranding and to state other possible options they think could be useful for improving destination’s or country’s image.

Finally, Question 23 focused on the impact of tourism on the economic development and sustainability of a nation and the role the industry played in image branding. The central idea is to gauge the similarity or difference that exists between the practical world and the claims in the literature review that tourism is the most tangible aspect of national branding; a threat to sustainability; a medium for alleviating poverty and so on. This is very important for this study because it is one of the objectives of the study to examine the role of tourism in brand creation and image improvement. Therefore the question was meant to clarify the pros and cons of the industry from the perspectives of the interviewed DMOs. The last question (24) was intended to give opportunity to all the respondents, both those that have had experience on image crisis and those that have not, to express their opinions on how a transition can be made on country reputation during image crisis. This is important for the author to have as much input as possible and to learn from the expertise and knowledge of the professional audience that were interviewed.

### 3.3 Sampling

There are three major types of non-probability sampling that are suitable for qualitative research as identified by Marshall (1996). These sampling methods are; Convenient sampling, Judgement or Purposeful sampling, and Theoretical sampling. Other types of sampling methods include; Criterion sampling, Homogenous sampling, Opportunistic sampling, Maximum variation sampling, Snowball sampling, and stratified sampling. (See Veal 2011 p.370 for more information on the qualitative sampling methods). Convenient sampling is the most criticized sampling method because it is believed to have possibility of bias by the researcher and may lack credible results. On the other hand, a purposeful
sampling is the most commonly used sampling method that involves the selection of the most productive samples by the author to answer the research questions (Marshall 1996). Considering the nature of this research, this study was carried out using the purposeful sampling method to obtain the most suitable and credible audience for the study. The purpose was to interview DMOs that have had image problems in the past and were able to overcome the problems. The central scheme of the idea was to investigate what led to the image crisis, how the image crisis was battled and what was the resultant situation. The target audience are destination marketing organization managers and directors who are expected to have had long working years of experience and high level of professionalism.

The author carried out the purposeful sampling by searching reliable databases for DMOs around the world that have had image problem in the past and were able to overcome the problems. The objective of using such DMOs as respondents was for the author to be able to investigate the causal effects of different destination image problems and to learn from those DMOs how such problems had been dealt with to generate positive results. However, it was quite challenging to get a database containing a list of DMOs that fit into the required criteria, therefore the author contacted as much as possible DMOs using the database of the destination marketing association international (DMAI) and the Association of National Tourist offices and representatives (ANTOR) to obtain an extensive list of DMOs contact details. It was difficult to tell from the list on the databases which DMO represent a nation that has had the required experience on image problem so the author contacted a total of 78 DMOs explaining the aim of the study in order to filter off those DMOs that had no previous experience on the subject of discussion. In the end, the author was able to get the right DMOs to be interviewed from the responses of the contacted DMOs. Although some destination that have done branding successfully in the past but without image problems also took part in the interview. The respondents were however grouped into 2, based on the criteria that “they have” or “they have not” had image crisis. The question 14 of the interview guide was used for the grouping as explained in the analysis of the interview guide above. The DMOs that matched the required criteria of the study and that were available scheduled time for interview. The interviews were conducted with the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) at the scheduled date and time but the scope of the interviews was limited to the author’s chosen topics so as to keep the interview within controllable measure. The interview theme was centred on the subject of branding and rebranding, challenges of the DMOs, role of tourism in the economic development and sustainability of the nations, previous experience of the DMOs on image crisis and how they were able to overcome the image crisis in promoting their respective countries for tourism and investment purposes. These interview themes were developed from the theoretical study and were meant to provide practical answers to the aim of the study.

3.4 Collection of Data

The data collection was done simultaneously because of the different timing of the scheduled appointments. The total number of interview requests was 78 out of
which more than 80 percent were unsuccessful. Some emails were rejected due to over capacity, some DMOs replied that they were too busy and could not respond to academic research, some recommended that information could be searched from their official webpages and provided links to their official press releases, some said that the manager or director of marketing and promotion will not be available for interview in the next 6 weeks, some said their colleagues that were suitable for this kind of research were on holiday, some did not have the required resources to attend to academic research, and some have had no rebranding experience.

It was disappointing in some cases that emails were undelivered because of over capacity or the emails were no longer in use. After about 2 weeks of the email request for the interview, only 16 destinations were interested in the interview but some with conditions. There were 2 major group with conditions; those that needed official letter from the author’s university before they could honour the interview request, and the second group were those that preferred a written interview and suggested that a questionnaire be sent to them because of their busy schedule. The third group were those that booked appointment for the telephone interview. Only 3 of the 16 destinations were interviewed on the phone but interview guide was sent to the remaining 13. It took about 2 weeks on average to get replies from 3 more destinations that have completed the questions but reminder was sent every week to all 13 respondents. At the end of 6 weeks, only 1 more completed questionnaire was returned despite continuous reminder every week. A total of 7 interviews were conducted despite the challenges but only 4 have had image crisis in the past. The positions of the respondents were in the following categories; the managers of promotion, directors of branding and corporate head of the DMOs at the national level, and the head of marketing and branding. All the 7 interviewee were highly experienced based on the position in the organization and the number of years they have been in service; the interviewee with the least years of service has been working in the managerial position for 9 years and the one with the highest has been working in same office for 25 years. The average time for the telephone interviews was 40 minutes. All the interviews were recorded on tape so as to note the paralanguage and to avoid missing important details but the recorded interviews were treated with utmost confidence.
4 FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This section contains the analysis of the data obtained from the interview. The data analysis will be conducted under four research themes. The purpose of the themes was to simplify the analysis and facilitate reader’s understanding of how the four research questions of the study were answered. Thus, one research question will be answered under each theme. More so, the proposed model of the study will be presented and explained.

4.1.1 Research Theme one: Structure, Funding, Roles and Challenges of DMOs

The first group of questions addressed the issue of organizational structure, funding, challenges and roles of the DMOs. The table below shows the result of the interview on this group of questions. Please note that the names of the destination will not be mentioned to keep the confidentiality as promised during the collection of data. However, letter A, B, C, D, E, F and G will be used to identify the DMOs for ease of analysis.

Table 3: The Profile of A, B, C, D, E, F and G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>• A: is an Island but politically part of Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• B: Western Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• C &amp; D: North West of Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E: Scandinavian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• F: South Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• G: Southern Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>• All are national level DMOs but the position of the respondents are as follows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A: Director Nordic Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• B: Head of Strategy and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• C: Corporate Planning &amp; Performance Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• D: Director of Convention Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E: Marketing Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• F: Head of Domestic Marketing and Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• G: Manager (Publicity and Promotion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>• The number of years of experience of the respondents in the managerial position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A: 10years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• B: 25years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• C: not provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• D: 10years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E: 9years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• F: 9years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• G: 20years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>• A, B &amp; C are entirely Government organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• D is a Government not for-profit organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E is an independent government organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• F is public-private partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• G is a Corporate organization with board of directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A&amp; C are funded by taxes from hospitality industry</td>
<td>The roles of the DMOs are similar but some have greater responsibilities than the others, mostly the major role of all the DMOs is to market and promote the country as a tourist destination and also to oversee tourism activities within the country. Other responsibilities of the DMOs are listed below;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• B is 51% funded by government and 49% private sector</td>
<td>• Responsible for local tourism information centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• D is entirely funded by the federal government</td>
<td>• Gives licenses and permits to hotels, restaurants etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• E is funded 50% by Government annual budget and 50% from private sectors e.g. hotels</td>
<td>• Inspect and control establishments to follow the license and permit regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• F is funded majorly by government but also by private partners</td>
<td>• Loans to companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• G is funded by the federal government, developmental projects on behalf of the government, and generated income from own motels and restaurants</td>
<td>• Developing rural areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transforming ideas into business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research and product development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organizing events and tourism activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping to develop new ideas and start-up businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate and link the public, private and civil society in both tourism and non-tourism sector using open dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the respondents are DMOs from Europe and the major challenges now is budget challenges which is traceable to euro crisis and debt, Hence securing adequate financial resources is a huge constraint. Other challenges are listed below:</td>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Too many unqualified people in the industry is slowing down progressive development and even distribution of labour</td>
<td>• Too many unqualified people in the industry is slowing down progressive development and even distribution of labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Too much bureaucratic procedures impede the flow of activities and communication</td>
<td>• Too much bureaucratic procedures impede the flow of activities and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulty to mobilize other stakeholders</td>
<td>• Difficulty to mobilize other stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gaps between demand and supply due to shortage of infrastructural and recreational facilities</td>
<td>• Gaps between demand and supply due to shortage of infrastructural and recreational facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of mass tourism</td>
<td>• Lack of mass tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Problem of accessibility because of high landing cost of airlines</td>
<td>• Problem of accessibility because of high landing cost of airlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• And finally, political stiffness and strict immigration regulations</td>
<td>• And finally, political stiffness and strict immigration regulations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result in the above table revealed some similarities with the reviewed literature on the structure, roles and funding of DMOs. However, there are some important facts that should be highlighted. The theory stated mutual relationship with private sectors as an important success factor for DMOs; this is evidence in the result because all the DMOs have some connections with private sectors although at different level of involvement. In “G” only 1percent involvement is given to the private sector but there was up to 50percent stake of private involvement in the organization at “E”. It should however be noted that the impact of the level of involvement of the private sector on the success or otherwise failure of the DMOs is beyond the scope of this study but that could be an avenue for further study. Nonetheless, it could be argued that private sector played important role in the success of the DMOs because in “E” that have 50percent DMOs involvement, there was financial stability and the DMOs were able to provide loans to start-up businesses and also support the development of rural communities while in “G” with 1percent private involvement, tourism success is still far reaching.
There were some important roles mentioned in the literature that were not mentioned by the DMOs in the study e.g. education and training, perhaps because only the DMOs at the national level were interviewed. Nonetheless, it should be thoughtful and productive to include education and training to the agenda of the DMOs at the national level because one of the major challenges mentioned in the study by “D” was that there were too many unqualified personnel in the industry which is impeding even distribution of labour. Other topical issues that “pop up” in the discussion was the role of the DMO “A” which was issuing licence to hotels and restaurants, but also monitoring and controlling new establishments to follow permit and license regulation; this is an important topic that will give the DMO an opportunity not only to monitor and control but also to be closer to many of the newly established firms, however for such relationship to function properly, a certain level of freedom and autonomy should be granted to the firms but more importantly, the strategic focus or theme of the national brand should be more effectively communicated and transparency should be encouraged. Another topic was the gap between demand and supply as a result of inadequate infrastructure mentioned by “G”, this challenge stem up from the stiff government regulation and strict immigration procedures and as a result, mass tourism or even tourism growth is not in sight. For tourism to function properly there is the need for government to provide basic infrastructure that will facilitate the operation of private sectors. This statement is in alignment with the IATA director general/CEO statement in a press release in March 2012 that infrastructural development and transparency are keys to success in the tourism and aviation industry (Tony 2012).

4.1.2 Research theme 2: Image Transformation Process

The questions 4,5,10,14,15,17,18,19,22 & 24 of the interview guide were meant for this purpose and the same alphabets used in the first theme above will be applied to identify the DMOs where necessary. Firstly, the present image of the destinations will be discussed; how the image is formed and controlled. Later in the discussion, the specific image problems will be treated, what caused the problem, if the problem had short term or long term effect on the country’s image, how the problem was resolved, or if the problem has not been resolved, why it has not been resolved?

To all the DMOs, Image is not static; it changes from time to time and different from region to region, and more importantly, it takes years to form an image. Almost all the DMOs agreed that image cannot be controlled but can be improved through series of activities such as profile improvement and product development. To “A” the image is well defined and clear in specific markets, generally the image is built around the seas and beaches but in specific markets the image could be different e.g. it was claimed to “have the party image for young people in the Scandinavian market” but to the United Kingdom, “the Image is an all-round island with varieties”. Although it was further claimed that the party image attracts negative publicity but there are ongoing activities to dissolve that. To “B” the image is differentiated based on the position of the tourists if they were first time visitors or returning visitors. It was claimed that the image was too broad for a visitor that has not made a visit but changes considerably after making the first visit. Although the respondent stated poor welcome service and value for money as
the weakness of the country as a tourist destination but based on the response, it could also be argued that the destination is not well positioned in the market and such unclear image could have adverse effect on the destination in a long term; a concise message should be created to directly communicate the image of the country to the specific market segments in order to be more competitive and uniquely identifiable.

“C” and “F” has recently established a new brand and presently a research is been conducted to measure the impact of the brand on the image of the countries. The result of the research is not available at the time this report. “G” has a negative image, based on the statement of the respondent, “our image problem stem from the geographic location of our country, religious stigma and political issues”; it was stated by the respondent that the September 11 attack on the US had a drastic effect on the Image of the destination and the country has until today not recovered from the negative publicity. Another interesting discussion was raised by “D” and “E”; although both claimed that their image is unclear to the international tourists but the countries possess a strong but unique position in EU market due to the political reasons and easy accessibility. More so, the destination enjoyed the favour of the press, as stated by “D”; “we are on the news almost every day and this is important for our image to anybody that understands what that mean”. However, it should be noted that such media favouritism may not last forever; effort should be made to register a concise image of the destination on the mind of the tourists, through effective and direct communication, in order to create a long lasting competitive edge, considering the spontaneous changes in the consumer behaviour and taste, and the potential of other destinations in the same geographical region to outperform the present position of the destination.

The image crises of the destinations are observed in two categories, some with short term effect on the Image and the others with long term effect. The negative stereotype of “A” by the Scandinavian tourists could be regarded as a short term and at the same time a long standing issue. As stated by the respondent “the problem emanated from our tour operator’s concept in the 80’s”, even though the destination is no longer represented in that regard, the stereotype is difficult to erase in the mind of the tourist. The country is currently monitoring and working with the press e.g. on press trips and media cooperation, and other partners e.g. airline, tour operators and travel agents, to correct the wrong impression and to influence the image but it cannot be confirmed from the interview if the stereotype is totally erased or how long it will take. “B” has experienced quite much problems but it has had short term effect on the image. Some crises were as a result of natural disaster and some were wrong presentation to a specific market group. The country has approached each crisis differently but the most popular method adopted was advertising campaign. According to the respondent; “sometimes we do nothing…we just have to wait”. Judging from the reviewed literature, problems caused by natural disaster gain international pardon within shorter time, that could explain why “B” was able to overcome some of the problems within the short time period.
The problem of “D” was similar to “B” above. The problem was developed from the stereotypic characterization of the country as a bureaucratic and administrative destination. This characterization limits the perception of the tourists such that the varieties of the destination eluded their cognitive psychology; which is an important phenomenon for destination image. According to the respondent, “it hurt us so badly and we realize we had to do something extremely cautious.......and the story changed within 5 years” because the country introduced series of activities that meet the needs of contemporary markets e.g. gastronomy, winter markets, summer festivals, extravagant night life, and working with world class artists to organize some artistic festivals that has attracted millions of visitors. All the activities paid off and the media story has changed making the country one of the most visited in the world today judging from the geometric increase in the number of overnight stay within the period, as stated by the respondent. However some problems like the unstable political situation in “G”, religious sentiment, and location disadvantage or association with country that involves with act of terrorism, takes much longer time to be erased. In fact, in the case of “G” it has taken 20 years of effort to influence the media through cooperation, direct publicity, documentary, use of social media e.g. Facebook to communicate a new story, shift of focus on target market, and improvement of the security situation. Taking cognisance to the statement of “E” that “it is very dangerous to just do regular campaign during crisis” and adding “A” statement that “such could lead to further distrust if the cause of the crisis was not first resolved”, using New York as an example; “A” stated that “a long standing stigma that started from 70’s until mid-90’s regarding New York as a dirty, dangerous and unfriendly destination was removed through cooperation with the law/police and local authorities to combat indiscipline”.......... “A” also added that “Zero tolerance and Big Apple campaigns with the help of celebrities, movie stars etc. made it to the hottest city break in the world”.

In conclusion, it could be said that there is no one way to solving image problem, the solution is entirely dependent on the cause, and the level of impact the crisis already had in the international community. Technically, the solution is structurally similar irrespective of whether it is a short term or long term crisis. However, a wrong approach to the crisis could even aggravate issue, for example the shift of focus on market segment by “G” could be helpful on a short term but what happens to future sustainability? Such approach to crisis management is similar to the withdrawal method in the reviewed literature but it was stressed that withdrawal could lead to further distrust and much stronger negative publicity. Therefore, instead of concealing the problem or shifting the blame of the crisis on other destinations, any country in crisis should admit the fault, dig to the root of the crisis, be sincere and transparent with the problem, never rush to decision (e.g. as stated by “B” that “sometime we just wait”), be sure that the problem is well understood, then solve the problem by cooperating with relevant authorities to reconstruct the image; like in the case of New York, and finally communicate the change using both direct and indirect publicity e.g. partnering with strong international media to communicate the new story in order to channel the line of thought of the tourists such as the case of “D” in the above discussion.
4.1.3 Research theme 3: Required Criteria for Rebranding Success

This section will focus on what attributes of a country should be well defined and developed to improve the image of the country when rebranding campaign is ineffective. It is obvious from previous section that rebranding is done when there is an unpleasant situation or when a destination want to communicate a change of direction; the purpose of rebranding is to reposition and restructure the image in the mind of the tourists. However, how the rebranding is done will determine success or failure. Sometimes rebranding may not be able to provide the much needed image improvement, at such times, what will the country do? The question 13, 16 and 21 of the interview guide were directed to solving the mysteries that envelop the rebranding concept. There were 2 perspectives in the reviewed literature; it is either an outside-in approach or inside-out approach. Majorly in practice as witnessed in the case countries, it is hard to set a line between the 2 approaches, sometimes both are necessary depending on the stage of the rebranding and what prompted it. In the case of “A” and “E” the countries first conduct a research to understand the needs of the contemporary market and then communicate the outcome of the research to all affected stakeholders so that the whole nation can function in the same strategic direction to meet the need of a defined market segment. All the other 5 destinations used a mix of both approaches but more specifically stressed the need to develop an identifiable product and do things right before the communication stage, for example, it was stated in the comment of “D” that “doing the right things ...these are things that will make difference and will comfort the experience of visitors”, until a change is made to the causes of the problem, nothing good will happen to the image of the destination. “B” also shared similar position with “D”, although the respondent stated clearly that “it is difficult to change the image and if there is possibility a lot of time is involved”. Hence, the responded recommended that a good advertising campaign and also the use of public relations, international ambassadors should be exploited to communicate a new message of the destination.

Having said all, it was important for this study to know what factors could be the reason for failure in rebranding campaign and what should be done when there is failure in rebranding campaigns. Therefore the respondents were asked to state the reasons for failure in rebranding campaigns, to state the attribute of their destination they consider important before conducting campaign, and what a destination can do to change a bad international image. There were different opinions from the 7 respondents but the two most popular reasons for failure are the campaign creative i.e. when the campaign is too vague or does not appeal and secondly when there is obvious difference between the actual product and the advertising themes- this could lead to serious distrust and much greater negative publicity. In the case of the attributes of the destination they considered important for branding, rebranding or advertising campaign; there were different opinions obviously because of the different offerings and character of the destinations. To “A”, it was the unique social context e.g. culture and archaeology, as well as climate, nature, easy accessibility, and connection to major European cities. “B”, “C” and “F” have quite similar propositions, their motivating strength is the diversity the nation has to offer but as specifically stated by “B” the diversity is equally a threat as well as opportunity but what is keeping the nation ahead is the
long standing positive connotation of the country as “a place to visit” though this has not totally solve the problem because the tourists still have limited perception of the country. “D” and “E” used more of the political position and also easy accessibility as a source of strength in their campaign but more specific to “E” is the nature and tranquillity; a factor that draws majority to the destination quoting from the statement of the respondent.

Finally, certain things must be done before a rebranding campaign is carried out especially when there is serious image issues involved. The most popular but general opinions from the 7 respondents are issues relating to security, cleanliness, service, product development, conviviality, and political situation. More specifically, “the image issue should be seen as everybody’s problem and solution should be built on the idea of the people” quoting from “E”. The first step is to deal with the general issues mentioned above, or as stated by “G” “there must be a radical change on the social, political and economic situation of the country in order to win the confidence of the local community”. Then the government should have a reasonable discussion with all organizations that represent the country and some opinion leaders that know the mind of the average citizen of the country. The discussion should be transparent and a sincere but practical consensus should be reached on what the problem is, the present situation of the country and what to be done to move the nation forward and to put an end to the image problem. This is necessary to change the orientation of the people and more importantly as stated by “E” “to get media on board, journalists to report and get tour operators to start up an operation and issue press releases about the “New” and fresh destination”. In conclusion, it should be noted that all these processes require a lot of time; considering the opinion of “D” “it is not just by accident” it is politically influenced and required high level of professionalism and proper understanding of the problem to achieve results.

4.1.4 Research theme 4: Role and contribution of tourism in the Image renewal process

Tourism plays a significant role in the image renewal process and also contributes to the economic and sustainable development of the society. However, not all the DMOs in the study have recorded success in the tourism industry, perhaps because of insufficient attention and investment. A good example is “G” that bluntly claimed that “there is no success so far in the industry and even tourism has not been able to contribute to the success of the image crisis”, the respondent gave 4 reasons for the failure in the industry which are; lack of funding, limited publicity and lack of credible representative or ambassadors outside the shore of the country, the industry is fragmented (i.e. no mutual relationship between the industrial players), and the need to win the attention of strong international media (e.g. CNN & BBC). The failure of the industry may be due to limited involvement of the stakeholders because only 1 percent stake of the national tourism organization is for the private sector, although as said earlier in the study, that area requires further study to examine the impact of private player involvement on the success or failure of the industry. These nonetheless did not undermine the potency of tourism in the image renewal process, e.g. in the case of “B” tourism is
the key factor behind the strong international reputation, more so, it was stated in the interview that “the perception of the tourists changed considerably after they make the first visit to the destination”. Also, when there was a short term image crisis in “E”, the issue was dissolved overtime when tourists that visit the destination returned home with positive reports. “F” termed the tourists as “ambassadors that speak beyond boarders”, and “C” regard tourism as “the most important medium to communicate the image of the country, to promote the unique identity of the people in term of culture, heritage, and religious believe and also to correct the bias misconception of the tourists influenced by media”.

Finally, tourism has economic contribution and also encourages the spread of people and companies across the length and breadth of the nation e.g. for educational tourism; people can move from one part to study at other part of the country and same with companies when people move for employment purposes. “E” stated that tourism contribute 3.5% to the overall GDP of the nation and “D” 15% growth of regional products and evolution of 8% of annual overnight stays. Aside the economic contribution to GDP, tourism and tourism related industries are the major employer of labour in the countries e.g. in “B” it contribute to almost 13% of the total employment in the country, more so, tourism could be a political media to communicate the mind of the ruling elite in the society, like in the case of “D” but such position should not be abused to exploit the people. Additionally, tourism could be a bridge to create bond and maintain unity in diversity, a good example is sport tourism.

It should be stressed however that tourism is like every other businesses; if nothing is invested, nothing should be expected in return but a smart nation that have the best interest of future generation at heart will exploit tourism to promote the national unique identity and exploit the economic benefit thereof.

4.2 The Proposed Model for Country Branding

The development of this model culminated from several ideas in the study process that is integrated into a single package. The reviewed literature on the concept of branding and destination image played a vital role in the formation of the model. The contribution of Simon Anholt and other academic scholars on organic image and induced image formation as well as theories on destination branding and destination image are the core functional part and theoretical backing for the formation of the model. Hence, the model will serve as a reference point for branding countries of all kinds but an experimental application will be conducted on Nigeria in this study. It should be noted that the development of the model makes the most use of practical information obtained from the interviews especially to compliment the literature on the first phase and to establish theoretical extension in the second and third phases while considering the connectedness of all the three phases as an important factor for success. The model is represented by the figure below;
According to word web dictionary, the word “reformation” was defined as “improvement (or an intended improvement) in the existing form or condition of institutions or practices etc.; intended to make a striking change for the better in social or political or religious affairs”. This definition obviously explains the purpose of the first phase of the model. Based on the reviewed literature and also the opinion of the interviewed respondents; a country brand must be built on something that is uniquely identifiable, that convey a strong but reputable image of the country with a story or promise that can influence the target audience to make the country a preference over others. Hence, in order for country branding to be successful, a thorough assessment is required to identify the unique capabilities of the nation that are strong enough for creating competitive advantage over other nations. Therefore, the first phase of the model will deal with the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of a nation based on important attributes on which the image of the nation is anchored. This phase is titled "reformation" because it is believed that an enhancement is required on the identified strengths in order to improve the performance of the nation and for society development. Also, the weaknesses of the nation should not be denied because denial is not a good way to manage image, but instead, necessary adjustments and improvements should be made on the weaknesses to assure the local community as well as the international audience and to build a sense of trust for the branding campaign.
The 8 factors that will be used for the assessment of nation are: Social, Political, Economic, Environmental, Technology, Education, Tourism industry, and Media. These factors are collection of ideas from the reviewed literatures, the result of the interviews, and personal observation of the author. The factors are essential elements that underpin the overall economy of a nation. Below is the definition and indicators of each factor for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of nations;

**SOCIAL:** The social factor is a complex phenomenon and has a variety of meaning depending on the field of study. At the country level, it depends on the culture, values, norms, and the structure of the society. According to the online business dictionary, social factor is defined as the facts and experiences that influence individuals' personality, attitudes and lifestyle. Based on the result of the world summit on national social development, the following indicators were highlighted to be of important social concern, these are; population, material well-being, education, eradication of poverty, income and expenditure, economic resources, expansion of productive employment work, reduction of unemployment working environment, social integration, crime and criminal justice, status of women and men health (United Nations Statistics Division 1996). Other important social indicators missing from above are culture, religion, language and discrimination (Williams no date).

**POLITICAL:** Political factors are activity related to government policy and its administrative practices that can have an effect on the society, either positively or negatively (Business Dictionary no date). Based on the PEST factor analysis by value based management (2012), the following are political indicators; environmental regulations and protection, tax policies, international trade regulations and restrictions, contract enforcement laws and consumer protections, employment laws, government organization, competition regulation, political stability, and safety regulation.

**ECONOMIC:** Economic (macro) factors are those factors that are of immense importance to the overall economy at both regional and national level, and affect a large population rather than a few select individuals (Investopedia 2012). The spending policy of a nation determines the well-being and lifestyle of the people. The economic indicators are: demand and supply, interest rates, inflation, unemployment, foreign exchange rate (Joseph 2012), balance of payment, government spending and economic growth (Business studies online no date)

**ENVIRONMENTAL:** According to the UNEP, environmental protection is of great importance to human existence and sustainability of the future. The following are the challenges of the environment; loss of biodiversity and damage to ecosystem, pollution of atmosphere and the consequence of climatic change, land degradation, the impact of chemical use and disposal, waste production and depletion of non-renewable resources.

**TECHNOLOGY:** Technology is an integral part of human development and an essential determinant for wealth creation and competitiveness (Bilsel and Oral 1995). Fodje (no date) regarded technology as the main key to human progress. Technology is a necessary requirement for a nation’s prosperity in today’s world.
How a government spend on technology education and innovativeness determines the level of success of the nation and how well the country will integrate to the modern society; this is especially true for the developing nation (Bhatnagar 2010). Japan, China and Singapore are examples of countries that climb the ladder of progress as a consequence of technological development (NSF 2007). Indicators of technological development are; Government research spending, industry focus on technological effort, new inventions and development, rate of technological transfer, life cycle and speed of technological obsolescence, energy use and cost, changes in information technology, changes in internet, and changes in Mobile technology (Value Based Management 2012).

EDUCATION: The World Bank defines education as one of the most fundamental building blocks for human development and poverty reduction (World Bank 2011). It is equally believed that the countries with the highest population of educated people are amongst the wealthiest in the world, with quality standard of living (24/7 Wall St. 2012). It is a widely accepted myth that educated people are less likely to be involved in violence and has much more possibility of increased life expectancy rate compared to the uneducated (Science daily 2008).

TOURISM: is the most visible and tangible aspect of national branding (Kerr 2006). Tourism is one of the most appropriate channels to change the image of a country as already witnessed in the result of the interviews above; that tourists always have clearer image of the country after making their first visit, and in the literature review, it was claimed that the image that the destination want to be known for could be induced during the visit to improve tourism experience (Gartner 1993). Such direct communications have strong impact on the image of the destination because the tourists could be a mouth piece for the destination when they return to their individual countries; this is a very important factor in image formation. Considering the work of Gunns (1972) on organic image formation that opinion of family and friends is a very strong influence. However, to enjoy success in tourism, there must be reasonable investment by the government and more so, partnership with private stakeholders (Dwyer et al 2009). The study of Pearce and Schott (2005) highlighted that coordination is needed between the owners of attractions, transport industry and the accommodation industry in order to facilitate tourism distribution. In addition, there is need to have a well-organized information centres for tourists to facilitate accessibility. Lastly, it should be understood that tourism may have adverse effect on the environment if not properly managed; hence there should be maximum control of tourism consumption to guarantee sustainability.

MEDIA: has a variety of meaning but for the purpose of this study, the dictionary definition will be adopted. In the online dictionary (2012) media is defined as the means of communication, such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines that reach or influence people widely. The ability of media to influence people is a great asset that a nation can exploit to channel the direction of thought of the people (Barnes 2009). It was stated however that issues of national importance should be handled with care because media can also be a channel to mislead people (Saleem 2006). Communication has been much easier with the advent to
electronic and internet technology but some school of thought still places more priority on direct communication and the use of opinion leadership (Rogers 2003). However, majority of people still trust information obtained from popular international news media e.g. CNN and BBC and regard them for primary source of information (Pew Research Centre 2011). Nevertheless, the use of strong interactive network e.g. Facebook, YouTube, twitter etc. has been more prevalent and proves to be very effective to spread information.

4.2.2 PHASE 2: REORIENTATION

This phase will build on the information obtained from the first phase. The purpose is to capitalize on the strengths identified from the first phase for creation of a country brand. Also, at this stage, it is important to reorient people in order to gain community involvement and to motivate a unified strategic focus within the country for a progressive development. It is expected that the reorientation will improve the confidence of the people and may stimulate a sense of citizenship and civic pride; this was explained by Baker (2007), Moilanen & Rainisto (2009), when discussing about the benefits of branding. The reorientation phase will build on the result of the assessment of the current situation from the reformation phase and will also incorporate the involvement of different stakeholders to stimulate nationwide active involvement and for the creation of a brand that genuinely represent the country. The brand creation phase will have 5 interconnected steps that are explained below;

STEP 1- CONFIRMATION OF CURRENT SITUATION: The DMOs at the national, regional and local level should be actively involved with the brand creation. There should be a further nationwide research by the DMOs to scan the result of the reformation phase in order to draw a master plan for the new brand to be created before inviting other stakeholders.

STEP 2- PRE-BRAND PLANNING: Stakeholders should be invited from different fields e.g. brand management, hotels, airlines, law enforcement, clothing, fashion, movies, art, tour operators, travel agencies, media, opinion leaders representing each communities and tribes, and every interested industry that will be directly or indirectly affected by the new movement. The purpose of this stage is to officially introduce the result of the scanning phase to the stakeholders and to get different opinions on how the tourism industry could be exploited for brand creation and to understand the perspectives of each industry. Each industry would serve as a link to understand the consumer perception of the country. This stage could take some time in order to reach consensus on what is most appropriate to represent the country.

STEP 3- BRAND CREATION: This stage involves intensive discussion with the stakeholders in order to establish a unique brand theme, slogan, logo or brand promise that will be used as an umbrella message under which each stakeholder’s marketing scheme must be incorporated in order to achieve a unified strategic focus and coherency. This however must align with the result of the scanning.
phase to avoid mismatch between the offering and the message; such discrepancy could aggravate tension and distrust—therefore should be avoided and the scanning phase must be undertaken with utmost professionalism.

**STEP 4-OBSERVE THE BRAND:** This stage involves presentation of the new idea to the local public, first to some specific focus groups to get their opinion and reactions and to observe the possibilities for success or failure of the brand message. If there is need, an adjustment should be done on the brand promise and a final conclusion should be reached.

**STEP 5-LAUNCH THE BRAND:** This is the final face of the reorientation phase; in this stage every stakeholders would be encouraged to establish projects of national importance using the brand message as the umbrella theme for the new projects. This is meant to redirect the focus of people and also to draw the attention of international media. Documentaries of the projects should be available on different social media to facilitate accessibility. There must be transparency in the process and communication should be closely monitored by the independent organization that conducted the scanning.

**4.2.3 PHASE 3: REPOSITIONING**

This is the damage control stage where communication plays a major importance. There is need to strengthen the communication network already in place and to improve on the weaknesses. The major focus of this stage is to establish awareness of the newly created brand, to expand the communication network and channels in order to deepen international presence, and lastly to have close monitoring of how the international media is representing the country. The media plays an important role at this stage; both direct and indirect publicity should be used to communicate the brand. Also, the social media should be exploited to attract a large number of audiences; there should be a close cooperation with the international media at this stage to facilitate the spread of awareness and to monitor the image of the country that is represented. Series of events e.g. cultural and religious festivals could also be organized to attract the attention of international tourists.

**4.3 Experimental Application of the Model on Nigeria**

This section of the study will present Nigeria as an experimental application of the model. It should be noted that the inadequate time and resources available for this research will limit the depth of the analysis and application of the model on Nigeria. However, effort will be made to be as detailed as possible with the analysis. It is important for the reader to understand the basic background information of Nigeria; therefore, overview information will be presented before the actual application of the model.
4.3.1 Nigeria: an overview

Nigeria became a nation in 1914 through the amalgamation of the then northern and southern protectorates under the British colonial governor-general sir Fredrick Lugard but did not gain her independence until 1st of October 1960. The amalgamation resulted in the formation of a culturally diversified economy which, of course, is strength to the development of the nation to her present position though not without formidable constraints and opposition in the struggle to achieve a cohesive economic status amongst the various ethnic groups (Afigbo, 2005, edited by Falola Toyin). Nigeria is located in western part of Africa, a tropic region with temperature ranging from as low as 21 degrees centigrade (southward) during the wet season to about 36 degrees centigrade (northward) during the dry season. There are basically three seasons around the year; Raining season (also known as wet season) is mainly between March and June, Dry season between July and September, and Hammatan between December and February, though there is variation in the seasons considering the climatic differences between the northern and southern region (BBC Weather, 2012).

According to New York Times, Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa, currently inhabited by almost 160 million people, and the second largest economy in the continent (The New York Times, 2012). It (Nigeria) is equally believed to be one of the fastest growing economies in the world with Real GDP growth rate of 6.1 percent in 2009 (US Bureau of African Affairs, 2011).

Nigeria is endowed with a wealth of resources but suffers gross mismanagement and bad governance, most noticeably since the oil boom in the 1970’s, that shy away the attention of the government from Agriculture, which according to Ogen, was the fundamental strength of the nation’s economy during the 1960’s before oil discovery (Ogen, 2003 cited in Ogen, 2007). It is interesting to know that Agricultural sector was in the forefront of economic development in the 1960’s and contributed to more than 60 percent of the GDP; making Nigeria the second world largest exporter of cocoa as well as largest exporter of palm kernel and palm oil. Nigeria was also in a strong world position in the export of rubber, cotton, groundnut, hides and skins and produces more than 95 percent of her own required food (Alkali, 1997 & Lawal, 1997). Regrettably, the negligence of Agriculture and a shift to absolute dependence on oil has caused great economic havoc on Nigeria making her the home of unrivalled corruption and poverty in the world. As a result of the heavy weight of poverty and the quest for survival of the fittest, many Nigerian citizens has resorted to series of illegal activities like spam, robbery, internet fraud, looting, and worst of all, embezzlement of public funds by the government authorities etc. just to make ends meet (BBC documentary 2009; Manyong et al 2005; Idowu 2009; Aigbokhan 2000; Ucha 2010; Ajakaiye & Adeyeye 2000). These, amongst others, have resulted in high level of insecurity within the country and have stigmatized the nation with bad public reputation in the international world. As a matter of fact, the World Bank in 2004 rated that about 55 percent Nigerians are living below poverty line and this percentage has increased in recent years (The World Bank, 2012).
After about 5 decades of independence, the oil-rich Nigeria is still amongst the most corrupt nations in the world occupying the 143 position on the list in the 2011 result as against the 121, 130 and 134 position in 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively (Transparency International, 2011). This is evidence signalling the direction to which the nation is moving, unfortunately, it is such an unfavourable story that could result in the end of the unity of the constituent states of the most populous nation in Africa if nothing is done in good time. Although the corruption level is on the rise based on the overall macro-economic performance of Nigeria as a nation, it is surprising that the country achieved a micro-economic boost in the last decade during the civilian regime led by President Obasanjo when Telecommunication sector was deregulated which open door of opportunities to private companies like MTN, GLO and ECONET to break-in to the monopolistic market that has been long enjoyed by the government owned NITEL for many years without tangible progress (Andrey 2011). During the same period between 1999 and 2009, the World Bank assessment of the nation revealed that the service sector grew by an average annual growth of 14.4percent and there was a significant growth in the GDP compared to the previous decades. (World Bank, 2011)

Hence, if the words of the experts were true claiming that diversification into industry and services will trigger sustainable and long term growth, then it could be inferred that the problem of the country is in the leadership and management style that has unnecessarily exhausted all energy on petroleum export neglecting other invaluable economic involvements that could deliver the nation from the present economic peril (Soludo, 2006). Therefore, considering that the repulsive international image is majorly a direct consequence of corruption in leadership (Ayogu 2000; (BBC documentary 2009; Manyong et al 2005; Idowu 2009; Aigbokhan 2000; Ucha 2010; Ajakaiye & Adeyeye 2000)), one possible panacea will be total reformation of style of governance and privatization of the major sectors of the economy. It should be stressed though that privatisation of other sectors of the economy may drive the country in the direction of growth and also give room to optimizing the utilization of the nation's human and capital resources which will advertently results in employment creation, reduction in public nuisance, infrastructural development, urbanization, stable cash flow, reduction of poverty amongst others.

In one of the statements of the governor of central bank of Nigeria about the key sectors that the country should focus, he stressed the need for diversification of the economy and specifically recommended tourism as an efficient driver of economic growth (Soludo, 2006). This is in alignment with the role the industry has played as major contributor to the GDP of many nations around the world and one of the largest industries, offering jobs to millions of people; for example, tourism contributes directly to more than 5% of the GDP of the European Union and more than 10% in tourism related businesses, and it constitutes about 12% of the labour force, a percentage that is relatively higher when compared to other sectors (EC 2012). Tourism is also known to be a ground of opportunity to any nation to properly represent herself to the international world as it attracts international tourists to the destination who will return their experiences to their various home
countries (Kerr 2006). Such words of mouth is very powerful in spreading authentic and genuine information as it is borne by personal experience of the tourists rather than the misrepresentation of the media which may be inappropriate or even wrong at some times therefore misleading people about the destination.

4.3.2 Assessment of Nigeria: The Reformation Phase

The first phase of the brand creation as explained in the model is the reformation phase. At this point, an assessment will be conducted on Nigeria to identify the strengths and weaknesses based on the 8 factors that were already defined in the model presentation above. Below is the analysis of Nigeria based on the factors;

SOCIAL: STRENGTHS- Nigeria is very rich in culture and religious belief. There are about 500 indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria as a result of the diversity (World Factbook 2012). There has been reasonable growth in the number of educated women in recent years; a good example is the former managing director of World Bank, Okonjo Iweala who is also presently nominated for the presidency of the same organization (BBC 2012). Also, Nigerians are quite welcoming and hospitable people to foreigners and it is a collective society with strong value for family union in a population of about 160 million inhabitants (World Factbook 2012). However, these social qualities has been underutilized; different cultural events could be organized seasonally and effectively marketed to attract international tourists. Also, religious diversity has not been properly monitored and people are not well educated on religious practices. The government should call the religious leaders on how the different religious group can mutually function within the social system without causing any social chaos as witnessed in the case of unpleasant activities of the Boko Haram group.

WEAKNESSES- There are social issues that could be improved e.g. the population growth rate (2.553%) could be monitored and controlled by educating people on family planning (World Factbook 2012). The continuous growth in population is one possible cause of increased poverty rate. The education system needs to be revisited and the issue of unemployment should be addressed. One possible way to reduce unemployment is to encourage entrepreneurship in tertiary institution because majority of Nigerian youths are more interested in job seeking after graduation rather than establishing one. Corruption has now become a normal social behaviour in Nigeria, in fact, Nigeria is still amongst the most corrupt nations in the world occupying the 143 position on the list in the 2011 result as against the 121, 130 and 134 position in 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively (Transparency International, 2011). The above positions could be regarded as major achievement for Nigeria if compared to 2000 report of the Transparency international that rated Nigeria as the most corrupt country in the world. The achievement was not by chance; it was as a result of the establishment (in 2003) of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to combat corruption that has developed to be part of the Nigerian culture. Other achievement of the EFCC was the delisting of Nigeria by the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) from the list of non-corporative nations in the effort to combat money
laundering (Owolabi no date). However, the negative drop in position of Nigeria on the list between 2008 and 2011 was as a result of the slack in the activity of the EFCC. It is a recommendation of this study that the organization should be back on track to safe the face of Nigeria in the international environment.

**POLITICAL:** STRENGTH- The major political achievement in Nigeria is the transition from military dictatorship in 1999 to democracy (Uzondu 2010). The milestone achievement in the telecommunication sector was evidently as a consequence of the relief of power in the regulatory policy on international trade during the 1999 administration, most noticeable the policy that favours the entry of international firms into the industry (Ndukwe 2005). Also, the success recorded in the restructuring of Lagos state road and major infrastructure in the ongoing Fashola administration is a consequence of the reorganization of the tax policy in Lagos state (Cheeseman 2011), although, not much can be said at the national level, perhaps as a result of lack of transparency and mismanagement of fund.

WEAKNESSES- The most notable problem in the political system is the issue of corruption and ethnic favouritism. The people are more interested in voting their ethnic kinsmen in power rather than voting the right candidate. According to the World Bank, the major impedance to growth in Nigeria is bad management in public offices (Ayogu 2000). There is no proper framework for implementation of the Nigerian budgetary allocations, the political system is unstable and the law enforcement agency has failed to protect the people; this is evidence in the incessant harassment of ordinary Nigerians and even the UN office in Abuja by the boko haram group without a notable success from the police authority (New York Times 2011). There is need to revisit the Nigerian policy on resource allocation, distribution of wealth, and political transparency. Also, the present political structure is questionable, perhaps there is need to return to the fiscal federalism or regional autonomy in order to promote regional competitiveness as practiced in the 60’s during which time, Nigeria recorded so much achievements.

**ECONOMIC:** STRENGTH- Nigeria has enjoyed a steady growth of real GDP by 6.9percent in 2011, a relatively high percentage when compared to the rest of the world. Nigeria is one of the world major oil producers and has maintained a steady business relationship with the United States, China, Netherland, and the UK etc. (World fact book 2012) Nigeria is a large market for computer electronics and the demand for IT related products has increased considerably in recent years (Vanguard 2008). There is large size of arable land that is still unexplored, which gives room for increased productivity if properly managed (Muhammad-Lawal & Atte 2006).

WEAKNESSES: The unemployment rate in Nigeria is still standing at 21percent; this is not healthy for economic growth of the nation and the well-being of the individual and families. Also, the economy solely rely on petroleum export; a recent report on Nigeria international trade statistics revealed a balance of trade (without oil) deficit, which means that all other sectors of the economy has suffered decline in productivity because of too much attention on oil (Loto 2011).
The inflation rate is high and the exchange rate against the dollar is unstable, this factor increases the risk of doing business in Nigeria (World fact book 2012).

The risk of doing business in Nigeria is quite high compared to the rest of the world (World bank IFC 2012), which means there is still much to do in order to boost economic growth, e.g. regulatory framework for business start-up should be revised, the issue of corruption should be taken with more seriousness, the government spending should be more transparent and public fund should be wisely distributed, the power and energy supply should be controlled because it cost more to do business when there is unstable supply of energy. Also, economic improvement can be achieved if there is diversification to other businesses like tourism industry. According to (Alkali, 1997; Lawal, 1997; Ogen, 2003) agricultural industry contributed to more than 60percent of the GDP in economy during the 1960s and Nigeria was able to provide for over 95percent of her own food during the same period, but now there has been a sharp drop in agricultural production. Therefore, this study recommended a revival in the agricultural and tourism industry in order to diversify the economy and make room for employment creation and socio-economic development.

ENVIRONMENTAL

Nigeria has established several regional environmental protection agencies but the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) was charged with the responsibility to oversee the overall environmental protection of Nigeria. The agency has witnessed serious setback because of lack of effective implementation strategies to the aim of its establishment (Echefu & Akpofure no date). The major environmental issues in Nigeria emanated from uncontrolled urbanization, deforestation, over population, desertification (mostly in northern Nigeria) and environmental pollution (Omofonmwan & Osa-Edoh 2008). According to World Bank statistics, there is 0.6 metric tons of CO2 emission per capital in Nigeria in 2008, this pollution amount from burning of fossil fuel and consumption of solid, liquid and gas without proper control (World Bank 2012). The poor social responsibility of firms operating in Nigeria also contribute a major damage to ecosystem, a good example is the oil spillage in Niger delta region of Nigeria that has resulted to regional dispute (Vanguard 2012). There is need to revisit the purpose of establishment of the environmental protection agency in Nigeria, and also a close monitoring and serious charges should be placed on the international firms operating in Nigeria if they pose any threat to the environment. This is to protect the health of the people and to sustain the environment for future generation. It should be noted that the interest of tourists diminish when a destination is dirty and unprotected and such image is not good for a brand that will be competitive.

TECHNOLOGICAL: STRENGTH- Nigeria enjoyed a major economic boost in the last decade during the civilian regime led by President Obasanjo when Telecommunication sector was deregulated which open door of opportunities to private companies like MTN, GLO and ECONET to break-in to the monopolistic market that has been long enjoyed by the government owned NITEL for many years without tangible progress (Andrey 2011). During the same period between
1999 and 2009, the World Bank assessment of the nation revealed that the service sector grew by an average annual growth of 14.4 percent and there was a significant growth in the GDP compared to the previous decades (World Bank 2011). In 2010, the ICT contributed to 25 percent of the GDP in the service sector and Nigeria was regarded as the country with the most internet user in Africa in the same year (US embassy in Nigeria 2011).

WEAKNESSES- It is however important to highlight that growth in the telecommunication industry should not be limited to consumption, there is need for Nigeria to be innovative driven and productive. Nigeria is still regarded as one of the countries with technological backwardness because of the poor investment of government on technological research and lack of modern technological equipment in the academic institutions (Uwaifo & Uddin 2009). Therefore, there is need for improvement in the government spending on research and development and also on educating people to be technologically driven in term of productivity rather than consumption.

EDUCATION

Although Nigeria can boast of highly educated individuals like the Nobel laureate Professor Wole Soyinka, the world renowned writer Chinua Achebe of things fall apart, Professor Pat Utomi, among others, yet the education system has suffered serious setback in the last few decades and is characterised by malpractices and high level of corruption (Torulagha no date). In the statement of Aziz (2012), it was claimed in a 2006 census and survey in America that Nigerian immigrants are the most educated ethnic group in the United States, even more than the white counterparts. According to Wang (2012) the returnees Chinese were regarded as the knowledge powerhouse of the spontaneous development in China. Unfortunately, this is not the case for Nigerians because many of the educated Nigerians remain abroad without returning home to support the development of the economy, perhaps because of the fear of insecurity and poor governance. The percentage of educated Nigerians stands at 68 percent which means 32 percent of about 160 million people is not educated. This is one possible reason for the low life expectancy of 52.05 years of the total population and the poor standard of living; 70 percent of Nigerians are living below poverty line based on 2007 estimation (Word fact book 2012).

Therefore, there is need for major improvement in the education sector. Government should restructure the education system and establish an external agency to monitor and control the corruption level. Also, government need to invest more on quality education and there should be a functional framework to encourage educated Nigerians overseas to return home because they are great assets to the future development of Nigeria.

TOURISM: STRENGTHS- Tourism industry is gradually developing in Nigeria especially religious tourism as a consequence of rapid growth of religious discipleship. Other reasons to visit Nigeria include the cultural diversity, scenery and festivals. In 2011, more than 2 million tourists visited Nigeria majorly for the international church crusades and conferences (Jacobson 2012). The tourism industry is centrally structured. The responsibility to promote and market Nigeria
as a destination is borne by the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation. Nigeria is home to Osun Osogbo groove, a world heritage site and a host of other interesting attractions as well as cultural festivals (ONP 2012).

WEAKNESSES: Government has not realized the full potential of tourism as an economic driver. The percentage of 2012 budgetary allocation to tourism is 0.45 percent; this is equivalent to approximately 139 million USD. However, how the allocated fund is utilized is quite questionable because no tangible change has been recorded or any implementation of developmental projects in sight (FGN 2012). The marketing and promotion activities of the NTDC are weak if there is any, for example, there is no activity on the official webpage “http://www.tourism.gov.ng/#“. It can also be argued that there is no smooth relationship with the private sectors, although the Director General (Olusegun Runsewe) of the NTDC recently flaunt his flag to partner with important international private authorities in the United Arab Emirates and promise to generate 897,500 jobs in 2012 but such promises can only be trusted when realised (Nigerian Tribune 2012).

As suggested by Pearce and Schott, there is need for collaborative partnership and effective coordination between the attraction owners, hotel industries and transport industries. Hence, the government should endeavour to provide a framework for such functional relationship as the partnership plans of the NTDC ensues. The webpage of the NTDC should be developed and there should be functional links to different attractions, accommodation and transport companies on the webpage to make life convenient for the tourists when searching for information. Nigeria government should revisit the implementation strategy plan and ensure that all monetary and resource allocation are rightly utilized.

MEDIA
Nigeria is well established in the news media and even recently majority of the news agency has gained strong presence on the internet e.g. the punch newspaper, vanguard, the sun, NG newspaper etc. (ABYZ 2011). The presence on the internet and easy access to internet technology has facilitated information flow in Nigeria compared to the 1990s (US Embassy in Nigeria 2011). In confirmation of the Pew Research, it could also be argued that people trust to receive information from the media than the government in Nigeria. Many organizations in Nigeria are now present on the social media like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. However, there is still room for improvement because there are times of information mismatch on the news, especially in the newspapers but sometimes also in the television station. A good example was the wrong rumour by channels television in September 2008 claiming that the president of Nigeria would step down due to health issues; the rumour was taken harshly by President Yar’ Adua and the TV station was shut down by security service (Ydelle 2008). Wrong news could raise serious tension especially in case of matters relating to national security and safety. There is need to apply a high level of professionalism in information dissemination and also the Nigerian news agency should endeavour to establish strong relationship with the international media in order to monitor how the nation is represented on the international news and to make necessary correction in case of any contradiction. Finally, Nigerian government should adopt the internet technology in the electoral
process in order to facilitate information flow during national election or census, to avoid fraud and to improve transparency.

4.3.3 Brand creation in Nigeria: The Reorientation Phase

The Nigerian people have lost confidence on the ruling government but brand creation requires community involvement. Therefore, there is a great opportunity for the government to win the trust of the community during the reformation phase by implementing major changes in the identified weaknesses as explained in the above analysis and also by enhancing the strengths. It should be stated that brand creation will yield no success if there is no cooperation with industrial stakeholders within the country as well as the local communities, hence the government should endeavour to attach importance to the reformation phase. The reorientation phase will involve a planning process on how to utilize the strengths identified in the first phase to create a nation’s brand, this is necessary because Nigeria has no brand at the moment. The second phase will require a collaborative partnership between the government and all important organizations in the country to create a brand that will properly represent the mind of the people.

The strength of the brand created will determine how far the nation can offset the present image crisis; a strong brand is capable to redirect the way people think if it captures and connect to their emotion. However, a damage control communication process, as suggested by Romila (2008), is necessary to reposition the country in the mind of people and to monitor the quality of information received in the international environment. More information about the awareness creation and communication will be provided in the repositioning phase. It is undeniable that Nigeria has a long standing image crisis that emanated from a variety of discrepancies in the nation. However, it is equally true that there are several unexplored potentials, as explained in the reformation phase that could be exploited as strengths for better representation and development of Nigeria as a nation. There are five stages in this phase of brand creation and the stages are explained below;

Stage 1: At this stage, the vision and mission statement of the national level DMO in Nigeria (NTDC) should be revised to suit the current situation. Also there is need to revisit the structure of the NTDC because the present structure is too centralized and it seems to be non-functional; it is recommended that the new structure should incorporate private partners to ensure flexibility and to have certain level of independent from the government. The above analysis of the reformation phase could be used as a starting point but further research (field study) to obtain in-depth information of the current situation of Nigeria and to validate the result of the reformation phase.

Stage 2: The NTDC should invite the major hotels operating in Nigeria (e.g Nicon, Sheraton, Moorhouse, Airport hotels, etc.), the association of Nigeria theatre art practitioners, the Nigerian Bar Association, the Nigerian Police Force, National Association of Nigerian Travel Agencies, National Union of Road Transport Workers, major airlines operating in Nigeria, Association of Nigerian,
Academic Staff Union of Universities, major fashion stores, Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilizations, Nigeria Union of Journalists, the opinion leaders from each tribes, and also other interested organizations. The meeting should be well organized and the aim and objectives of creating a brand for Nigeria should be introduced. However, the official report of the reformation phase should be presented for possible modifications and ideas from the invited stakeholders. This could be a one-week seminar and each day will be a discussion on a specific topic based on the agenda of the NTDC for the branding. At the end of the seminar, a conclusion should be reached on when to have the next stage of the brand creation; which is to decide the brand theme, slogan and logo, while considering the strengths of Nigeria as the deciding factors. Each group has the responsibility and equal right as the others to contribute to the decision of brand creation. A discussion forum should be created (preferably online) for every group and also common Nigerians both home and abroad to express their opinions on what brand name is good and why. This will continue until an agreed time when the next seminar will be held to decide the brand name. All information posted on the forum should be handled by brand professionals.

Stage 3: This is a workshop or symposium where all the invited stakeholders will gather again but this time with relevant suggestions on the brand name, slogan, advertising theme, and logo to be used to represent Nigeria. This could also take a week of serious discussion and the progress of the discussion should be made available on the forum to monitor the reaction of the people. At the end of the seminar, a consensus should be reached on the brand name, advertising theme, slogan, and logo; the conclusion should be based on the information from the (online) interactive forum, the result of stage 2 seminars, the contribution of NTDC, the stakeholders, and most importantly, the strength of Nigeria identified in the reformation phase.

Stage 4: At this stage, the brand name and advertising theme is presented for a pilot test to some specific focus groups e.g. the religious group and the university students, to get their opinion on the newly created brand. If there is need to update or adjust the brand, it should be known from the reaction of the group to whom the brand was presented.

Stage 5: This stage involves the launching of the brand. Each state in Nigeria could develop sub themes based on the country brand theme to direct the thinking of people. This is an effective way to motivate a large group of people to think in similar way, for example, when Governor Fashola commenced his tenure as the Governor of Lagos state, he realized how dirty the state was, so he introduced the slogan “eko oni baje” which can be literally translated as “Lagos will not be demolished”. The slogan was backed up with strict control from the law enforcement agencies and the reconstruction of roads in Lagos state. A broom was used as a symbol which could be translated as “sweep away uncleanliness”. It was a huge surprise how Lagosians took the slogan with seriousness and changed their social behaviour to the environment. In fact, many Lagosians have adopted the slogan as a way of attacking anybody caught in the web of uncleanliness and today’s new Lagos is evidence of the change that has taken place within 5 years of
determination. This exercise is a proof that Nigerians are ready to change but need to be directed on the right part to follow by good leadership; a national brand can be a great starting point in these regards.

4.3.4 Communicating the Nigeria Brand: Image Repositioning Phase

The brand that is created in the reorientation phase should be able to communicate the strengths of Nigeria that were identified in the reformation phase, and to reposition the nation for competitive advantage, with the intention to draw the attention of not only the local but also international tourists and media. The marketing and communication activities should include advertising campaigns and movies that showcase the culture of the country. Collaboration with the airlines is required for example quarterly magazines that advertise special events could be distributed to different airlines. Tourism offices should be introduced abroad to represent the country, magazines and pamphlet about the country and practical information should be available in the overseas embassies, the country should be actively present on different social media e.g. Facebook, you tube and discovery channels. Sponsoring popular television shows, sport events and international festivals is necessary to gain more international awareness. With the cooperation of all the involved stakeholders and coherency in the marketing scheme, there is high possibility to influence the perception of the tourists. This process should be a continuous issue, it is strongly recommended that there should be a central framework to coordinate all the involved stakeholders in order to build a strong communication network and there should be a continuous research and development to improve the consumer knowledge and align tourism product offering to the need of the contemporary market.
5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no perfect society. This statement is the conclusion of the author based on the observation from the interviewed DMOs, each with their own problems at one point or the other. In fact, the present situation of the global system can justify the claim e.g. the Euro debt crisis, terrorism in some parts of the Middle East, natural disaster in some parts of Asia and America, and Political crisis in Africa etc. Therefore, rather than trying to conceal our weaknesses as a nation, it will be productive to admit them; admitting your weakness as a nation is a great strength in the making. Hence, we should exert much energy on our strength, develop them even more and let the world know who we are and what we can contribute positively to the global development. This is a challenge call for a change of focus that requires that majority, if not all, the notable member of the nation to mutually agree on a specific strategic direction. This study has sought a variety of literature on the concept of country branding, importance of image to the brand and the negative impacts of image crisis.

The aim of the study was to develop a country branding model. In the course of the study, a three phased model for country branding has been developed. It was evidence from the study process that brand creation requires a strong backing to be competitive; hence the first phase of the model suggested an assessment of the nation to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the nation. The identified strengths should be enhanced on the second phase and a brand should be created based on these. It is the conclusion of the study that a strong brand is capable of influencing the image of the nation if it is developed on something genuine and uniquely identifiable with the country. As discussed in the aim that the model can be used by all countries, it was equally stressed that it is recommended for countries that have been struggling with image problem and have failed in every attempts to improve the image. Therefore, the last stage of the model was necessary to reposition the image of the country in the mind of the international tourists and foreign investors; the mass communication in the third stage of the model is believed to be a good avenue to stimulate a change of story in the international media and could attract the awareness of the international audience. An experimental application of the model was conducted on Nigeria because Nigeria is a great nation that has suffered image problem as a result of corruption and poor leadership. Corruption has eaten deep into the Nigeria social-political and economic system and has developed into a strong negative stigma on the nation. Hence exhausting resources trying to change the image through rebranding

5.1 Research Objective 1: To identify the weaknesses of the previous rebranding campaign of Nigeria

Nigeria is a great nation that has suffered image problem as a result of corruption and poor leadership. Corruption has eaten deep into the Nigeria social-political and economic system and has developed into a strong negative stigma on the nation. Hence exhausting resources trying to change the image through rebranding
without correcting the situation that lead to the image problem will be quite unreachable in the near future or even unrealistic. Considering the opinion of Gunn that organic image is out of the control of the destination, and also one of the respondents in the interview stated that “we cannot change a country image.....and even if we can, it will take several years”. It is evidence that the approach of the previous Image rebranding of Nigeria was wrong and would undoubtedly yield no tangible result even if tried 10 more times. The two most popular reasons why rebranding campaign fails as stated by the interviewed respondents are;

- Lack of creativity and vagueness of the the campaign
- and the obvious difference between the actual situation of the country and the advertising themes- this has lead to serious distrust and much greater negative publicity

The theme of the previous campaigns “Good people great Nation” and “Heart of Africa” is not a proper representative of Nigeria considering the present situation and the strong negative publicity. Such theme could be true during the 60’s when Nigeria was regarded as the major world exporter of cocoa, palm kernel and other agricultural produce, not today that the country cannot produce her own food and does not even have any serious economic influence in Africa. The 23minutes documentaries of BBC about the campaign, titled “Can the home of 419 internet scams, corruption and voodoo ever transmit a positive image?”, confirms the second reason that difference between rebranding themes and the actual product or situation of the country can aggravate more negative publicity.

5.2 Research Objective 2: To establish the argument that brand creation can contribute a greater influence on Nigeria’s image than a rebranding campaign

It is obvious that a rebranding campaign is not what Nigeria needed considering the image problem that has stigmatized the nation for several years. A much more practical approach to image improvement is required to attract the attention of international media and improve the Nigerian society. Hence, this study advocated a shift of focus from image rebranding to societal development and creation of a brand that is much needed for differentiation strategy. It is obvious that Nigeria has no known brand at the moment; to start with, a brand needs to be created. According to the reviewed literature and even from the result of the interviews, a strong brand improves the reputation of a nation and also motivates future expectation of benefit from the target audience. However, brand creation needs to be established on something concrete, in order to improve the image of the nation, which is why this study suggests societal developmental planning in the first phase of the model in order to realize the unique identity of Nigeria and capitalize on that in the brand creation.
5.3 Research Objective 3: To contribute to developmental planning of Nigeria as a nation

As a contribution of this study to future developmental planning of Nigeria, the developed model has been applied on Nigeria to understand the current situation and to suggest future improvement. However, for the recommendation to be effective, a master plan should be drawn on how to better utilize and improve our strengths (agriculture, cultural diversity, large population, beautiful landscapes, abundant resources etc.) as identified in the first phase of the model. Also, we should be ready to admit our weaknesses that cannot change and improve on those that we can e.g. corruption, education system and security issues can be changed or improved. The second stage of the model can happen simultaneously as the first stage; this is because a country is a complex phenomenon that changes continually, hence it will be difficult to delineate one stage from the other. In order to motivate strong community involvement, it is important that people are reoriented at the second stage and effective communication will help. It is at the second stage that a decision will be reached on what brand to be created and how. Finally, the brand should be communicated internationally on the third stage. The service of the media is intensely needed at this stage, both direct and indirect publicity is required in order to appropriately position the brand and attract international awareness for competitive advantage and preference. It is expected that the societal development will influence the way Nigeria is perceived internationally which will invariably have much impact on the Image.

The choice of what brand name and slogan to be used depend entirely on the conclusion of the discussion between the stakeholders and the government at the second stage of the model. However, the recommended slogan from this study is:

“Change is everything” Or “Clockwise movement” Or “Experience the newness”

A big clock symbolising a continuous and permanent change of progressive development could be used in the logo design. At least for a start, the recommended slogan above can represent the nation but need to be modified overtime.

5.4 Research Objective 4: To identify the role of tourism in country branding and in Nigeria

In order to improve the quality of the branding process, this study recommended that tourism industry should be incorporated into the process. Tourism is believed to be the most tangible aspect of national brand (Kerr 2006), aside that, the industry is a major job provider in many nations around the world. Unfortunately it has gained very little attention from the Nigerian government; the budgetary allocation to the industry is relatively small and there is no effective implementation strategy in place. Also there is lack or inadequate infrastructure for tourism development. Therefore this study recommended that tourism education
should be encouraged in higher institutions, events and cultural festivals that have been neglected should be revived, and there should be investment in heritage tourism. Given that Nigeria has a lot of heritage and historical artefacts that has been long forgotten; museums should come alive again. Finally, all the tourism attractions should be revived and the beautiful landscapes should be preserved. More so, government should invest in transportation network and hospitality industry. The government should also stimulate cordial relationship between the attractions, accommodations and transport industry to facilitate tourism growth and to improve tourism experience.

5.5 Recommendation for further study

In the first phase of the model, 8 elements were listed as factors to measure the current situation but this study only examine each factor briefly due to insufficient time and resources. In order to strengthen the study and deepen the understanding of the current situation of Nigeria, further study is required. However, it will be much more credible if specialized professionals and student in different academic discipline focus on the most appropriate elements to their area of expertise, e.g. further research on international relations could be best handled by professionals or students of political science, international relations and mass communication. Professionals from Sociology, African literature, and history could handle social issues more appropriately. Professionals in engineering and IT related fields could handle “technology”. And professionals or students of economics, statistics and mathematics could handle the current situation on “economic”

Also, in the case of tourism, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation should be restructured and private partnership is recommended. However, the amount of private level involvement should be determined by further study by tourism professionals. The structure, roles and funding of DMOs has been discussed in this study but an in-depth study is lacking to measure the impact of private sector involvement in the success or failure of the DMO. Therefore a further study is suggested, to understand the connection and impact of the private partners on the success or failure of the DMOs and the tourism industry at large. This is important for the proper restructuring of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation and also the tourism industry at large.
6  REFERENCES


Barnes, J 2009, Restoring Thailand's Tourism Destination Image in the Wake of the recent Political Crisis: A few Proposals. Assumption University, Graduate School of Business, Thailand.


Business Studies Online no date, Economic Factors (ppt. file).


Cheeseman, N 2011, Raising revenue to reduce poverty :Improving Institutions for pro-poor growth. CSAE Economics Department, University of Oxford, Manor Road, Oxford.


Emerald Insight Staff 2004, Building a Brand, Emerald Group Publishing Ltd, Bradford, GBR.


Fodje, MN *no date*, The impact of technology to education in the developing countries. Affiliation: The Cameroon General Certificate of Education Board.


Gunn, C 1972, Vacationscape, Bureau of Business Research, University of Texas, Austin, TX.

Gunn, C 1988, Vacationscape: Designing Tourist Regions, Bureau of Business Research, University of Texas, Austin, TX.


Hang, WK Nunes, C & Dioko, NAL 2005, Does the type of perceived travel risk associated with destinations affect visitors’ likelihood of visiting? An Exploratory Study, International Conference on Destination Branding and Marketing for Regional Tourism Development, Macao, SAR, China, 8-10 December: pp. 149-159.


Kaptan, SS & Pandey, S 2010, Brand Imitation, Global Media, Mumbai, IND.


Lichrou, M O’Malley, L & Patterson, M 2008, Place Product or Place Narrative(s)? Perspectives in the marketing of tourism destinations, Journal of Strategic Marketing Vol. 16, No. 1.


Melewar, TC & Small, J 2007, Contemporary Thinking, Topics and Trends in International Branding, Part 1, Emerald Group Publishing Ltd, Bradford, GBR.

Miletsky, J & Smith, GL 2009, Perspectives on Branding, Course Technology, Boston, MA, USA.


Mohsin, M 2009, Encyclopaedia of Brand Equity Management, Vol.2, Global Media, Mumbai, IND.


Risitano, M 2005, The role of destination branding in the tourism stakeholders system: the Campi Flegrei case, Department of Business Management, Faculty of Economics - University of Naples Federico II, Naples Italy.


Romila, C 2008, Tourism Marketing and Crisis Management. Global Media, Delhi, IND.


Saraniemi, S 2009, Destination Branding in a country context: A case study of Finland in the British Market: University of Joensuu, Finland.


Wang, D 2012, Skilled returnees as contingent brokers of inter-organizational knowledge transfer. Department of Sociology, Stanford University: USA.


7 APPENDIX

NOTICE: Please note that the thesis topic was changed after analysis of the findings to suit the result.

Before analysis: “Image rebranding; a case of Nigeria Image crisis and the unsuccessful Rebranding attempts”
Final Topic: A proposed Model for Country Branding
———————— An experimental Application on Nigeria

Interview Guide

Dear Sir,

I am a master's degree student of Dalarna University, Sweden majoring in destination development. I am conducting my master’s degree research on the topic “Image rebranding; a case of Nigeria Image crisis and the unsuccessful Rebranding attempts”. I would like to obtain up-to-date information from your professional but practical experience on the chosen topic in your reputable destination. Any information given will be strictly confidential and will be used only for the purpose of the thesis. Your opinion regarding the matter would be greatly appreciated!

1. What is your name and position in your organization?


2. How long have you been working with the organization?


3. What is the name of your organization? And what is the structure of the destination marketing organization in your country? What kind of relationship does your organization have with the government and local community? E.g. Public-Private partnership, private for-profit organization, Nongovernmental organization etc.


4. What can you say about the local and international image of your destination? I.e. what is your destination known for around the world? How is the image formed? How do you monitor, influence, and control your destination image?

5. Is there any connection between the way the local communities see the destination and how international tourists perceive it?

6. What is your perception of the terms “Destination Branding” and “Destination Image”? What country branding method do you adopt in your organization? What criteria or attributes of your destination (country) do you consider important when planning Branding activities and programs? And what is your ultimate goal for branding your country (i.e. why is destination branding necessary)?

7. Why do you think branding campaigns fail? Considering the financial involvement of branding, what does your organization do in order to avoid failure when branding your destination? How do you measure the impact of your branding programs? What are the benefits of destination branding to your country? Do you work or cooperate with other organizations for branding activities? If yes, which organizations? And if no, why? How do you coordinate the activities of other stakeholders?
8. What challenges does your organization encounter in terms of securing adequate resources for branding and marketing your destination, and also coordinating relationships with other stakeholders? How do you combat the challenges?

9. Aside branding and marketing, what are other roles of your organization? How do you get funding to run the organization? What are the major expenses of your organization?

10. What do you sell as tourist products and what is unique about your destination?

11. How are tourism activities organized in your destination? Is it fully controlled by the public sector or is there collaboration with private authorities? How much private involvement is allowed?

12. In what ways does the structure of governance in the tourism industry of your destination affect the flow, financing and success of programs organized/packaged for international and local tourists?
13. How do you know what the tourists wants and how do you make provisions for such? Or do you simply develop a set of tourism products and look for the markets that suit the products?

14. Have you ever experienced image problems at your destination? If yes, what do you think was the cause? Was it tourism related or non-tourism related?

15. If the answer to the number “14” question is yes, how did you overcome the image problem?

16. What brand name/quality/slogan best represents/describe your destination? Does the brand quality affects the way the destination is perceived by international tourists? If yes, How?

17. Have you ever undergone any rebranding exercise? Why or why not?
18. If you have undergone any rebranding exercise, what was your driving force for the exercise and what were the changes made to the management, administration and/or the physical structure of the attractions as well as the destination at large?

19. What impact does the rebranding exercise have on tourism industry in your destination and how do you measure the impact of the rebranding exercise on the growth of tourism in your destination?

20. Do you market the country as a collective tourism product or each region has individual marketing scheme? Any reason for the choice of marketing method?

21. In your own opinion, what do you think are the needed criteria for a tourist destination in order to undergo a successful rebranding exercise?

22. Do you think image rebranding is one possible solution to a bad international image/reputation of a tourist destination? Or what do you think is the role of image rebranding in the marketing of a tourist destination? What other possible solutions can you suggest to redeem a destination bad international reputation?
23. What impact or contribution has tourism made in building a good and sustainable brand image for your country and what is the specific role of your organization in the image building process?

24. In your own opinion or from your experience in destination marketing, how do you think a nation can change from bad international Image to a good one or how can a nation plan and build a good image? You can give answer beyond tourism field.

Please note that the above is simply a guide for the interview and does not in any way intended to limit your answers. Thus, detailed response beyond the scope of the questions will be appreciated but will be even more appreciated if all responses fall within the border of branding, rebranding and marketing of your destination.

Thank you for taking your precious time to respond to my questions!!!
Figure 6: Location of Nigeria in World (Maps of world – Your windows to the world)