FACTORS DETERMINING GASTRO-TOURISM PROMOTION OF INDIGENOUS FOODS IN HOTELS WITHIN WESTERN TOURIST CIRCUIT, KENYA
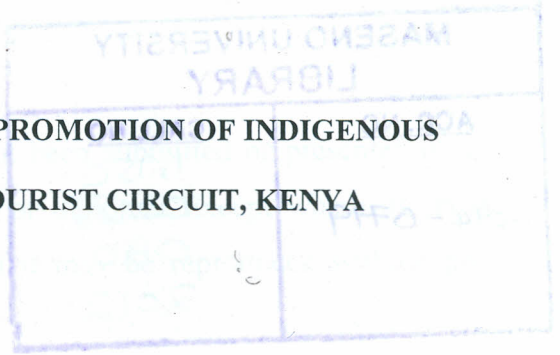
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ABSTRACT

Tourism promotion in Kenya has been conducted with a view that neglects an important tourism component - food. Despite this, tourists' demand for local indigenous foods is reportedly increasing. Local hospitality organizations have not been keen to follow this changing trend and instead serve tourists the same convention foods they consume back in their home countries while ignoring their experience concerns. The main objectives of this study therefore were (a) to identify factors determining gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods within hotels in the Western Tourist Circuit, and (b) to assess hotel's performance in gastro-tourism promotion. This study adopted a sequential explanatory research design in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaires and key informant interviews respectively. The study population consisted of top and middle level hotel managers in the Western Tourist Circuit. 166 managers were drawn from 62 hotels using multi-stage sampling technique in the quantitative phase. Stratified random sampling was used to select seven top level managers as key informants in the qualitative phase. Quantitative data collected was analysed using Descriptive statistics, Factor Analysis, Regression and Correlation analysis in SPSS. Qualitative data gathered were subjected to Content analysis in NVIVO 9.2. The research identified *Food preparation process, Food preparation benefit, Food preparation output; Food service process, Food service output, Food service input; External food related activity* and *Internal food related activity* as important factors in gastro-tourism promotion. Of the eight factors, the process aspects of food preparation and service in a hotel set up as well as external food related activities came out as the most important factors of gastro-tourism promotion. Qualitatively this was attributed to the need for various forms of experiences such as learning, participatory and adventure, which would make tourists feel appreciated and satisfied. Although hotel managers perceived these factors as important in gastro-tourism promotion in the Western Tourist Circuit, the performance of the hotels in gastro-tourism promotion generally did not conform to managers' perceptions. The study attributed this to seasonality, acceptability, religion among other factors which were thought to influence hotels ability to utilize indigenous foods and facilities in promoting gastro-tourism. The implication of this finding to hoteliers and tourism professionals is that particular attention should be paid on those factors perceived to be more important in gastro-tourism promotion, the concern being maximizing tourists' experiences. Further studies should however be conducted with tourists and the local community in the picture and a comparison be made.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The hospitality industry is regarded as one of the most important contributor to the tourism industry (Assaf & Cvelbar, 2010). Expenses on food and beverage, which are some of the tourism products supplied by the hospitality industry, amount to one-third of overall tourist expenditures of the global tourism turnover (International Culinary Tourism Association [ICTA], 2010; Meler & Cerovic´, 2003). Together the hospitality and tourism industry shape a destination's sociocultural and economic activities in various ways. For example, according to the World Tourism and Travel Council [WTTC] (2009), tourism accounts for $3.5 trillion of economic activities and 207 million jobs worldwide. Various forms of tourism that focus on several aspects of human social life such as culture, region, time, ethos/ religion, gastronomy, and socio-economic class (Long, 2004) have surfaced. Of major concern in this study is the gastronomic component which basically looks at the understanding of the scope of food preparation as well as how, where, when and why they are consumed (Gillespie, 2000). Gastro-tourism or gastronomic tourism is the pursuit of travel in the quest for unique and memorable culinary experiences through the enjoyment of prepared food, drinks and other related food activities (ICTA, 2010; Wolf, 2002). This new travel trend is said to be bringing more visitors to countries with strong gastronomic reputation for their regional and local cuisines (Duffy, Fearne, & Healing, 2005; ICTA, 2010). According to Assaf and Cvelbar (2010), this new interest in travelling to sample local cultures and cuisine by tourists is opening up new market for hoteliers and hotel property investors in the global tourism market; whether it is the sale of traditional dishes or just a requirement for something other than sun-lust and wanderlust.

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Local or regional food with a cultural touch has become a fundamental component of a destination's attributes, adding to the range of attractions and the overall tourist experience (Meler & Cerovic, 2003; ICTA, 2010; Symons, 1999; Wolf, 2002). Food related tourism has shaped traditional gastro-tourism destinations such as France, Italy, Spain and Thailand, whereas in emerging destinations such as Vietnam and Oman, food plays an important role in the attraction of tourists and the overall experience (International Tourism Trade Fairs Association [ITTFA], 2011). There is a growing recognition of the role of local cuisine in tourism promotion and development (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Duffy, Fearne, and Healing, 2005; Meler and Cerovic, 2003; Quan and Wang, 2004). However, these are in reference to the developed world (Duffy, Fearne, & Healing, 2005). In African countries, especially in southern and eastern Africa (including Kenya), which are considered a 'success story', the development and promotion of tourism is currently narrowly focused on a limited tourism product based on wildlife safari and beach tourism (Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture, 2009). However, Kenya as a whole and the Western Tourist Circuit in particular could be among popular gastro-tourism destinations that would attract a number of visitors simply for the food and food related activities. The region is endowed with vast sociocultural diversity and food varieties which can bring Kenya at the same level with already established gastro-tourism destinations if this is well packaged and promoted.

Studies in tourism where food has been the focus of research have mainly been case studies of developed countries (Hall and Sharples, 2003; Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006; Hjalager and Richards, 2002) and ethnographies (Long, 2004). These studies have contributed to the field by providing analysis of the relationship between food and tourism with practical examples of success stories of cities and countries that have used food related tourism as a positioning strategy (Shenoy, 2005). In addition, they have attempted to define the parameters within which to study food in tourism. However, the data that is available on food-centric tourism

activities is disparate and owes its origin to unrelated range of sources (Shenoy, 2005). Despite gastro-tourism products with regional and local touch being considered influential in satisfying tourists experience needs (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Henderson, 2009; Maleki, 1997; Meler and Cerovic, 2003) there is little empirical evidence if any that links the hospitality sector and hoteliers in promoting various forms of tourism such as gastro-tourism. There also lacks any empirical evidence on tourism promotion factors especially from local or indigenous point of view. It is against this background that the study sought to identify gastro-tourism promotion factors and assess gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods within hotels in the Western Tourist Circuit.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Tourism destinations all over the world are fiercely competing for international tourism receipts, which are forecasted to total over US$2 trillion by 2020 and arrivals are predicted to top 1.6 billion (World Tourism Organization [WTO], 1998). According to Maleki (1997), locations which can develop and market unique tourism products, such as regional cultural foods, can take advantage of this market by attracting revenue from visitors. The literature indicates a growing initiatives and discussion regarding the development of food tourism in the developed world (Duffy, Fearne, & Healing, 2005; ICTA, 2010). Little, however, has been reported and published regarding the situation and potential in the developing world, especially in eastern and southern Africa, which are considered a 'success story'. The development of tourism has been narrowly focused on a limited tourism product based on wildlife safari and beach tourism thereby posing a challenge in tourist product diversification (Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture, 2009). This lack of diversification and provision of unique experiences has led to dwindling tourists expenses on tourism products in Kenya.

Despite gastro-tourism products with regional and local touch being considered as influential in satisfying tourists experience needs (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Maleki, 1997; Meler and Cerovic, 2003) there is little empirical evidence if any that links the hospitality sector in promoting various forms of tourism such as gastro-tourism. In fact, hotels in most parts of Kenya focus principally on cuisines of international origin, serving tourists similar foods they eat back in their home country. This influence has to some extent reflected the power of international cultures on Kenya making her cuisine be perceived as inferior even in the minds of the domestic tourists. This practice negates the common hypothesis that tourism behaviour is a 'compensation' for activities or experiences that are missing in potential tourists' everyday lives. Thus, there is a need for conceptually based research set in a positivistic paradigm within the framework of social sciences that empirically examines gastro-tourism promotion and identifies factors relating to gastro-tourism promotion. The obvious lacuna that exists in terms of research that specifically examines gastro-tourism promotion needs to be addressed.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to assess gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods in hotels within the western tourist circuit.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

Four specific objectives of this study were identified as follows:

1. To identify factors that relate to gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods within hotels in the Western Tourist Circuit.

2. To assess hotels' performance in gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods within Western Tourist Circuit based on the identified factors.

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3. To evaluate gastro-tourism experiences in hotels within Western Tourist Circuit based on the identified factors.

4. To develop a model of gastro-tourism promotion that can be used in other tourist destinations.

1.4 Research Questions

Four research questions the study sought to answer were derived from the specific objectives as follows:

1. What are the factors that relate to gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods in the Western Tourist Circuit?

2. What is the performance of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods within the Western Tourist Circuit based on the identified factors?

3. Which elements of the identified factors are perceived by management of hotels to be very important in gastro tourist experience enhancement?

4. What model describes the relationship between hotel gastro-tourism promotion factors and gastro-tourism performance of hotels in determining tourists' experience?

1.5 Justification and Significance of the Study

Tourism studies that focus on food are mainly case studies of developed countries (Hall and Sharples, 2003; Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006; Hjalager and Richards, 2002), which have contributed to the field by providing analysis of the relationship between food and tourism However, the data that is available on food-centric tourism activities is disparate and owes its origin to unrelated range of sources (Shenoy, 2005). Although local or regional food with a cultural touch has become a fundamental component of a destination's attributes (Symons, 1999; Wolf, 2002), tourism promotion approaches in developing countries, including Kenya, is currently conducted with a view that negates important tourism component – food

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(Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture, 2009). The increasing number of holiday travellers attracted by local cuisines in several countries around the world (Duffy, Fearne, and Healing, 2005) actually calls for the linkage of the hospitality and other tourism stakeholders in promoting various forms of tourism with unique tourism products. There is therefore the need to create this link especially in in developing countries, by coming up with gastro-tourism promotion factors that hospitality industry can focus on in the promotional initiatives.

As a result, this study identified factors related to gastro-tourism promotion which can be applied by hospitality and tourism industry sector in developing countries such as Kenya. This adds to the body of knowledge on gastro-tourism which would benefit hoteliers as well as researchers and academicians in the field of hospitality and tourism. The study goes a step further to assess performance of hotels in Western Tourism Circuit in promoting gastro-tourism and also evaluates the various experiences that would result in the process. The study is of considerable applied and commercial importance to hospitality and tourism practitioners as it adds onto the existing tourism products in the Western Tourism Circuit.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (1994), reports that "A conceptual framework explains graphically or in narrative form the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and the presumed relationship among them," (p.18). Gastro-tourism promotion concept calls for participation of the hospitality industry (including hotels) in order to develop tourism activities in a particular destination. The principle of gastro-tourism is focusing on unique culinary experience (ICTA, 2010) from the cultural aspects of a destination (Hjalager and Richards, 2002). Hotels are believed to be part of this unique experience provision to tourists seeking accommodation and meal services while away from home. The conceptual

framework in Figure 1 recognizes that there are three channels through which performance of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion can be assessed. These are indigenous *food preparation, food service* and *food related activity* constructs labelled as "throughput" in Figure 1. It is important to note that in every key construct there are several elements that have to be considered. These elements are what have been used to operationalize the key constructs and are labelled "input" in Figure 1. Any attempt to assess the performance of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion must therefore take into account the input considerations which will all influence the extent to which the throughput considerations affect the "outcome". The outcome in this case is the gastro-tourism promotion based experience. All the three constructs (throughput) must therefore be considered in gastro-tourism promotion initiatives by hoteliers in the Western Tourist Circuit.

However, consideration of all the key constructs in gastro-tourism promotion does not necessarily translate to provision of unique and memorable culinary experiences. Therefore, unique and memorable gastro-tourism based experience would come as a result of priorities given to the input considerations. These priorities are guided by factors which could be considered as key determinants of gastro-tourism promotion. How these input considerations are combined, packaged and prioritized (*gastro-tourism promotion performance*) would therefore determine *gastro-tourism promotion based experiences* generated, which would determine the success or failure of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion.

1.7 Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

The researcher assumed that the targeted respondents in this study were truthful in their responses and knowledgeable on the topic of the study. The study is subject to the following delimitations:

1. One of the areas where this study poses some limitations is in the nature of the research methodology used. The study is delimited to hotels within ten counties, namely Bungoma, Busia, Homa Bay, Kakamega, Kisii, Kisumu, Migori, Nyamira, Siaya, and Vihiga in the Western Tourist Circuit. By taking only a number of regions there is an inherent disadvantage with regard to the formulation of generalizations. In this study a number of regions were classified into cluster type, and although they can be described for their similarities, the certain level of heterogeneity within these regions can be a limiting factor in the formulation of generalizations for cluster types.
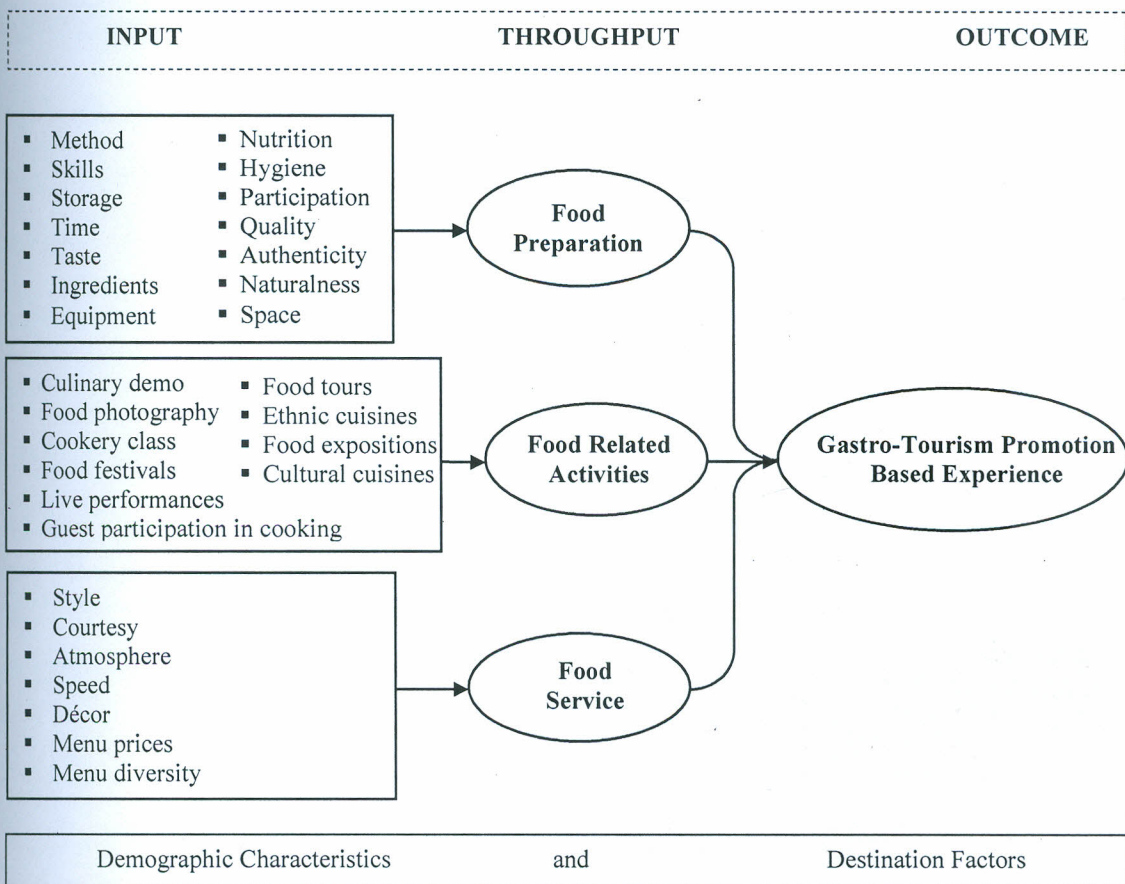
INPUT	THROUGHPUT	OUTCOME

- Method
- Skills
- Storage
- Time
- Taste
- Ingredients
- Equipment

- Nutrition
- Hygiene
- Participation
- Quality
- Authenticity
- Naturalness
- Space

Food Preparation

- Culinary demo
- Food photography
- Cookery class
- Food festivals
- Live performances
- Guest participation in cooking

- Food tours
- Ethnic cuisines
- Food expositions
- Cultural cuisines

Food Related Activities

Gastro-Tourism Promotion Based Experience

- Style
- Courtesy
- Atmosphere
- Speed
- Décor
- Menu prices
- Menu diversity

Food Service

Demographic Characteristics	and	Destination Factors

Figure 1 Gastro-Tourism Promotion Conceptual Framework (Author, 2012)

2. The study limited itself to hotel managers in the Western Tourist Circuit only. The primary data collection method was quantitative and in this case questionnaires were

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used to collect primary data, with the collection depending on the input from the hotel managers in the various hotels selected from the ten counties. The answers therefore reflect the view taken by the hotel manager, which may not be the same as other actors within the region.

3. The study does not explore and identify types of various indigenous within the Western Tourism Circuit, and limits itself to food preparation, food service and food related activities.

4. The study limits itself to being an empirical generalization and does not test any theory/ theories.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section reviews some of the theories of tourism development and promotion, the modernization theory, the world culture theory of globalization and the dependency theory, to offer a theoretical explanation for tourism development in a given region. The second section describes the review of tourism literature that focuses on food related tourism and identifies the gaps in knowledge as governed by the objectives of the study.

2.1 Theories of Tourism Promotion

According to Smith (1988), much tourism work lacks theoretical framework because many of the contributors are trained in peripheral fields, and as a result are not exposed to the dynamic complex of social and cultural processes, which inundate tourism phenomena. Previous tourism related studies with significant amount of work revolve around the impacts of tourism, witnessed concepts and theories that were borrowed or adopted from other branches of social sciences (Goeldner, Ritchie, & McIntosh, 2000). Though this study does not seek to test any theory, a discussion on the modernization theory, the world culture theory of globalization and the dependency theory is helpful in understanding food related tourism as used in this context.

2.1.1 Modernization Theory and Tourism Development

According to Schmidt (1989), modernization theory has its roots in growth theory, which is grounded in economics. Schmidt notes that classical modernization paradigm represents change as evolutionary processes, from a traditional agricultural rural-based to industry urban-based economy. In this context, tourism has been advocated as a development strategy to generate foreign exchange, to increase the balance of payment, increase GDP, attract

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development capital, increase the transfer of technology, increase employment (Shaw and Williams, 1994) and promote modern western values of life (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Other than advocating for development through tourism, modernization in tourism development also stipulates for the consumption of 'experience' as an end product (Pearce, 1989). Thus the experiential aspects in this case become a component of tourism development in any given destination so that the experience needs of the tourists are taken care of by the concerned parties. According to Wang (2000), tourists improve their social structural status when they manage to travel and consume these experiences. Butler (1980) further improvised the evolution of tourism development through his product cycle-based evolution of tourist destination (see Figure 2). Butler proposes six stages of development: involvement, exploration, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation. In this sense, Agarwal (2002) argues that endogenous or exogenous forces also play a significant role in a process of tourism development in a destination. However, the use of tourism as a development tool has been questioned by other researchers. De Kadt (1979), for example, questions the benefits posed by tourism where the multiplier effects are lower and leakages are higher than had been previously presumed.

2.1.2 Dependency Theory and Regional Tourism Development

Tourism development in peripheral countries or regions is strongly influenced by events in the core countries. The flow of mass tourists from central to peripheral countries or regions, and the running of hotels and resorts, are subject to various control mechanisms found in the former (Britton, 1989). The argument here is that tourism development depends on other forces. For instance, tour operators in core countries can exert a strong impact on the occupancy rate of hotels and spatial distribution of tourist flow in receiving countries, many of which resemble peripheral areas (Shaw and Williams, 1994).

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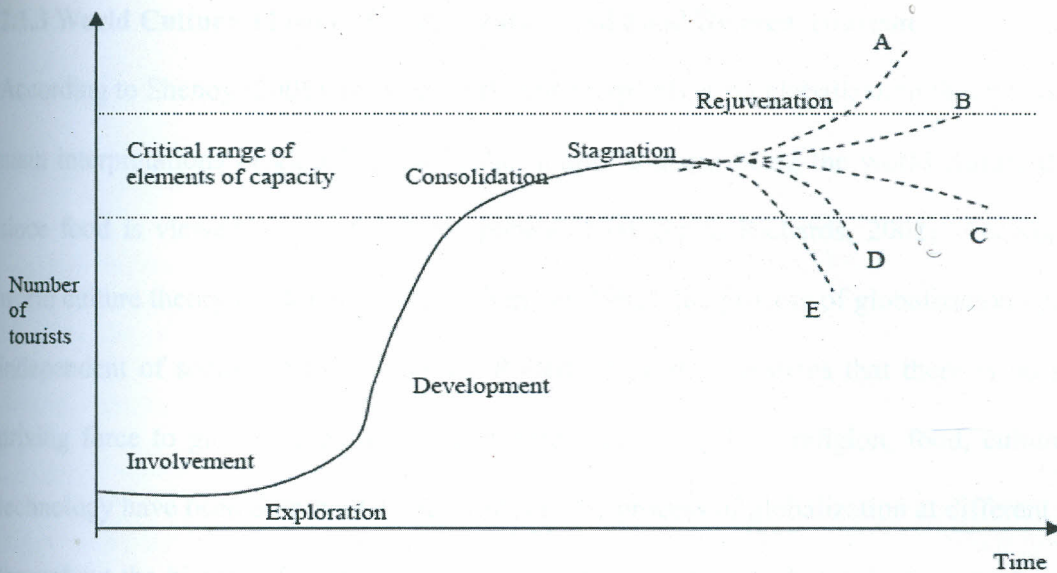
Note:

A – Successful redevelopment leading to renewed growth and expansion.

B – Minor modifications which may include the protection of existing resources and price increases.

C - Some readjustment to meet existing demand which may include an increase in visitor prices to prevent further growth.

D – Over use of resources leading to destination decline largely as a result of competition with other areas.

E – War, politics or some other catastrophe halting tourism altogether.

(Source: Butler, 1980)

Figure 2 Butler's destination life cycle

Likewise, use of certain indigenous materials in food preparation may influence the level of gastro-tourism promotion by hotels in a given destination. Furthermore, many of the hotels, particularly those of an international class, are owned or managed by Transnational Corporations. These Transnational Corporations may develop policies that influence development and promotion of various forms of tourism in a destination. Din (1997) on the other hand contends that not all international standard accommodation chains in developing countries belong to developed countries and hence are not controlled by external force. At a different level, these relationships posit the notion of tourism development as a linkage between the various stakeholders in the hospitality and tourism industry.

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2.1.3 World Culture Theory of Globalization and Food Related Tourism

According to Shenoy (2005), there are different perspectives on globalization theory, with the main interpretations of globalization in the field of tourism being the world culture theory, since food is viewed as a cultural component (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). According to world culture theory of globalization (Robertson, 1992), the process of globalization operates independent of socio-cultural processes. Robertson (1992) theorizes that there is no single driving force to globalization and that, different forces such as religion, food, culture and technology have been dominant causal forces in the process of globalization at different times throughout the history of humanity. People therefore interpret globalized goods such as food and ideas in a variety of ways (Shenoy, 2005) thus creating tension between global and local products. According to Mattiacci and Vignali (2004, p. 704), "...there is a growing trend towards considering food as an intellectual experience..." According to Mowforth and Munt

(2003, p. 25), globalization may influence peoples' culture, particularly in the developing world where people may find it difficult to "sustain their traditional lifestyles in the face of an imposition of western values and beliefs, and the consequent erosion of cultural difference and authenticity." Local culture and regional development, however, are increasingly seen as key components of 'new tourism' and as valuable sources of new initiatives designed to capture traditional and new markets (Poon, 1989). While Mowforth and Munt see globalisation as a threat to local cultures and identities, other researchers (Sklair, 2002) view the effects of globalisation more positively with talk of the 'global village' and that the 'shrinking' of the globe through technology and communication has resulted in reduced cost of long-distance travel and increased tourism supply and demand. According to Steinmetz (2010), food which has become an important and essential element in tourism is not immune to the global pressures. Food in itself has a significant role to play in 'place' marketing and also in the sustainable competitiveness of both the industry and a region (Steinmetz, 2010).

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The theoretical implication here is that cultural food if well utilized by tourism service and product providers such as hotels can actually result to creation of unique experiences to tourists, which in turn gives a destination a competitive edge.

Alternative development models of tourism based on local sustainability have emerged in the wake of the negative outcomes associated with the globalisation of the industry such as cultural homogeneity (Steinmetz, 2010). Such 'alternative' models represent an attempt to maximize equitable economic benefits of tourism for local people and reduce the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of traditional tourism models. Holden (2006, p. 127) identifies the following characteristics of alternative tourism models: (a) the pace of development is directed and controlled by local people rather than external influence, and development is small scale with high rates of local ownership. (b) Environmental conservation is important with the minimization of negative social and cultural impacts. (c) Linkages to other sectors of the local economy such as agriculture are maximized, thus reducing the reliance on imports. (d) There is emphasis on attracting a market segment that is interested in education in the local culture and environment, and willing to accept local standards of accommodation and food. Gastro-tourism, which is a concern for this study capitalizes on these four characteristics by focusing on the regional or indigenous food derived from the local culture. The theoretical prepositions above however, concentrates on the local culture and community and does not consider other stakeholders like tourism service and product providers such as hotels in the alternative development process.

2.2 Gastro-Tourism

The above discussed theories generally look at the various components of tourism development in a destination without specifically touching on a particular type of tourism. Food related tourism in literature represents a multifaceted research area which has been

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rising in prominence for the past few years. Duffy, Fearne, and Healing (2005) notes that more tourists are being attracted by the local cuisine of a growing number of countries around the world. This is attributed to environmental and sustainability concerns (Bratec, 2008); and the overall benefits derived from the experiences (Cohen and Avieli, 2004); and because regional foods and related food activities are perceived to add value to the overall travel experience (Sims, 2009). Tourism in which food plays a primary or supportive role is already popular in other destinations outside Africa such as China, France, and Canada with good prospects (Frochot, 2003). Various terms have been used to describe food related tourism: culinary tourism, cuisine tourism, food tourism and gourmet tourism (Hall and Sharples, 2008).

2.2.1 Gastro-Tourism Trends and Best Practices

According to Fyall and Garrod (2005), successful delivery of tourism products depends on close working linkage among numerous stakeholders in the tourism industry. This in turn enables the providers of tourism products such as hotels to provide a seamless experience for its customers. According to the International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA, 2010), tourists are increasingly aware of the benefits of local produce leading to increased desire to sample local dishes. A number of studies also indicate a growing appreciation of local food by tourists (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Everett and Aitchison, 2008; Duffy, Fearne, and Healing, 2005; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Quan and Wang, 2004) with a significant proportion willing to pay more for a locally identifiable product. The implication is that food has to be appreciated and interpreted within a cultural context (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). As a result, initiatives regarding the development and promotion of food related tourism are emerging. These include food tourism strategies; establishment of gastro-tourism networks and regional development (Murray and Haraldsdottir, 2004); culinary heritage identification (Long, 2006); food tourism as an element of destination marketing (du Rand and Heath,

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2006). Others include food tourism marketing activities; development of food events, food festivals, local product promotion and the development of variety of food related activities such as gourmet cooking holidays, food tours and dedicated food routes (Hall & Sharples, 2003). Previous studies however, do not report on tourism promotional or development factors which can be considered by tourism service and product providers such as hotels.

Previous researchers (e.g. Hjalager and Richards, 2002) have tried to link gastro-tourism to cultural or heritage tourism because food forms part of a given culture that can enhance tourists' cultural experiences while in a particular destination. In this sense, food and food related activity plays a significant role in gastro-tourism promotion (Steinmetz, 2010). According to the International Tourism Trade Fairs Association (ITTFA, 2011) food related tourism could be commercial or domestic, festive or ordinary, involving restaurants, festivals, cookbooks, speciality food stores, food events, cookery classes, films, brochures, food and wine tours and other similar ways of physically experiencing the product. ITTFA further argue that food in itself offers a gateway into other cultures, through taste, through food preparation and the whole eating environment. Other researchers have linked gastronomy and location (e.g. Henderson, 2009; Hjalager & Richards, 2002), which in turn has been used in tourism promotional efforts based on destination or typical regional or national foods. This has been based on food types, varieties and the way the food is prepared and served (Henderson, 2009). There is a growing recognition that tourism destinations throughout the world are competing with each other in a bid to attract visitors (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006). According to Hashimoto and Telfer, successful tourist destinations must develop a range of goods and services that will distinguish it from other destinations in order to attract a steady stream of visitors. The argument above implies that gastro-tourism promotion calls for a three pronged approach in order to provide unique experiences: food preparation, food service and food related events. The literature however does not vividly encapsulate this.

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2.2.2 Gastro-Tourism Promotion Challenges

As discussed in the tourism theories, tourism promotion may be influenced by other factors negatively. Various challenges in attempts to promote tourism products especially from the local indigenous foods point of view have been identified in the literature. Cohen and Avieli (2004) for example think that food in itself, other than attracting tourists, can impede tourism activities especially when tourists are in unfamiliar destinations. This further explains (Hall and Sharples, 2003; Lepp and Gibbson, 2003) stand on unfamiliar tourism products posing some challenge when it comes to first time visitors. Cohen and Avieli (2004) outline several factors including health considerations, hygiene standards, communication gaps and the limited knowledge of tourists concerning indigenous food resources as some of the impeding factors. Meyer-Rochow (2009) cites food taboos, cultural differences, ethnicity and religious believes as the other factors that can impede tourists' consumption of gastro-tourism products. Hjalager and Richards (2002) identified seasonality, acceptability, availability, climatic, economic and the sociocultural aspects as some of the factors that determine particular components of gastro-tourism products.

According to Scholderer, Frewer and Lambart (2003), problems may also arise from "belief systems". These "belief systems" could be associated to ethnic, religious or just life style values that would normally help consumers reduce complexity of everyday decision making. The so called "belief systems" may sometimes lead to a prior judgement and over generalization that may override the information that is conveyed to prospective consumers of a given product (Scholderer et al, 2003). This implies that food other than being a motivator to travel can also be a hindrance to tourism activities especially when the targeted market does not appreciate the food or have developed some perceived negative attitudes towards gastro-tourism product being promoted. The above arguments only points at gastro-

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tourism promotion challenges but does not bring out how and why these would be challenges to the hoteliers promoting gastro-tourism.

2.3 Gastro-Tourism Based Experiences

Tourism experience has become one of the most popular academic topics, as reflected in the constant growth of social science literature on the subject and other similar issues (Anderson & Mossberg, 2004; Hu, Chen & Ou, 2009; Morgan, 2009; Richards & Wilson, 2004; Suvantola, 2002). According to Cohen and Avieli (2004), cities, regions, or countries could effortlessly draw tourists' attention as long as a unique culinary experience could be provided. A destination's experience is regarded as the fundamental tourism product, and tourism therefore constructs places as destinations within which certain sorts of experiences would be available (Suvantola, 2002). Tourism experiences are therefore thought of as extraordinary because they stand out against other competing tourism offers and also because they hold a special meaning for the tourist (Morgan, 2009). According to Suvantola (2002), experience is much more intense when it's discovered by the traveller, 'lived' rather than 'seen'. Experience is therefore a broad term that can refer to any sensation or knowledge resulting from an individual's participation in daily activities. Jordan (2008) however believes that the production and consumption of tourism is not a linear process by which one set of people produce the experiences (as workers or performers) that are then consumed by a different set of people (the tourists or actors). This supports Suvantola (2002) idea that experience should be 'lived' rather than 'seen'. Wolf (2002, p. 2) epitomises this view when he states that "culinary tourism is both experiential and interactive." According to Steinmetz (2010), business success comes from creating experiences which engage consumers emotionally through staged interactions in an 'authentic' and memorable way. This in turn presents food and tourism businesses such as hotels with greater prospects for increased revenue returns.

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According to Hu, Chen and Ou (2009), tourists seek various experiences related to food tourism. These experiences include: dining, learning, participatory, social-cultural, relaxation and adventure experiences. Compared with other gastro-tourism themes, dining, along with other phenomena such as, food related activities like dinner theatres and food festivals are considered to elicit unique tourists' experience (Hu, Chen & Ou, 2009). Majority of existing studies on dining experience (e.g. Hall and Wilson, 2009; Morgan, 2009; Nield, Koazk, and LeGrys, 2000) have only touched on consumers' satisfaction issues. A memorable dining experience is thought could be translated into a factor influencing total trip satisfaction (Hu, Chen & Ou, 2009). Leong (2008) notes that positive consumer experience often play a pivotal role in sustaining business growth because tourists are likely to revisit a destination for a particular dining experience offered. Gastronomic experiences are therefore thought to play a part in determining the perception and satisfaction with the overall travel experience (Hall & Wilson, 2009; Nield, Koazk & LeGrys, 2000).

Tourism motivation in literature is widely based on the benefit and travel experience that tourists believe they will get. Hjalager and Richard (2002) assert that motivators are central in enhancing the experience satisfaction level that tourists seek. Hall and Sharples (2008) share a similar thought in which they consider food as the central issue especially if the tourists are more concerned with experiencing the sociocultural and economic activities of the host community. Consistent to this thought, Quan and Wang (2004) postulate that food can act as a primary trip motivator to culturally related tourism. Through these cultural motivators, tourists can learn about and experience culture of different societies, other than their own. This leads to the fulfilment of knowledge and social needs of their holiday (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). According to Richards and Wilson (2004), the desire for experience influences both the choice of destinations tourists visit and the activities they undertake while on holiday.

The search for authenticity and experience has also been identified by many researchers as central to tourism motivation (Ritchie & Hudson, 2009). According to Shaw and Williams 2004), this has led to a general rise in interest in regional authentic foods amongst tourists Shaw and Williams also noted a significant increase in food related activities amongst tourists perceived to be adventurous implying that tourists are increasingly looking for unique products that enhance their holiday experience. On the other hand, Lepp and Gibson (2003) noted that tourists perceived to be less adventurous and less experienced would seek comfort in familiar foods while the modern status-conscious traveller is likely to seek out the local cuisine. This supports Hall et al argument that marketing unfamiliar product to first time visitors would pose a challenge in motivating first time travellers. Very often, the local cuisine identified by Lepp and Gibson (2003) is the 'traditional or indigenous' food not supplied by the mainstream tourism industry. A similar thought is shared by Kivela and Crotts (2006) who points out that experienced tourists seek tourism product that are more locally sensitive rather than products with limited local provenance. Hall and Sharples (2008) point out that tourists will be more accepting of novel foods if there is concrete and tangible consumer benefit. These so called benefits are tied to the tourists' needs and motivation for travelling and partaking in a particular activity. This implies that the benefits must out weigh the risks of consuming such foods. Gastro-tourism therefore has the potential to capture a wider range of tourism activities as well as better describe the kinds of experience that tourists motivated by an interest in food and food related activities actually seek in a particular destination. According to Sims (2009), the demand for a local, authentic experience can persist even where there is a degree of scepticism about claims being made for the product.

The service aspect of gastronomy including fine dining experiences is an essential consideration in gastro-tourism promotion. This is because tourists can be attracted to a new

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location because of the image of fine dining experiences offered at destinations (Hu, Chen & Ou, 2009). Other researchers such as Anderson and Mossberg (2004) have explored dining experience by six aspects: food, service, fine cuisine, restaurant interior, good company, and other customers. Hanefors and Mossberg (2003) acknowledge the importance of social context in dining experience. According to Hanefors and Mossberg (2003), the decision to choose a particular food is regarded as a complex function of preferences for sensory (taste, odour, and texture) characteristics. This is however integrated with the influence of non-sensory factors, including food related expectations and attributes, health claims, price, convenience, service space concerns, cleanliness, taste, menu variety, and mood (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003). Therefore, hospitality organizations located at destinations may play an important role in contributing to tourism growth in the host community (Quan & Wang, 2004) by providing unique culinary experience (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

2.4 Gastro-Tourism Promotion by Hospitality Industry

Performance has been conceptualized in literature in two fundamental ways: by the determinants of performance and by the results that are the performance outcomes (Wadongo, Odhuno & Kambona, 2010). From the literature, majority of hotel performance studies have lean towards human resource strategies, management performance and monetary indicators. It is however important to note that given the role of hospitality industry in accommodating and providing food to travellers, performance of the hotels can as well be assessed based on this aspect. Supply of tourism products that satisfies tourists' need (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003; Quan and Wang, 2004) is one of the aims of the hospitality industries which include hotels. The tourism products have to be packaged and sold in a manner that ensures future existence of the hotels and in a way that enhances tourists' experience (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hjalager & Richards, 2002). According to Hall and Wilson (2009), tourists today tend to focus more on the experience that will be generated

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by the tourism product be it food or food related activities which are authentic. How these products are delivered to the tourists by the hospitality industry will thus determine whether the experience level sought by tourists is met or not. In this sense, food related tourism has ceased to be only concerned with the provision of food for tourists in restaurants, hotels and resorts (du Rand, 2006) and the focus is shifting towards provision of unique experiences (Meler and Cerovic, 2003). According to Hall and Sharples (2003), things have now changed hands and it is the tourist that now travels in order to search for unique and memorable experiences all over the world. The search for these experience is not only limited to quality food provision and service delivery at the hotels but also the other packages such as entertainment that goes with it (Poon, 1989) as well as quality and variety relation to culinary passion (Rutherford and O'Fallon, 2007).

In the hospitality research, Yuksel and Yuksel (2002) investigated restaurant selection and food service evaluation by measuring the level of tourist satisfaction with dining based on 10 attributes namely service quality, product quality, menu diversity, hygiene, convenience and location, noise, service speed, price and value, facilities and atmosphere. Anderson and Mossberg (2004) on the other hand have explored performance of hospitality facility in dining experience by six aspects namely food, service, fine cuisine, restaurant interior, good company, and other customers where dining experience was regarded as an important aspect of the overall travel experience. The performance of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion and development should thus be based on how they utilize food products and processes to enhance tourists' experience. Tourists' needs have to be determined by hotels when marketing and promoting tourism products in order to deliver the desired expectation and experience satisfaction level more efficiently and effectively (Fyall & Garrod, 2005).

2.5 Gaps in Knowledge

The foregoing literature above paints a picture of food related tourism which mainly focuses on customer satisfaction through travel experience. Various food components have been identified but there lacks clear distinctions as to which food attributes are important in gastro-tourism promotion. Despite the importance of food as an input in the tourism sector (Hall and Sharples, 2008; Henderson, 2009; Quan and Wang, 2004), previous studies have not looked into the importance of food and food related activities in promoting various forms of tourism such as gastro-tourism. From the literature, it is also evident that food and culture are important contributors to tourism promotion and tourists' experience enhancement (Bratec, 2008; Sims, 2009). However, the performance of hotels in developing and promoting this form of tourism has not been captured especially from the local indigenous food point of view. Owing to the above shortcomings, this present research was an attempt to assess hotels performance in promoting gastro-tourism through local indigenous foods based identified gastronomic factors. Hall and Sharples (2003) findings considered food as an important element of tourists' experience but they fail to explain which aspects of food bring about tourists experience. This study finding therefore goes a step further to come up with the most important factor to be considered in tourists experience satisfaction.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter describes the logical procedures and methods employed in achieving the objectives and answering the research questions of the study. It specifically describes the study area, research design, study population, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection instrument, pre-test study, ethical consideration, data collection process and finally data analysis methods.

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in the Western Tourist Circuit in Kenya, covering ten counties namely Bungoma, Busia, Homa Bay, Kakamega, Kisii, Kisumu, Migori, Nyamira, Siaya, and Vihiga (see Figure 3 in Appendix E). Western Tourist Circuit was launched in the year 2002 with the aim of diversifying tourism products in Kenya. This was in response to the declining tourists expenditure recorded in the country despite the country receiving higher number of tourists compared to competitors such as Tanzania. The circuit is home to economic activities such as farming, business and fishing. It offers a wide range of tourist activities and interesting places. These include notable museums, good hiking trails, beautiful sceneries, natural wonders and sea-angling activities among others. The region was chosen because of its rich cultural diversity and background with regard to indigenous foods. Tourists come to the region for various reasons such as taking part in cultural activities, research, religious activities, adventure, and business among others. The study area has a varied cultural landscape thereby providing a repository of rich traditional cuisine.

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a sequential explanatory research design. This design was considered because it is the most straight forward mixed method approach that first involves collection

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and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2008). As such, priority was given to quantitative data and the two methods were integrated during the interpretation phase of the study (Figure 4). This approach was adopted because it is easy to implement in collecting and analysing diverse types of data to best provide an understanding of the research problem and achieving the research objectives (Creswell, 2008; Creswell & Plano Clerk, 2011).
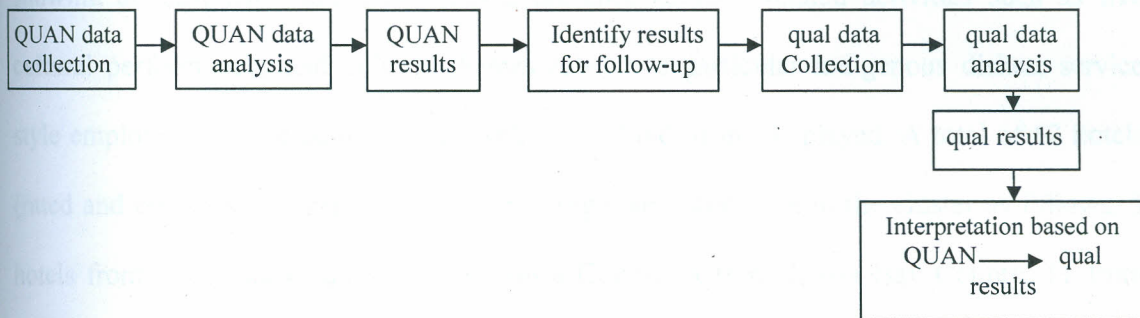
Note: QUAN: Upper case indicates that quantitative method is emphasized more and has more weight; qual: Lower case indicates less emphasis is given to qualitative method

Figure 4 An illustration of Sequential Explanatory Design (Creswell and Plano Clerk, 2011; Modified)

3.3 Study Population

The study population consisted of top and middle level managers of selected hotels in the Western Tourist Circuit. The population was estimated at 600. The managers were targeted because they are involved in the planning process of the tourism products, hence were in a better position to provide the necessary information for the research.

3.4 Sampling Procedures

Sampling was conducted in two stages: during quantitative and qualitative phase of the study.

3.4.1 Sampling in the Quantitative Phase

A multi stage sampling procedure was adopted considering vastness of the study area. Multi stage sampling is a sampling procedure that involves use of more than one sampling

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procedure in selecting participant of the survey in stages. First, hotels were clustered according to the counties. This was to ensure that hotels to be considered in the study were drawn across all the ten counties. Hotels to be considered for the study were then drawn purposively from the clusters. This entailed conducting a preliminary assessment of hotels in Western Tourist Circuit to determine their level of engagement with indigenous foods and food related activity. The indicators of engagement with indigenous foods were hotels' menu showing at least two indigenous dishes, presence of food related activities such as live cultural performances and cultural themes related to particular indigenous dishes, service style employed, service equipment as well as the kind of music played. A total of 62 hotels (rated and non-rated) offering food and beverage were drawn from the cluster as follows: 5 hotels from Bungoma County, 5 from Busia County, 3 from Homa Bay County, 11 from Kakamega, 7 from Kisii, 14 from Kisumu, 4 from Migori, 4 from Nyamira, 3 from Siaya and 6 from Vihiga. Purposive sampling was used because it allowed the researcher to pick only those hotels that met the purpose of the study (Bailey, 1982). To get the actual participants involved in the study, stratified random sampling was used to draw at least three managers from the selected hotels who deal with foods and food related activities. This first involved compiling a list of top and middle level managers from the selected hotels which served as the sample frame.

Before proceeding with sample size calculation, the researcher decided which variables (scaled or categorical) would play primary role in the analysis. This helped in determining the level of acceptable error (Cochran, 1977). For this study, scaled variables were determined as the primary variables to be used in the analysis hence the sample size was calculated using Cochran formula for continuous data as shown below:

$$n_o = \frac{(t)^2 * (s)^2}{d^2} \qquad (1)$$

$$n_o = \frac{(1.96)^2 * (1.25)^2}{(5 * 0.03)^2} = 266$$

Where n_o is the sample size needed to achieve specific level of reliability; t is the standard error corresponding to desired level of confidence (1.96 for 95% confidence level); s is the estimate of standard deviation in the population = 1.25 (estimate of variance deviation for 5 point scale calculated by using 5 [inclusive range of scale] divided by 4 [number of standard deviations that include almost all of the possible values in the range]); and d is the acceptable margin of error (3% for continuous variables) for mean being estimated = .15 (number of points on primary scale * acceptable margin of error; points on primary scale = 5; acceptable margin of error = .03). Cochran (1977) stated that one method of determining sample size is to specify margins of error for the items that are regarded as most vital to the survey. According to Cochran (1977) researcher typically needs to estimate the variance of scaled variables by determining the inclusive range of the scale, and then divide by the number of standard deviations that would include all possible values in the range, and then square this number.

Therefore, for a population estimate of 600, the required sample size is 266. Cochran (1977) further suggested that if the sample size resulting from the calculation exceeds 5% of the population, then a correction formula should be used to calculate the new sample size. Since this sample size exceeded 5% of the population (600*.05=50), Cochran's (1977) correction formula was used to calculate the final sample size. The calculation is as follows:

$$n = \frac{n_o}{(1 + n_o / Population)} \tag{2}$$

$$n = \frac{266}{(1 + 266/600} = 184.3$$

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Where population size is 600; n_o is the required return sample size according to Cochran's formula = 266; and n is the required return sample size because initial sample was > 5% of the population. The actual sample size from the calculation above is therefore 185. An additional participant was added to adjust the sample size upwards to 186 so that out of the 62 hotels selected, three managers would be drawn from each hotel.

3.4.2 Sampling in Qualitative Phase

Re-visiting the participants of the quantitative phase became paramount in the qualitative phase. Since only key informants were being targeted, the researcher decided to consider all the 42 hotel managers who returned complete questionnaires (see Chapter 4 section 4.2) for interviews. This was because the aim of the second phase of the study was to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of the quantitative study (Creswell &Plano Clerk, 2011). All the 42 managers were considered to saturation point.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments were developed for both quantitative and qualitative phases of the study as described in sub-section 3.5.1 and 3.5.2 respectively.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire (see Appendix C) was developed after a reconnaissance of the hotels was conducted. During the reconnaissance, the researcher took note of those hotels engaged in regional indigenous food and other food related activities. Secondary data analysis on gastro-tourism and other food related tourism was also conducted. Food preparation, food service and food related activities variables were operationalized based on existing research, researcher judgment, the respondents of the pre-test study, and the preliminary assessment of hotels' involvement with local indigenous food. The approach used was deductive and exploratory in nature. After an extensive examination of the pertinent literature, preliminary

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hotels assessment and the pre-test study, 22 items indicative of food preparation in gastro-tourism promotion were generated. 20 items indicative of food service and 16 indicative of food related activities were also generated. The creation of item pool went through an iterative process of exploratory factor analysis after the pre-test study. Nine, seven and six items were eliminated from food preparation, food service and food related activity indicators respectively because of cases of multicollinearity (variables that are highly correlated) and singularity (variables that are perfectly correlated) and low factor loadings. Thus, 13 items were generated to operationalize food preparation and food service while ten items were generated to operationalize food related activities (Appendix C).

The questionnaire consisted of three sections each structured differently. The first section focused on respondents' demographic profile. This included variables such as *position held, gender, age* and *education level* (Appendix C). The second section consisted of closed-end scale questions. A five point likert scale was used to measure all the variables in this section. The section was constructed in two parts. The first part required the respondents to indicate on a five point scale the importance of each attribute in gastro-tourism promotion through tourists experience enhancement. The level was constructed in a continuum ranging from *1=not at all important, 2=slightly important, 3=important, 4=very important,* to *5=extremely important.* A value of 5 was given more weight in this case. The dependent variable in consideration here was *perceived best practices in gastro-tourism promotion based experience.* The second part required respondents to evaluate based on the attributes, the performance of the hotels in gastro-tourism promotion. The level was constructed in a continuum ranging from *1=poor, 2=fair/average, 3=satisfactory, 4=good* to *5=excellent.* A value of 5 was also given more weight in this case. The dependent variable in consideration here was *actual hotel performance in gastro-tourism promotion.* Gastro-tourism promotion

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was operationalized using perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP) measured on five point scale.

The last section of the questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions which focused on gastro-tourism promotion inhibiters. This section required the respondents to narrate in writing, problems and challenges they face or may face regarding gastro-tourism promotion and what they are doing or should be done to overcome some of the challenges. The respondents were also required to indicate some of the indigenous foods they prepare and serve to their clients and food related activity they are involved in as a hotel.

3.5.2 Key Informant Interview Guide

Interview questions and probes for the key informants were developed based on the findings of the quantitative phase of the study. The first section of the interview guide focused on the introduction of the researchers to the interviewee, the purpose of the interview and assuring the respondents of that their responses were to be used for the research purpose only. The second bit focused on the questions. Six probing questions concerning gastro-tourism promotion factors, hotel performance in gastro-tourism promotion and what should be done regarding gastro-tourism promotion by hotels were included (Appendix D).

3.5.3 Pre-testing of the Instruments

It was necessary to pre-test the data collection instruments before using them in the main survey to determine any flaws and correct them (Bailey, 1982). Pre-testing was also useful for the reliability and validity of the instruments. In the quantitative phase, pre-test was conducted in two stages two weeks before the final survey. All the research assistants and the principle investigator were involved in the pre-test study. Ten per cent (10% +1) of the target sample (i.e. [10% of 185] + 1 = 20) was used in the pre-test study because the researcher wanted to maintain the study set up and also conduct the pre-test study in the same manner as

the final study. The extra participant in the pre-test was the additional participant in the sampling stage (See Section 3.4.1). Participants of the pre-test were drawn from three counties: 7 from Kisumu, 7 from Kakamega and 6 from Kisii. Participants of the pre-test study were issued with the questionnaire to fill by themselves. The first half (10) of the identified respondents were informed that they were participating in a pre-test study and that their comments regarding the data collection instruments were valuable for purposes of enhancing the research output. The result of the first stage pre-test study lead to some attributes being eliminated and changing the structure of a few question statements, open-ended and closed-ended questions. After correction, the instrument was then administered to the second group (the remaining 10) who were not told that they were participating in a pre-test study. The result from the second group did not indicate reasons for restructuring the instrument further. The 18 participants of pre-test were excluded from the main survey meaning that the total sample size was reduced to 166 (i.e. 186 − 20 = 166).

In the qualitative phase different sets of questions and interview protocols were developed for the key informant interview participants. During the training session for research assistants in the second phase of the study a list of interview questions and probes were composed for top level managers of the hotels in the Western Tourist Circuit. The principal researcher and an extension specialist drawn from hotel managers section then reviewed and revised the questions and probes. Additionally, the principal researcher with the help of extension specialists developed a set of interview procedures that helped guarantee reliability and consistency across the key informants interviewed.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The study was presented and approved by the board of the School of Graduate Studies, Maseno University. Before data collection commenced, the researcher obtained a research

permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) together with a letter indicating permission to conduct research in the area of study. NCST is a national body in Kenya in charge of research authorization. Access permission was also obtained from the various selected hotels through letter of introduction. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity and assured that their responses were to be used for purposes of the study only. Consents of the respondents were obtained prior to administration of the questionnaires.

3.7 Data Collection Process

Data collection was done in two stages: quantitative and qualitative.

3.7.1 Data Collection in the Quantitative Phase

Letter of introduction were sent to the selected hotels to notify the managers of the intention to conduct research in the hotels. This was to pave way for accessibility to the hotels. Data collection involved distribution of the self-administered questionnaires to the target respondents. Self-administered questionnaires were considered because they save on cost and also allow the respondents to answer at their own convenience time. Three research assistants were trained prior to data collection exercise to assist with data collection. The training content included a brief presentation of the research project (including objectives, research questions and significance of the study), sampling procedures and ethical issues for research involving human subjects. The targeted hotels and the target respondents to answer the questionnaires were pointed out to the research assistants. The decision to use research assistants in the distribution of the questionnaires was considered given the vastness of the research area and also to increase questionnaire response rate. Questionnaire distribution took about three weeks. Some respondents mailed back their completed questionnaires while the remaining questionnaires were collected back after one month by the research assistants. One

month was believed to be sufficient for the respondents to have completed filling in the questionnaires.

3.7.2 Data Collection in Qualitative Phase

After quantitative data collection and analysis, it became necessary to use qualitative methods to gather more data. Key informant interviews were conducted to get in-depth answers pertaining gastro-tourism promotion practices and hotel performance. This method was used because it seeks qualitative information that can be narrated and cross checked with quantitative data. Target respondents were identified and contacted in person to seek their permission to participate in the interview as key informants two weeks prior to conducting the interview. Follow up telephone calls were made just to make sure that the target respondents were still aware of the pending interview and to find out any changes in terms of their availability. On the agreed interview dates, two face-to-face interviews were conducted per day. The interviews lasted between 20-30 minutes. On the seventh interview, saturation point had been attained and there was no need of conducting further interviews as the information provided at this point were now similar to the previous interviews conducted. All the interviews were conducted by the key researcher while two research assistants were used to take notes during the interview process. All the interviews were also tape recorded. This approach allowed the interviewer to freely engage in the conversation without worrying about note-taking. Immediately after each interview the interviewer compared and compiled the notes taken by the two research assistants, filled in any details, expanded on their note-taking short-hand, or added important comments or points made during the interview. According to the United States Agency for International Development [USAID] Centre for Development and Information Evaluation (1996), it is always a good practice to do this immediately after the interview when things are still fresh in the mind because waiting several hours or a day may mean losing a lot of valuable interview information.

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3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed in two stages: quantitative and qualitative stages. In quantitative stage, statistical analysis procedures involved use of descriptive statistics (frequency) to analyse respondents' demographic status, factor analysis, regression analysis and correlation analysis in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 17). Internal reliability analysis was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha while construct validity was evaluated using exploratory factor analysis (Conway & Huffcutt, 2003). Qualitative analysis was done through content analysis using NVIVO version 9.2.

3.8.1 Factor Analysis

Preliminary factor analysis was performed to determine internal validity, sample adequacy, extreme cases of multicollinearity (variables that are highly correlated) and singularity (variables that are perfectly correlated) in the variable sets (Field, 2005; Hershberger, 2005). It is important to determine sample adequacy and cases of multicollinearity before conducting any factor analysis such as principle axis factoring (Field, 2005, Hershberger, 2005). Sample adequacy was ascertained using Kaiser-Myer-Olkin (KMO), Bartlett's Test of sphericity and anti-image matrices. Cases of multicollinearity and singularity were assessed using determinant of the R-matrix of the variable correlations. Field (2005) and Hershberger (2005) recommends a determinant of R-matrix >.00001, KMO value >0.500 and Bartlett's Test of sphericity value < 0.050 for factor analysis. All the diagonal matrices for the variables correlated in the anti-image matrix should be >.5 (Hershberger, 2005).

Hierarchical Factor Analysis was performed on three variable sets (food preparation, food service and food related activities) to identify gastro-tourism promotion factors. Principal axis factoring (PAF) with direct oblimin rotation was used to extract the factors. PAF was used because it represents high quality decision in understanding latent structure for a set of

variables that account for relationships among the measured variables (Hershberger, 2005). Oblique rotation was considered because the resultant factors were thought to be correlated; and to enable for ease of interpretation and clear determination of which measured variables load on which factor (Field, 2005). Number of factors to retain for interpretation was based on Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalue > 1) and Cattell's Scree test (see Table 2 and Figure 8 to Figure 13 in Appendix E). These two criteria were considered because relying in one criterion sometimes doesn't give reliable number of factors to retain (Field, 2005). Only factor loadings equal to or greater than 0.500 were retained for interpretation as any loading below 0.500 is considered low factor loading (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Bartlett factors scores were retained for further analysis. Bartlett factor scores were used because the procedure is considered to produce unbiased estimates of the true factor scores and also because the process provides unique solutions for factor analysis results (Hershberger, 2005). Factor analysis results are presented in form of tables, matrices and figures in chapter four and appendix section.

3.8.2 Regression Analysis

The factor scores obtained in factor analysis were regressed with the observed variables to determine contribution of each element in the factor structure identified. Hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis using enter for first block entry and backward entry for the second block was performed. Hierarchical multiple regression is a regression method performed where by those variables that are known to predict a factor are entered first followed by those which are believed to predict the factor in the second block (Field, 2009). In this case, all those variables that loaded on a factor were treated as independent variables that predicted that factor hence were entered first. The rest of the variables were entered in the second block using backward entry method. This was done for all the factors extracted in factors analysis stage. The model fit was tested using the F- statistics $p < 0.050$ while the t-

statistics $p < 0.050$ and beta values were used to assess the significance and contribution of each observed variables in the factor structures.

3.8.3 Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlation analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficients to compare perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP). The aim was to determine whether hotels were conforming to what the management perceived to be the best practices in gastro-tourism promotion. Correlation analysis was performed in two stages for each study construct. First was to determine conformity based on the factors extracted (in the 1st order factoring) and secondly to determine overall performance based on the study constructs (in the 2nd order factoring). Significant correlation ($p < 0.050$) indicated conformity and hence it implied that hotels were performing well on a particular factor or study construct. Results are presented in figures and tables in chapter four.

3.8.4 Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis has been defined as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. It can be applied to qualitative responses to open-ended questions on surveys, interviews, or focus groups (International Program for Development Evaluation Training [IPDET], 2007). Interview notes and audio content were broken down and coded into manageable categories on a variety of themes using NVIVO 9.2 software developed by Qualitative Solution and Research (QSR) International. This version is considered to be strong and takes care of other weaknesses associated with earlier versions. The

comprehensiveness of coverage was examined using content analysis' basic method: conceptual analysis. The results obtained were used to make inferences about the data gathered and explain the results of the quantitative phase of the study. Responses from open ended questions of the quantitative survey were also analysed using this method.

Six themes: overall experience, learning, authenticity, adventure, participation and appreciation and satisfaction were defined prior to coding and analysis of responses on perceived best practices (PBP) questions. Nine themes: seasonality, religiosity, ethnicity, availability, policies, locality, acceptability, convenience and utility were defined prior to coding and analysis of responses on hotel performance questions. Frequency or number of references coded and percentage coverage of each theme or concept in the texts were then obtained for interpretation. The relationships between the concepts or themes were also ascertained using NVIVO 9.2. Because NVIVO cannot ascertain the nature of relationship when modelling, researcher judgement was used. Although the results generated were more quantitative in nature (frequencies and percentage coverage), the themes generated were basically used to explain the results.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter focuses on the results of the study. The presentation is organized into six main sections. The chapter contains results on reliability and validity tests, respondents profile, factor analysis, regression analysis, correlation analysis and content analysis based on the study objectives.

4.1 Reliability and Validity Test Results

The reliability of the scale was established by testing for consistency and stability of the questionnaire results in the pre-test study and the main survey using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. Reliability tests were done for all the sets of indicators i.e. food preparation, food service and food related activity for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance. George and Mallery (2003) rules of thumb was used to classify the Cronbach's alpha coefficients generated. These rules of thumb provide the following: "> .9 – Excellent, > .8 – Good, > .7 – Acceptable, > .6 – Questionable, > .5 – Poor, and < .5 – Unacceptable" (p. 231). During the pre-test study, *food preparation* indicators and *food related activity* indicators registered good reliability. *Food service* indicators registered acceptable reliability for both perceived best practices and actual hotel performance. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients registered in the main survey were also >.7 (see Table 1 in Appendix E).

Preliminary factor analysis was performed to determine dimensionality of the scale as well as sample adequacy. The determinant of the R-matrix for all the matrices for the data met Field (2005) recommendation of > 0.00001; hence factor analysis was suitable for the data. All the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin values registered were > 0.500 (i.e. food preparation indicators = 0.868,

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food service indicators = 0.875 and food related activity indicators = 0.872) for perceived best practices. KMO values for actual hotel performance were also > 0.050 (i.e. food preparation indicators = 0.774, food service indicators = 0.840 and food related activity indicators = 0.800). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values recorded for all the variable sets were highly significant (i.e. $p < 0.001$) an indication that the R-matrices obtained were not identity matrices. The anti-image correlation matrices recorded were also > .5 and average communalities of > 0.500 were recorded for all the observed variables (see Table 2 in Appendix E). Therefore the study sample met the sample adequacy criteria for factor analysis (Field, 2005; Hershberger, 2005). Factor loadings and percentage variance explained for the study constructs are presented under factor analysis section.

4.2 Respondents Demographic Profile

The characteristic of the respondents are summarised in Table 3 below. The table reveals that most of the study participants were male (99, 63.100%) while the number of female who took part in the survey were only 58 (36.900%). Majority of the respondents in the sample were in the age group of 31-40 (76, 48.400%) followed by 41-50 (46, 29.300%). Few participants fell in the age group above 50 years (13, 8.300%). All of the respondents in the survey possessed some form of education with majority 86 (54.800%) having attained college level education with either certificate or diploma. Few number of survey participants had postgraduate education 9 (5.700%). The sample was composed of mainly chefs 60 (38.200%) followed by general managers at 42 (26.800%). Those who were categorised as others formed the least number of sample response at 26 (16.600%).

Table 3 Respondents demographic profile

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency	Valid Per cent (%)
Position held at the hotel		
General Manager	42	26.800
F& B Manager	29	18.500
Chef	60	38.200
Others	26	16.600
Total	157	100.000
Respondents Age Bracket		
21-30	22	14.000
31-40	76	48.400
41-50	46	29.300
Above 50	13	8.300
Total	157	100.000
Gender		
Male	99	63.100
Female	58	36.900
Total	157	100.000
Education Level		
Secondary (KCSE or its equivalent)	26	16.600
College (Certificate or Diploma)	86	54.800
Undergraduate (BSc, BA, BBA, B.Ed. etc.)	36	22.900
Postgraduate (MSC, MBA, MA, PGD, etc.)	9	5.700
Total	157	100.000

4.3 Factor Analysis Results

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed at two levels for food preparation indicators, food service indicators and food related activity indicators for both perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP). Factor analysis results for all the study constructs are presented in the sub sections that follow.

4.3.1 Food Preparation Factors

The 13 food preparation indicators (see Appendix C) resulted in a three factor solution explaining for 73.051% and 69.081 % of the total variance in perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP) respectively (see Table 2 in Appendix E). All the factor

loadings were > .500 with at least three items loading highly on each factor. The first factor contained six variables (i.e. food preparation time, food preparation method, guest participation in food preparation, cookery skills and knowledge of cooks, food storage procedures, and food preparation equipment in use). The factor accounted for 38.137% and 34.499% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively.

The second factor consisted of four variables (i.e. food nutritional value, food taste and flavour, food naturalness and authenticity, and food preparation according to guest request). The factor accounted for 20.271% and 19.648% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively. All factor loadings are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Food preparation pattern matrix for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance indicators

MEASURED VARIABLES	PBP FACTORS			AHP FACTORS		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ingredient used in food preparation			.718			.808
Quality of raw food materials used			.855			.752
Food preparation time	.935			.889		
Food preparation method	.925			.926		
Food nutritional value		.751			.896	
Food taste and flavour		.801			.881	
Food naturalness and authenticity		.950			.976	
Guest participation in food preparation	.940			.821		
Food types and varieties			.802			.830
Cookery skills and knowledge of cooks	.865			.849		
Food storage procedures	.856			.838		
Food preparation according to guest request		.723				
Food preparation equipment in use	.900			.793		

Note. All non-significant factor loadings (<. 5) were omitted. PBP = Perceived best practices; AHP = Actual hotel performance

The third factor had three items: ingredients used in food preparation, quality of raw materials used, and food types and varieties. The factor accounted for 14.643% and 14.934%

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of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively. In the second order factoring, one factor (Food preparation practice) accounted for 4.042% and (Food preparation performance) 12.021 % of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively.

4.3.2 Food Service Factors

The 13 food service indicators resulted in a three factor solution, which accounted for 73.802% and 74.086% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively (see Table 2 in Appendix E). All the factor loadings were also > .500 in both cases. The first factor contained six variables (i.e. food service style, food price and value, service equipment, guest service suggestions, speed of service delivery, and menu diversity and menu presentation). The factor accounted for 38.908% and 35.242% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively (Table 5 below). The second factor had four variables (i.e. hotel facilities and dining atmosphere, music and image portrayed, hygiene and service product quality and restaurant interior furnishings and décor). The factor accounted for 21.829% and 25.542% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively. The third factor had three items: staff service skills and knowledge, courtesy and friendliness of service staff and well-groomed service staff accounting for 13.065% and 13.302% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively.

In the second order factoring, two factors: Service practice A and Service practice B in PBP were extracted. The two new factors accounted for 12.802% and 9.212% of the total variance explained in Service practice A and Service practice B respectively totalling to 22.021%. In AHP, two factors were also extracted: Service performance A and Service Performance B. The two factors accounted for 8.324 % and 4.413% of the total variance explained in Service performance A and Service Performance B respectively totalling to 12.702%.

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Table 5 Food service pattern matrix for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance indicators

MEASURED VARIABLES	PBP FACTORS			AHP FACTORS		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Food service style	.926			.908		
Food price and value	.913			.861		
Service equipment	.834			.818		
Hotel facilities and dining atmosphere		.726			.861	
Staff service skills and knowledge			.813			.842
Guest serving suggestions	.869			.880		
Music and image portrayed		.876			.888	
Speed of service delivery	.908			.864		
Hygiene and service product quality		.898			.936	
Courtesy and friendliness of service staff			.705			.800
Well-groomed service staff			.812			.647
Menu diversity and menu presentation	.943			.885		
Restaurant interior furnishings and décor		.869			.918	

Note. All non-significant factor loadings (<. 5) were omitted. PBP = Perceived best practices; AHP = Actual hotel performance

4.3.3 Food Related Activity Factors

The nine food related activity indicators resulted in a two factor solution, which accounted for 74.356% and 59.541% of the total variance explained in PBP and AHP respectively (see Table 2 in Appendix E). One of the initial 10 indicators was eliminated during preliminary factor analysis. Factor one consisted of five variables (i.e. cookery classes at the hotel, culinary demonstration at the hotel, guest participation in food preparation, food photography at the hotel and live dance performance at the hotel during dinner; for perceived best practices) accounting for 45.404% of the total variance explained. However, the scenario changes when it comes to actual hotel performance (AHP). The variables food exhibition at the hotel; organized food tours by the hotel to various farms; organized food festivals at the hotel; and ethnic food cuisines and cultural celebrations at the hotel loads highly in factor one. This factor accounted for 33.890% of the total variance explained in AHP.

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The items which loaded on factor one for AHP are the same factors which load on factor two for PBP. The factor accounted for 28.952% of the total variance explains in PBP. However, two items cookery classes at the hotel and food photography at the hotel either had low factor loading (< .5) or did not load at all thus was not reflected in the AHP pattern matrix. The factor accounted for 25.651% of the total variance explained in AHP (Table 6). In second order factoring, one factor accounting for 8.012% and 11.604% of the total variances explained in perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP) resulted.

Table 6 Food related activity pattern matrix for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance indicators

MEASURED VARIABLES	PBP FACTORS		AHP FACTORS	
	1	2	1	2
Food exhibition organized at the hotel		.766	.943	
Organized food tour by hotels to various farms		.859	.949	
Organized food festivals at the hotel		.882	.878	
Ethnic food cuisines and cultural celebrations at the hotel		.747	.797	
Cookery classes at the hotel	.888			
Culinary demonstration at the hotel	.874			.908
Guest participation in food preparation	.919			.888
Food photography at the hotel	.906			
Live dance performance at the hotel during dinner	.909			.921

Note. All non-significant factor loadings (<. 5) were omitted. PBP = Perceived best practices; AHP = Actual hotel performance

4.4 Regression Analysis Results

Hierarchical multiple regressions were used to estimate the coefficients of the linear equations involving the attributes (predictor variables) that best predicted the value of the various factors extracted (dependent variables). This method was also used to identify models that best describe the relationship between the predictors and the factors identified in the three study constructs. Significant models resulted in each study construct as shown in the subsequent sub-sections below.

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4.4.1 Food Preparation Regression Results

Three significant models resulted namely food preparation process model ($F_{6, 150}$ = 92050.914, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = 1.00), food preparation benefit model ($F_{4, 152}$ = 13662.841, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = .997) and food preparation input model ($F_{3, 153}$ = 13892.583, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = .996). Table 7 indicates that guest participation in food preparation significantly predicted food preparation process factor (β = .269, t = 75.418, p < .000) while food storage procedures had the least contribution (β = .102, t = 40.495, p < .000). Thus, this model takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food preparation process, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_6 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_6 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 7 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food preparation process

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-6.267	.009		-714.981	.000
Food preparation time	.336	.005	.233	70.541	.000
Food preparation method	.299	.005	.204	63.258	.000
Guest participation in food preparation	.384	.005	.269	75.418	.000
Cookery skills and knowledge	.163	.004	.114	45.510	.000
Food storage procedures	.155	.004	.102	40.495	.000
Food preparation equipment in use	.223	.004	.153	50.538	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R^2 = 1.00; ΔR^2 = 1.00; F – Statistics = 92050.914 (p < .001)

Table 8 shows that food authenticity and naturalness significantly predicted food preparation benefit factor (β = .707, t = 80.379, p < .000) while food preparation according to guests requests had the least contribution (β = .108, t = 18.228, p < .000). Thus, the regression model below takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food preparation benefit, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_4 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_4 variables and ε is a random error term.

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Table 8 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food preparation benefit

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-9.446	.044		-213.741	.000
Food nutritional value	.246	.012	.120	19.919	.000
Food taste and flavour	.281	.013	.152	20.862	.000
Food naturalness and authenticity	1.336	.017	.707	80.379	.000
Preparation according to guest request	.184	.010	.108	18.228	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R2 = .997; Δ R2 = .997; F – Statistics = 13662.841 (p < .001)

Table 9 results indicates that quality of raw food materials contributed significantly to food preparation input factor (β = .525, t = 73.531, p < .000), while locally sourced ingredients used in food preparation had the least contribution (β = .244, t = 38.089, p < .000). Thus, the regression model takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food preparation input, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_3 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_3 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 9 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food preparation input

Model	B	Std. Error	B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-6.822	.034		-198.876	.000
Ingredient used in food	.367	.010	.244	38.089	.000
Quality of raw food materials	.816	.011	.525	73.531	.000
Food types and varieties	.585	.011	.369	53.047	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R2 = .996; Δ R2 = .996; F – Statistics = 13892.583 (p < .001)

4.4.2 Food Service Regression Results

Three significant models also resulted in food service namely food service process model ($F_{6, 150}$ = 227247.032, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = 1.00), food service output model ($F_{4, 152}$ = 26899.504, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = .999) and food service input model ($F_{3, 153}$ = 19003.135, p = .000, adjusted R^2 = .997). Table 10 shows that menu diversity and menu presentation significantly contributed to *Food service process* factor (β = .271, t = 119.956), while

equipment used in service had the least contribution (β = .096, t = 60.901). Thus, this regression model takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food service process, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_6 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_6 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 10 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food service process

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-5.558	.005		-1104.722	.000
Food service style	.243	.002	.196	99.885	.000
Food price and value	.272	.003	.207	100.846	.000
Service equipment	.124	.002	.096	60.901	.000
Guest serving suggestions	.139	.002	.117	73.592	.000
Speed of service delivery	.235	.002	.195	98.106	.000
Menu diversity and menu presentation	.340	.003	.271	119.956	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R2 = 1.00; Δ R2 = 1.00; F – Statistics = 227247.032 (p < .001)

Table 11 indicates that hygiene and service product quality significantly contributed to *Food service output* factor (β = .379, t = 64.913) while hotel facilities and dining atmosphere had the least contribution (β = .127, t = 30.290). The regression model below also takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food service output, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_4 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_4 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 11 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food service output

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-6.642	.021		-314.936	.000
Hotel facilities and dining atmosphere	.164	.005	.127	30.290	.000
Music and image portrayed	.463	.008	.306	56.432	.000
Hygiene and service product quality	.507	.008	.379	64.913	.000
Restaurant interior furnishings and décor	.395	.007	.296	53.478	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R2 = .999; Δ R2 = .999; F – Statistics = 26899.504 (p < .001)

Table 12 highlights that service skills and knowledge possessed by hotel service staff significantly predicted *Food service input* factor ($\beta = .457$, $t = 77.276$),while courtesy had the least contribution ($\beta = .270$, $t = 50.437$). Thus, the regression model takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the food service input, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_3 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_3 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 12 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting food service input

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-8.759	.038		-232.113	.000
Staff service skills and knowledge	.766	.010	.457	77.276	.000
Courtesy and friendliness of service staff	.489	.010	.270	50.437	.000
Well-groomed service staff	.746	.010	.428	73.413	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R2 = .997; Δ R2 = .997; F – Statistics = 19003.135 (p < .001)

4.4.3 Food Related Activity Regression Results

Two significant models namely internal food related activity model ($F_{5, 151} = 3617676.617$, $p = .000$, adjusted $R^2 = 1.00$) and external food related activity model ($F_{4, 152} = 937388.642$, $p = .000$, adjusted $R^2 = 1.00$). Table 13 shows that guest participation in food preparation process significantly predicted *Internal food related activity* factor ($\beta = .273$, $t = 526.512$), while culinary demonstration at the hotel had the least contribution ($\beta = .170$, $t = 370.019$).

Table 13 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting internal food related activity

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-6.321	.002		-4130.520	.000
Cookery classes at the hotel	.272	.001	.193	405.345	.000
Culinary demonstration at the hotel	.251	.001	.170	370.019	.000
Guest participation in food preparation	.398	.001	.273	526.512	.000
Food photography at the hotel	.302	.001	.209	419.112	.000
Live dance performance at the hotel during dinner	.352	.001	.241	462.724	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R^2 = 1.00; Δ R^2 = 1.00; F – Statistics = 3617676.617 (p < .001)

The regression model below takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the internal food related activity, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_5 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_5 variables and ε is a random error term.

Table 14 below shows that organized food festivals at the hotel significantly predicted *External food related activity* ($\beta = .419$, $t = 470.900$), while ethnic food cuisines and cultural celebrations at the hotel had the least contribution ($\beta = .179$, $t = 242.742$). The regression model below also takes the linear equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ where Y is the external food related activity, β_0 is a constant, β_1 to β_4 regression coefficients, X_1 to X_4 variables and ε is a random error term. The integrated regression models therefore take a linear regression equation of the form: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta(FPP) + \beta(FPB) + \beta(FPO) + \beta(FSP) + \beta(FSO) + \beta(FSI) + \beta(IFRA) + \beta(EFRA)$ where Y is gastro-tourism promotion based experience; β_0 is a constant; β regression coefficients in a factor; FPP is *Food preparation process* factor, FPB is *Food preparation benefit* factor, FPO is *Food preparation output* factor; FSP is *Food service process* factor, FSO is *Food service output* factor, FSI is *Food service input* factor; IFRA is *Internal related activity* factor, and EFRA is *External food related activity* factor.

Table 14 Summary of regression statistics for variables predicting external food related activity

Model	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-7.912	.004		-1786.859	.000
Food exhibition organized at the hotel	.319	.001	.198	258.321	.000
Organized food tour by hotels to various farms	.459	.001	.342	402.422	.000
Organized food festivals at the hotel	.704	.001	.419	470.900	.000
Ethnic food cuisines and cultural celebrations at the hotel	.296	.001	.179	242.742	.000

Note. B = Unstandardized coefficient beta value; β = Standardized coefficients beta value; t = t values; R^2 = 1.00; $\Delta R^2 = 1.00$; F – Statistics = 937388.642 (p < .001)

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4.5 Correlation Analysis Results

Perceived best practices (PBP) factor scores were correlated with actual hotel performance (AHP) factor scores to assess the performance of the hotels. The factor scores used were generated in two sets: first order and second order factor scores.

4.5.1 Food Preparation Correlations

First order factors results indicated high correlation ($r = 0.927$, $p < 0.001$) between factor three in perceived best practices (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP). This implied that food preparation input in PBP explained 92.700% of the variance in AHP. The rest of the correlations were not significant (Table 15). No significant correlations were registered in the second order factors.

Table 15 Correlation coefficients for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance in food preparation 1st order factoring

n = 157	PBP Factor1	PBP Factor2	PBP Factor3	AHP Factor1	AHP Factor2	AHP Factor3
PBP Factor1	1.000					
PBP Factor2	-.060	1.000				
PBP Factor3	-.012	.004	1.000			
AHP Factor1	.005	-.141	-.009	1.000		
AHP Factor2	-.140	.051	-.118	-.144	1.000	
AHP Factor3	.024	-.069	.927**	.064	-.103	1.000

Note. PBP = Perceived best practice; AHP = Actual hotel performance; **. Correlation is significant at the 0.010 level (2-tailed).

4.5.2 Food Service Correlations

Significant correlation ($r = 0.569$, $p < .001$) was registered between food service output (PBP Factor2) in perceived best practices and actual hotel performance (AHP Factor2) for first order factors (see Table 16 below). This implied that food service output (PBP Factor2) in perceived best practices explained 56.900% of the variance in actual hotel performance (AHP Factor2).

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Table 16 Correlation coefficients for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance in food service 1st order factoring

n = 157	PBP Factor1	PBP Factor2	PBP Factor3	AHP Factor1	AHP Factor2	AHP Factor3
PBP Factor1	1.000					
PBP Factor2	-.120	1.000				
PBP Factor3	.139	.074	1.000			
AHP Factor1	.072	.078	.071	1.000		
AHP Factor2	.015	.569**	.091	.027	1.000	
AHP Factor3	.143	.088	.135	.067	-.099	1.000

Note. PBP = Perceived best practice; AHP = Actual hotel performance; **. Correlation is significant at the 0.010 level (2-tailed).

Significant correlations were registered between Service practice A and Service performance B (r = .243, p < 0.010); Service practice B and Service performance A (r = .339, p < 0.001); Service practice B and Service performance B (r = .228, p < 0.001); and Service performance A and Service performance B (r = .204, p < 0.050) in second order factors (see Table 17 below). However, the study focuses only on bivariate correlations recorded for factors corresponding to one another in both perceived best practices and actual hotel performance.

Table 17 Correlation coefficients for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance in food service 2nd order factoring

n = 157	Serv Prac A	Serv Pract B	Serv Perfo A	Serv Perfo B
ServPract A	1.000			
ServPract B	.114	1.000		
ServPerfo A	.063	.339**	1.000	
ServPerfo B	.243**	.228**	.204*	1.000

Note. ServPract = Service practice; ServPerfo = Service performance; **. Correlation is significant at the 0.010 level (2-tailed); *. Correlation is significant at the 0.050 level (2-tailed).

In this case, only the second factor (Service Practice B and Service Performance B) met the criteria. This implied that generally, perceived best practices of food service indicators explained 22.800% of the variances in actual hotel performance regarding food service indicators.

4.5.3 Food Related Activities Correlations

Unlike the other two key constructs, food preparation and food service, there was no significant correlation registered for both first order factors in food related activity (Table 18) and second order factors.

Table 18 Correlation coefficients for perceived best practices and actual hotel performance in food related activity 1ˢᵗ factoring

n = 157	PBP Factor1	PBP Factor2	AHP Factor1	AHP Factor2
PBP Factor1	1.000			
PBP Factor2	.081	1.000		
AHP Factor1	.057	-.131	1.000	
AHP Factor2	.112	-.027	.117	1.000

Note. PBP = Perceived best practice; AHP = Actual hotel performance

4.6 Qualitative Analysis Results

This section presents results from the analysis of open ended section of the questionnaires and the results obtained from analysis of interview notes taken during key informant interviews. The results presented in the sub-sections that follow explain further the results in the quantitative phase of the study.

4.6.1 Why some factors were important in gastro-tourism promotion

When asked why certain elements of food preparation process was considered the most important factor in gastro-tourism promotion regarding food preparation, majority of those interviewed reported that food preparation process allows for direct or indirect involvement of guests in the production process. This they said ensures guests satisfaction in terms of the experiences such as learning, participation as well as adventure. One participant in particular mentioned that:

> "….by allowing guests to participate in the food preparation process, he or she feels wanted, appreciated and can be able to learn a lot through observation, actual preparation as well as through asking the chefs about anything in the preparation

process such as the methodology employed, the equipment being used, time required as well as the various recipes being utilised".

Another participant mentioned that:

"Guest participation in preparing a dish he or she has never tried before translates to some kind of adventure and through that, the guest is in a position to learn and appreciate the cultural aspects of the dish he or she participated in preparing".

Still another participant felt that:

"The fact that the guest is physically there engages all their senses and this make him or her feel that he or she is part and parcel of the product development process".

To fully evoke the kind of experiences mentioned above, participants felt that certain food preparation attributes such as equipment and cookery skills would be important. This is evidenced in the following verbatim quotation:

"…chefs' cookery skills were important because the skills contribute towards the learning experience of the guests taking part in food preparation".

Based on the interview responses and open-ended responses on the questionnaires, six themes namely overall experience, learning, authenticity, adventure, participation, and appreciation and satisfaction were identified and coded in NVIVO 9.2 for further analysis. The results in Table 19 below indicate that adventure registered the highest percentage of coverage (26.070%) with only 23 references in the interview. Appreciation and satisfaction of tourists recorded the least number of references (19) but it explains for the second largest percentage of the coverage (20.830%). Authenticity also registered the least number of references (19) with the least percentage of interview coverage. Overall experience registered the highest number of references (26) with percentage interview coverage of 11.520%.

Researcher judgement and interview responses were used to ascertain the relationships between the six themes. The themes were then modelled (Figure 5) using NVIVO. Though not the main focus of this study the model in Figure 5 was developed to help in the

understanding the results in the qualitative phase. The figure indicates that authenticity (7.900%) impacts tourists learning (12.200%) and adventure experience (26.100%) which together with participatory experience (16.800%) influences the overall tourists' experience (11.500%). This in turn makes the tourists feel appreciated and satisfied (20.800%).

Table 19 Qualitative results of perceived best practices in food preparation and service by theme

Theme/ Concept Defined	n	Reference Coded	% Coverage
Overall Experience	7	26	11.500
Learning	7	25	12.200
Adventure	7	23	26.100
Participation	7	20	16.800
Appreciation and Satisfaction	7	19	20.800
Authenticity	7	19	7.900

Note: n = number of interview participants
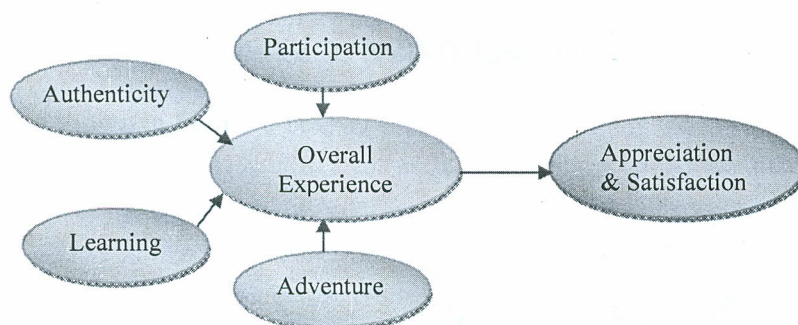
Figure 5 Thematic model illustrating various forms of experiences that influences perceived gastro-tourism promotion factors (Author, 2012)

4.6.2 Why the Lack of Conformity in terms of Hotel Performance

The qualitative phase of the study also sought to identify why the performance of the hotels in gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous food generally poor. Majority of the participants agreed that this was gastro-tourism was still not a well-established tourism in the Western Tourism Circuit and therefore were facing many challenges in promoting and developing it. The performance of hotels in gastro-tourism promotion was attributed to nine themes namely seasonality, religiosity, ethnicity, availability of raw products, policies, locality, acceptability, convenience and utility. Table 20 below indicate that utility registered the highest percentage

coverage (24.000%) with 27 references in the interview. Availability registered the highest

reference (30) with 15.500% of the coverage. Locality recorded the least percentage of the

coverage (3.250%) with 17 references. Policies theme had the least reference (14) with

percentage coverage of 9.100%.

Table 20 Qualitative results of hotel performance in gastro-tourism promotion by theme

Theme/ Concept Defined	n	Reference Coded	% Coverage
Seasonality	7	29	13.470
Religiosity	7	15	2.700
Ethnicity	7	26	4.200
Availability	7	30	15.540
Policies	7	14	9.090
Locality	7	17	3.250
Acceptability	7	24	18.080
Convenience	7	16	8.230
Utility	7	27	24.020

Note: n - number of interview participants

The nine themes were modelled in NVIVO based on researcher judgment and interview

responses as shown in Figure 6 below.
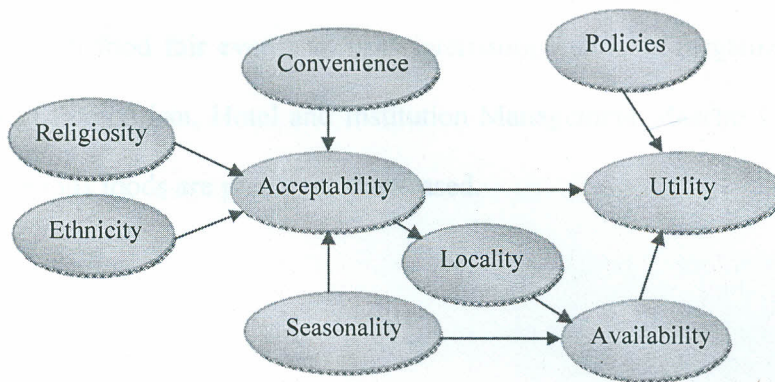
Figure 6 Thematic model illustrating factors influencing gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods by
hotels in Western Tourist Circuit (Author, 2012)

The figure shows that ethnicity (4.200%), religious affiliations (2.700%) and convenience

(8.230%) directly influences acceptability (18.080%) of certain indigenous products by

tourists which in turn influence utilization (24.020%) of such products by hotels. Locality

(3.250%) and seasonality (13.470%) determine the acceptability (18.080%) and availability (15.540%) of certain gastro-tourism products and this in turn influences utilization of such products by hotels. Policies (9.090%), whether internal or external, influences distribution, accessibility and utilization of certain gastro-tourism products by hotels and gastro tourists in a destination.

Indigenous foods that are prepared and served at hotels and in various ceremonies, expositions, fairs, festivals and events (whether cultural, ethnic, sports related or religious) also form part of the study. Traditionally prepared foods here range from vegetables (e.g. *akeyo/dek, osuga, omboga/dodo* etc.), cereals/starches (e.g. fermented porridge, brown ugali), mostly tubers (e.g. boiled sweet potatoes, boiled cassava, boiled arrow roots), to animal products including meat (e.g. *aliya*), poultry (e.g. *aluru, ingoho*) and edible insects (such as elate termites, locusts etc.) that form the protein base. Most of these foods have been in existence since ancestral days in various parts of the region. Food related activities include Ethnic events such as traditional nights (for instances Luo Nights, Gusii Nights and Luhyia Nights) and even food fair events such as international cuisine (organized annually by the department of Ecotourism, Hotel and Institution Management Maseno University) in which certain indigenous foods are prepared, showcased.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION

This chapter presents results discussion. The discussion is organized into sections which addresses the objectives of the study. The discussion links findings of this present study and previous study.

5.1 Factors that Relate to Gastro-Tourism Promotion and Gastro-tourism experiences

Two objectives of this study were to identify factors relating to gastro-tourism promotion of indigenous foods in hotels within Western Tourist Circuit; and to evaluate gastro-tourism experiences in hotels within Western Tourist Circuit. Several factors resulted based on the three study constructs (food preparation, food service and food related activity) as well as important experience elements under each factor. These are discussed in the subsequent sub-sections below.

5.1.1 Food Preparation Factors

The three factors extracted explained for 73.051% of the total variance in perceived best practices (PBP). The high percentage of variance explained by the factors implies that all the three factors were important in gastro tourism promotion and development as perceived by hotel managers. Factor one was named *Food preparation process* factor because all the items loading on it tend to explain the process aspect of food preparation i.e. what is done, how it is done, when it is done and by what method (Gillespie, 2000). Factor two was named *Food preparation benefit* because the variables which loaded on it relate to the benefit aspects of food preparation. The third factor was named *Food preparation input* because its constituent variables were thought to be concerned with what goes into a product. PBP factors were used as the basis for naming the factors since the factors acted as the frame of reference for comparing the hotel performance in gastro-tourism promotion. The results depicts that certain

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factors were perceived to be more important in gastro-tourism promotion regarding food preparation construct.

Food preparation process factor

Food preparation process explained for the greatest percentage (38.137%) of the total variance in food preparation perceived best practices (Table 2). The adjusted R^2 value of 1.00 registered was an indication that the six predictor variables (Table 7) in *Food preparation process* factor explain 100% of the variation in the factor structure. Of the six variables, participation of tourists in the whole process of food preparation (β = .269, t = 75.418, p < 0.001) registered the greatest contribution towards food preparation process meaning that tourists have to be involved in the preparation stages of dishes. This is consistent with Jordan (2008) believe that the production and consumption of tourism is not a linear process by which one set of people produce the experiences (as workers or performers) that are then consumed by a different set of people (the tourists or actors).

In the current study, tourists' participation accounted for the greatest variance because actual consumer participation in product development is thought to boosts their confidence and acceptability in whatever product they consumer. This finding also supports Suvantola (2002) idea that experience should be 'lived' rather than 'seen'. By tourists actually participating in their food preparation, they are actively involved what Suvantola is referring to as "living". The study finding is also consistence with that of Wolf (2002) in which food related tourism is both experiential and interactive. Therefore directly or indirectly involving tourists in food preparation process provides for their experiential needs. According to Meler and Cerovic (2003) tourists are constantly seeking higher levels of participation in the tourism industry of experience and adventure.

To help understand this concept of tourist participation and experiences, the qualitative results revealed that there are various forms of experiences sought after by tourists as was perceived by hotel managers interviewed. Tourist participation in food preparation process is therefore thought to translate to various experiences such as participation, adventure as well as learning. While storage aspect of *Food preparation process* was highly significant (t = 40.495, p < 0.001), it registered minor contribution towards *Food preparation process* (β =0.102) and therefore it should not be given more attention in the gastro tourism promotion process. This is attributed to the fact that most storage facilities in a hotel set up are inaccessible to tourists due to organizational policies, and store routines.

Food preparation benefit factor

Food preparation benefit factor explained for the second largest percentage (20.271%) of the variance in food preparation perceived best practices (Table 2). The adjusted R^2 value of 0.997 registered was an indication that the four predictor variables (Table 8) in *Food preparation benefit* factor explain 99.700% of the variation in the factor structure. As already mentioned, food preparation benefit was used in this context to refer to the output benefits emanating from food preparation as perceived by hotel managers who took part in the study. This is consistent with previous studies of Cohen and Avieli (2004) who points out that food generally translate to overall benefits derived from the experiences. These experiences are to some extent based on tastes and flavours, and nutritional values of the food under consideration (International Tourism Trade Fairs Association (ITTFA, 2011; Symons, 1999). The result indicated that authenticity had the greatest contribution (β = .707, t = 80.379) towards *Food preparation benefit* factor (Table 8). This is consistent with previous researchers (Anderson and Mossberg, 2004; Hu et al, 2009; Morgan, 2009) findings that authenticity is one of the important attribute in tourists experience when it comes to food related tourism, heritage or cultural tourism.

In the current study, authenticity explained for the greatest contribution regarding *Food preparation benefit* because consumers nowadays prefer food products prepared in their natural form to preserve their nutritional value and flavours which basically translate to authentic products. Authenticity has also been mentioned here since it translates to a kind of experience sought after by gastro tourists. The qualitative results revealed that provision of authentic experiences by hotels would lead to tourists' appreciation of the overall experience generated. This would then translate to tourists' satisfaction with a particular hotel in terms gastronomic products on offer. In this regard, hoteliers should therefore focus on authentic products that elicit unique and memorable dining experiences as suggested by Meler and Cerovic (2003).

Food preparation input factor

Food preparation input explained for the third largest percentage (14.643%) of the total variance in food preparation perceived best practices (Table 2). The adjusted R^2 value of 0.996 registered was an indication that the three predictor variables (Table 9) in *Food preparation input* factor explain 99.60% of the variation in the factor structure. Generally, this factor addresses the need for quality and variety in terms of the raw materials and ingredients used for production in hotels. The findings support Rutherford and O'Fallon, 2007) argument that variety and quality of produce should be a focus in enhancing culinary passion within hotels. The findings further suggest that quality of raw food materials had the greatest contribution towards *Food preparation input* ($\beta = 0.525$, $t = 73.531$, $p < 0.001$). According to Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007) quality is always a concern for any hotel serving food to their guests. This is because the quality of the raw materials dictates most of the other elements in the output factors such as taste, flavour and quality of food product. Food variety and types ($\beta = 0.369$, $t = 53.047$) came second. This finding is therefore in line with Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007) suggestions to focus on quality and variety regarding

food preparation in hotels. This study further links variety to diversification of the tourism product so that what is on offer is an array of selection from which tourists can choose from. The qualitative phase revealed various types of experiences sought after by tourists and therefore utilizing quality and variety regarding the input component of food preparation translates to unique.

5.1.2 Food Service Factors

The three food service factors registered high percentage of variance (73.802%) in perceived best practice (PBP), an indication that all the three service factors are critical in gastro tourism promotion. Factor one was named *Food service process* because the variables which loaded on it were explaining aspects of service delivery process. Factor two was named *Food service output* since the items loading on it were concerned with outcome of what the hotel does to make the service area appealing i.e. the general outlook. Factor three was named *Food service input* because it's entire factor loading items were concerned with efforts being made to impact on the final service outcome. Just like the case of food preparation construct, factor naming was based on the perceived best practice (PBP) indicators.

Food service process factor

The results indicated that *Food service process* explained for the greatest percentage (38.908%) of total variance in food service indicators (Table 2). The adjusted R^2 (1.00) value recorded for food service process factor indicated that the predictor variables (Table 10) explained 100% of the variation. According to Leong (2008) the process of service delivery creates a positive consumer experience which plays a pivotal role in sustaining business growth. This present study postulate that service delivery process would make tourists feel part of the service delivery as they experience the level of service offered by hotel service staff. As such, the service delivery process provides tourist with the opportunity to evaluate

and assess the kind of service being offered and by doing so, tourists feel part and parcel of the entire service process. This is consistent with previous studies of Suvantola (2002) and Wolf (2002) of creating participative experiences for tourists. According to Hu et al. (2009), this result into what tourists would perceive as optimal experience. Further analysis indicated that menu diversity and menu presentation (β = 0.271, t = 119.956) had the greatest contribution. This is attributed to the idea that diverse tourism products add value to tourists' experience (Meler and Cerovic, 2003). Diversity in this essence could be achieved through use of different food types or just using different preparation method for a particular type of food, what Rutherford and O'Fallon (2007) calls variety.

Food service output and input factors

In the current study, *Food service output* and *Food service input* are believed to be very crucial in the overall meal experience for any hospitality establishment. According to Hu et al (2009), meal experience is an inevitable component of the touring experience and thus is something that hospitality organizations have to provide their clients. There is no much in the previous studies regarding the output and input factors of food service in hotels. The adjusted R^2 value (.999) registered for food service output indicated that the variables hotel facilities and dining atmosphere, music and image portrayed, hygiene and service product quality and restaurant interior furnishings and décor explained 99.900% of the variation in *Food service output* factor. It is evident from the regression coefficient results that hygiene and service product quality (β = 0.379, t = 64.913) has the greatest contribution towards food service output. The findings above suggests that despite all the items being statistically significant, only one item (hygiene and product quality) has the greatest contribution towards enhancement of gastro tourists experience. This contradicts Anderson and Mossberg (2004) study which indicated dining atmosphere as the most crucial element in tourists' experience. The aim of the service, however, is to ensure that food and drink intended for human

consumption produced within hotels is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer. This implies that hotels should give more focus on the hygiene and product quality compared to the other elements regarding food service output.

The adjusted R^2 value obtained for food service input was .997 implying that the variables staffs service skills and knowledge, courtesy and friendliness of service and well-groomed service staff explains 99.700% of the variation. The results indicated that service skills and knowledge possessed by hotel service staff (β = 0.457, t = 77.276) had the greatest contribution towards *Food service input* factor. This is because staffs who understand their work often create good impression to the tourists. Skills are also crucial in staging experiences as it translates to learning on the part of the tourists regarding cultural aspects of food (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). Depending on the impression created by the service delivery staff and the tourism product as a whole the level of tourists experience may be satisfactory or not.

5.1.3 Food Related Activity Factors

Two factors extracted explained for 74.356% of the variance implying that the two factors were important in gastro tourism promotion. The study result is an indication that food related tourism is not all about provision of food items. This is consistent with du Rand (2006) proposition that food related tourism has ceased to be only concerned with the provision of food for tourists in restaurants, hotels and resorts. This also supports Steinmetz, (2010) preposition that food related activity play a significant role in gastro-tourism promotion. Factor one was named *Internal food related activities* because all the variables which loaded on it focuses on food related activities that can be organized or done at the hotel and the hotel management has greater influence on them. Factor two was named *External*

food related activities because the items which loaded on it were activities and events organized from outside the hotel setting which management had minimal influence on.

Internal food related activity factor

Internal food related activity explained for the greatest percentage (45.404%) of the total variance in food related activity. The adjusted R^2 value of 1.00 indicated that the five predictor variables (Table 13) explain for 100% of the variation. The management perceived those activities organized within the hotels (Internal food related activities) as the most crucial enhancers of tourists' experience. According to Sims (2009), food related activities organized within the hotel add value to the overall travel experience. Internal food related activity in this sense imply that the management has some control over what is going on and that guests can participate in such activity because of perceived minimal security risks. This in turn adds up to their overall experience generated from food related activities (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Sims, 2009). Guest participation in food preparation process had the greatest contribution ($\beta = 0.273$, t = 526.512, p < 0.001) towards *Internal food related activity* factor. As already discussed, allowing guests to participate in food preparation process translate to learning, adventure and participatory experiences.

External food related activity factor

External food related activity explained for the second largest percentage (27.918%) of total variance regarding food related activity measure. Compared to the internal food related activity, hotel managers perceived this factor to have minimal influence on tourists' experiences within hotels. The adjusted R^2 value of 1.00 indicated that the four predictor variables (Table 14) explains 100% of the variation. Further analysis indicated that organized food festivals at the hotel ($\beta = 0.419$, t = 470.900, p < 0.001) had the greatest contribution towards *external food related activity* factor. According to Hu et al. (2009), food festivals are

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of various forms and vary in content. In this current study, the aspect of different people showcasing their culinary skills at the end of which participants sample some of the delicacies being showcased would excite tourists. The festivals also provide opportunity for tourists to learn based on the festival organization, presentation and the overall experience generated (Hall & Sharples, 2003). As such, only those food related activity elements which prove to evoke unique experiences to tourists should therefore be the focus of the hoteliers in attempts to promote gastro-tourism in Western Tourist Circuit.

5.2 Performance of Hotel in Gastro Tourism Promotion

The other objective this study set to achieve was to assess hotels' performance in gastro-tourism promotion. Much of the discussion in this section is, however, not linked with previous studies because previous researchers have not captured the aspects of hotel performance in relation to gastro-tourism promotion. Factor scores were used as the basis of comparison between the perceived best practices and the actual practice or performance of the hotels. High Pearson's correlation indicated that hotels were conforming to what they believed were best practices while low correlation indicated slight conformity. Lack of correlation was an indication that hotels were not conforming to practices they believed were the best. The discussion into three major sections based on the three study constructs namely food preparation, food service and food related activity.

5.2.1 Performance of Hotels in Food preparation

High correlation ($r = 0.927$, $p < 0.001$) registered between *Food preparation input* factor in perceived best practice (PBP) and actual hotel performance (AHP). This factor initially accounted for 14.643% of the total variance in both PBP and AHP. The result is a likely indication that hoteliers give more preference to Food preparation input as opposed to food preparation process which explained for the greatest percentage (38.137%) of total variance

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(Table 2). The focus of food preparation process is basically engaging guests in the process in order to provide them with certain experiences such as participation, adventure and learning as was revealed in the qualitative phase. Correlation results however indicates that hoteliers in the Western Tourist Circuit are instead focusing more on the input aspect of food preparation which actually explained for the least percentage of variance.

Generally, there lacked conformity between hotel performance and perceived best practices with regard to food preparation given the correlation results of the second order scores. This study attributes this to what other researchers (Hall & Sharples, 2003; Lepp & Gibbson, 2003) referred to as 'impeding factors' of food related tourism. These were identified as acceptability, availability, seasonality of the products and facilities under consideration (Table 19). Ethnicity and religious beliefs were also mentioned as some of the impeding factors in the qualitative phase. This is consistent with previous studies of Hjalager and Richards (2002) who cite seasonality, acceptability, availability, climatic, economic and the sociocultural aspects as some of the factors that determine particular food stuffs as tourist product components. The findings also support Cohen and Avieli (2004) notion of unfamiliar products as well as Scholderer and Lambart (2003) perception of belief systems hindering promotion of gastro-tourism products.

Though not supported by food tourism literature per se this current study linked ethnicity, religious affiliations and convenience to influence acceptability of certain indigenous products by tourists. This in turn would influence utilization of such products by hotels (Figure 6). The study further linked geographical location and seasonality as determinants of acceptability and availability of certain gastro-tourism products, which in turn influences utilization of such products by hotels. Policies, whether internal or external, were identified

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as influencers of distribution, accessibility and utilization of certain gastro-tourism products by hotels.

5.2.2 Performance of Hotels in Food service

Service elements in any hotel or restaurant are very crucial in determining the kind of experience the guests would feel especially from the perspective of meal experience. Good service experience is cited by researchers as a motivator for tourists to try out certain hospitality facilities (Anderson & Mossberg, 2004; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006). The significant correlation ($r = 0.569$, $p < 0.001$) registered between food service output in PBP and AHP is an indication that hotels were focusing more on food service output elements. This study attribute this factor to general outlook which is consistent with Anderson and Mossberg (2004) suggestion that general look and the atmosphere in a restaurant or any eating place stimulate people to visit a particular attraction or destination. However, this finding suggest that food service process which explained for the greatest percentage of the variance (Table 2), comes second or even third to food service output in terms of hotel performance.

The highly significant correlations registered in the second order factors (Table 17) indicates some level of conformity between what the managers believe are good food service practices and what hotels are doing. This performance could be attributed to the fact that hoteliers only believe that the contact point between producers and consumers of tourism product should be the selling point where service is offered (Rutherford & O'Fallon, 2007). During this contact with the guests, experience can be enhanced or destroyed depending on the mode of delivery and service factor priorities by the hotel. Service is also thought as the only tourism product consumed at the point where it's produced therefore managers have got no choice but to ensure that service standards are maintained especially the visible aspect of the service.

### 5.2.3 Performance of Hotels in Food Related Activities

Internal food related activities were perceived by hotel managers as the best enhancers of gastro tourists' experience (45.404%). Hotels however, were focusing more on the external food related activities (28.952%) which include food exhibitions organized at the hotel, organized food tour by hotels to various farms, organized food festivals at the hotel, and ethnic food cuisines and cultural celebrations at the hotel. This could be attributed to lack of appropriate facilities and the many challenges faced in embracing the internal food related activities at the hotel level. For instance, culinary demonstrations require professionalism in indigenous knowledge of food preparation, service techniques and equipment which hotels may not be having or are reluctant to acquire. This in turn would have made hotel managers to prefer the option of hosting such activities e.g. food festivals and cuisines which are organized by people from outside the hotel though tourists participates in them.

Generally, hotels were performing poorly in gastro-tourism promotion through food related activity given the results of the second order factor correlations. This performance could be attributed to the fact that this is not a well-established tourism product in the Western Tourist Circuit. However, analyses of open ended questions revealed that majority of managers acknowledge the contribution of such activities in tourists experience enhancement and gastro tourism promotion even though it is not yet a well-established product.

5.3 Gastro-Tourism Promotion Model

This study also set out to develop gastro-tourism promotion model. The several models generated from the regression analysis were integrated into one model (Figure 7) to help describe gastro-tourism promotion by hotels. The model theorizes that gastro-tourism promotion factors: *Food preparation process* (FPP) factor, *Food preparation benefit* (FPB) factor, *Food preparation input* (FPI) factor, *Food service process* (FSP) factor, *Food service*

output (FSO) factor, *Food service input* (FSI) factor, *Internal food related activity* (IFRA) factor and *External food related activity* (EFRA) factor influences gastro-tourism experiences through food preparation, food service and food related activity. However, the manner in which these factors are considered, gastro-tourism products are packaged and experience generated are influenced by seasonality, product availability, seasonality and hotel utilization of such products in gastro-tourism promotion (Figure 7).
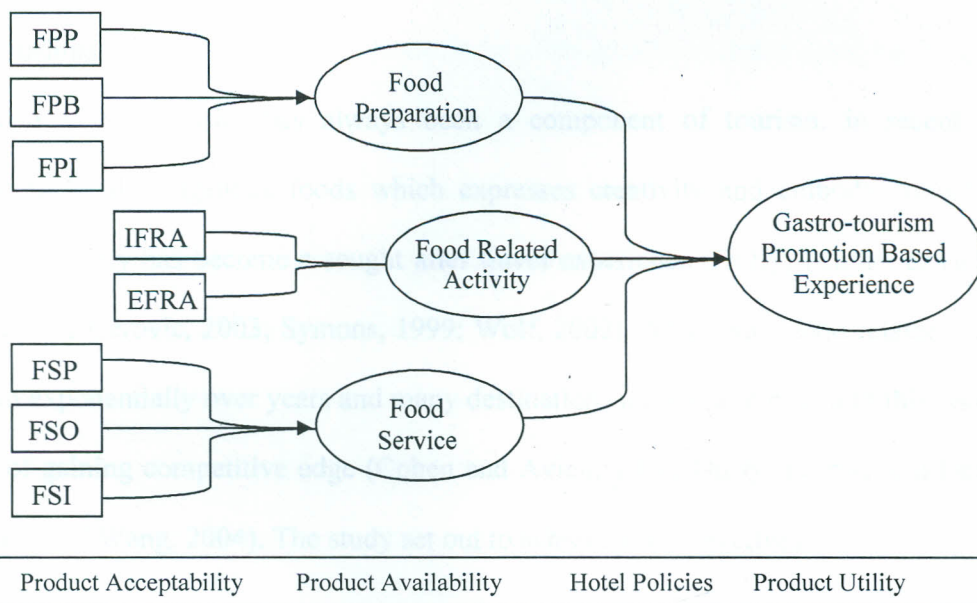
Note

FPP: Food preparation process factor	FSP: Food service process factor	IFRA: Internal food related activity
FPB: Food preparation benefit factor	FSO Food service output factor	EFRA: External food related activity
FPI: Food preparation input factor	FSI: Food service input factor	

Figure 7 Integrated Gastro-tourism promotion model

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter highlights key findings of the study. It concludes and recommends actions relevant to the findings. The conclusions are made in line with the research objectives and research questions. Recommendations are made for the hospitality and tourism professionals, policy makers and scholars who may want to conduct further research in this line of academic discipline.

6.1 Conclusions

While food as a necessity has always been a component of tourism, in recent years experiencing local indigenous foods which expresses creativity and embody cultural and destination identity has become a sought after travel experience (Duffy, Fearne, & Healing, 2005; Meler & Cerovic, 2003; Symons, 1999; Wolf, 2002). As a result, food related tourism has grown exponentially over years and many destinations are looking now into this sector as a means of gaining competitive edge (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Duffy, Fearne, and Healing, 2005; Quan and Wang, 2004). The study set out to achieve four objectives.

First was to identify factors that relate to gastro-tourism promotion. The study identified several factors based on the three study constructs – food preparation, food service and food related activity. Therefore, recognizing the importance of food preparation, food service and food related activities to the visitor experience is very critical in gastro-tourism promotion in a given destination. Under food preparation, the study came up with three key factors in gastro-tourism promotion. These are *Food preparation process, Food preparation benefit* and *Food preparation input* in that order of importance. In food service, three factors were also identified as *Food service process, food service output* and *Food service input* in that order of importance. The study identified two factors in food related activity as *Internal food related*

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activities and *External food related activities* in that order of importance with regard to gastro-tourism promotion. This order of importance was attributed to the experiential needs of the target gastro-tourists.

Secondly, the study set out to assess hotels performance in gastro-tourism promotion within the Western Tourist Circuit. The study revealed that although hotels were slightly doing well in some areas like service, generally the performance was not conforming to what they believed were the best practices. This was attributed to impeding factors that sometimes would influence how hotels utilizes some indigenous products that impacting on gastro-tourism promotion. Thirdly, the study sought to evaluate various attributes that greatly contributes towards gastro-tourism experiences. The findings revealed that those attributes that directly or indirectly provides for guest involvement in product preparation greatly contributes towards gastro-tourism experiences. According to Suvantola (2002), experience is much more intense when it's discovered by the traveller, 'lived' rather than 'seen'. The findings suggest that more hoteliers should place more focus on those factor elements with the highest level of contribution to tourists' experience.

Lastly, the fourth objective of this study was to develop a model relating to gastro-tourism promotion. Despite the performance the hotel industry in promoting gastro-tourism activities within the Western Tourist Circuit, there is still room for improvement provided hoteliers in this region concentrate on those factors perceived to be the greatest contributor to gastro-tourism promotion based experience. It is therefore necessary for hoteliers in this region to improve the tourists' overall experience in order to meet or exceeds their expectations if the aim is to promote gastro-tourism. There is undoubtedly scope for developing tourism and/or enhancing tourists experience in Western Tourist Circuit through indigenous foods and food related activities. The study therefore proposes adoption of the model developed in order for

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the hospitality industry including hotels to participate fully in the promotion and development of gastro-tourism in the Western Tourist Circuit.

6.2 Implications

The results of this study have implications to the hoteliers in the hospitality industry as well as tourism promotional authority. To the hospitality industry, the findings imply that gastro tourism development and promotion calls for the participation of the hospitality sector. Tourists' experience satisfaction while on holiday should be a consideration by the hoteliers in order to meet the needs of the gastro tourists. The process aspects of tourism products should be given more focus in whatever tourism product being developed and promoted in a region. The implication of this result in the industry is that all the senses needs to be engaged in the entire food experience all the way from the preparation stage to service delivery which ensures guest participation.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the preceding of the survey results, the following recommendations regarding gastro-tourism promotion by hotels are suggested:

1. It is important for the hotels in collaboration with tourism authorities to publicize and promote regional indigenous food in order to build awareness among prospective tourists.

2. These foods should be prepared and served in a manner that ensure maximum participation either directly or indirectly of the consumers, the aim being maximizing their experience satisfaction while on holiday. In order to achieve the so called optimal customer experience (Hu et al., 2009), hotels needs to concentrate or dedicate most of their efforts in improving the service delivery process as well as food

preparation process if they want to cut a niche of their own in the already developing gastro tourism market.

3. It would also be important for the hotels to involve the local community in gastro-tourism product development and promotion through taking part in service delivery, organizing food related activities, entertaining the tourists and teaching tourists about the local indigenous foods and their significance in the community.

6.4 Future Research

The study recommends the need to investigate further why in spite hotel managers in the Western Tourist Circuit understanding the importance of gastronomy in enhancing tourists holiday experience, they don't conform to the practices they believe are best in gastro-tourism promotion. Further studies should also be done with the focus being the consumers of tourism product (tourists) and then compare the results with the findings of this study.

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