

MEKELLE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

Assessment of tourism marketing strategy in tourism destination:

A case study in Bale Mountain National Park-Bale Zone

By:

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A thesis

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Degree of Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in (MBA)**

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DECLARATION

I, Elias Mohammed, hereby declare that the thesis entitled “Assessment of marketing strategy in tourism destination: The case study in Bale Mountain National Park-Bale Zone in Oromia region, Ethiopia”, submitted by me to the award of the degree of MBA in Marketing of Mekelle University at Mekelle, is original work and it has not been presented for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Fellowship or other similar titles of any other university or institution.

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STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis entitled “Assessment of marketing strategy in tourism destination: The case of Bale Mountain National Park-Bale Zone in Oromia region, Ethiopia” ”submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (Master of Business Administration) in Marketing Management, College of business and Economics, Mekelle University, through the Department of Management, done by Mr. Elias Mohammed ID No: CBE/PR: 044/05 is an authentic work carried out by him under my guidance. The matter embodied in this thesis has not been submitted earlier for award of any degree or diploma to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|---|
| <i>BERSMP</i> | <i>Bale Eco-Region Sustainable Management Project</i> |
| <i>GMP</i> | <i>General Management Plan</i> |
| <i>NBSAP</i> | <i>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan</i> |
| <i>UNWTO</i> | <i>United Nations World Tourism Organization</i> |
| <i>MOCT</i> | <i>Ministry of Culture and Tourism</i> |
| <i>OCTB</i> | <i>Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau</i> |
| <i>STP</i> | <i>Segmentation, Positioning and Targeting</i> |

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>List of Acronyms</i> | v |
| List of tables..... | ix |
| List of figures..... | xi |
| <i>Abstract</i> | xii |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Background of the Study..... | 1 |
| 1.2 statement of the Problem..... | 3 |
| 1.3 Research Questions..... | 5 |
| 1.4 Objective of the study | 6 |
| 1.4.1 General objective | 6 |
| 1.4.2 Specific objectives | 6 |
| 1.5 Significance of the study..... | 6 |
| 1.6 Scope of the study | 7 |
| 1.8 Organization of the Thesis | 8 |
| CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW | 9 |
| 2.1. Introduction | 9 |
| 2.1 Tourism industry..... | 9 |
| 2.1.1 Nature of tourism Marketing | 9 |
| 2.1.2 Role of marketing in tourism..... | 10 |
| 2.2 Theory of Business Strategies | 11 |
| 2.3. ROLE OF MARKETING IN TOURISM SUPPORTING EMPIRICAL LITERATURE..... | 13 |
| 2.4.1 Empirical Evidences With Regard To Africa | 14 |
| 2.4.2 Empirical Evidences With Regard To Ethiopia..... | 15 |
| 2.4 Elements of marketing strategies..... | 15 |
| 2.4.1Market Segmentation, targeting and positioning in Tourism (STP) | 15 |
| 2.4. 2. Tourism Marketing Mixes | 18 |
| 2.4.3 Customer satisfactions..... | 22 |
| 2.6 Tourism activities in Bale Mountain National Park..... | 23 |
| 2.7. Conceptual framework..... | 24 |
| CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY | 25 |
| 3.1 Description of the study area..... | 25 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 3.1.1 Sections of the Park..... | 25 |
| 3.2 Research Design and Strategy | 26 |
| 3.3 Data type and source..... | 27 |
| 3.4. Sampling design and procedure..... | 27 |
| 3.4.1. Sampling design..... | 27 |
| 3.4.2. Sampling procedure | 28 |
| 3.5. Methods of data collection and instruments | 29 |
| 3.6 Methods of data processing and Analysis | 30 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS..... | 31 |
| 4.1 Demographic profile of respondents..... | 31 |
| 4.1.1 Demographic profile of the surveyed employees..... | 31 |
| 4.1.2 Demographic profile of the surveyed tourists..... | 33 |
| 4.2. Segmentation, targeting and positioning strategies of the organization..... | 34 |
| 4.2.1 Different key market segment and bases of market segments in the park..... | 35 |
| 4.2.2 Market targeting..... | 36 |
| 4.2.3 The Bale Mountain National Parks’ positioning strategy as a tourism destination | 37 |
| 4.2.3.1 Reason to choose and tourists feeling about BMNP over other tourist destination | 39 |
| 4.3 Marketing mixes | 42 |
| 4.3.1 Marketing mixes elements of BMNP..... | 42 |
| 4.3.2Marketing mixes separately designed for each group in the segments | 44 |
| 4.3.4 Promotional activities in Bale Mountain National Park..... | 45 |
| 4.3.4.1. The most commonly used promotional strategies in BMNP. | 45 |
| 4.3.4.2 Advertising media and its importance. | 46 |
| 4.3.4.3 Sources of information for tourists on Bale Mountain National Park..... | 48 |
| 4.3.4.4 Weather the parks have its own website and how often this website updates | 51 |
| 4.3.4.5 The park’s printed promotional materials..... | 52 |
| 4.3.5 The intermediaries used in the availing and accessing of BMNP tourism products to the customers and its importance | 53 |
| 4.4 Tourist’s satisfaction toward marketing elements | 57 |
| 4.4.1 Tourists’ satisfaction toward tourism product of BMNP | 57 |
| 4.4.1.2 Tourist satisfaction with birding and trekking in BMNP | 60 |
| 4.4.2 Tourists Satisfaction towards promotion and pricing..... | 61 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 4.4.3 Tourists satisfaction toward intermediaries | 63 |
| 4.4.4 Tourists' satisfaction toward tourism planning process in BMNP | 65 |
| 4.4.5 Tourists' satisfaction toward peoples providing service | 67 |
| 4.4.6 Tourists' satisfaction toward physical evidence | 68 |
| 4.5 Strength and weakness of Bale Mountain National Park | 70 |
| 4.6 The park's marketing strategies to realize long term plan | 73 |
| 4.7 Future action for marketing tourism in Bale Mountain National park..... | 75 |
| CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION | 79 |
| 5.1. CONCLUSION | 79 |
| 5.2. RECOMMENDATION | 82 |
| 5.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION | 83 |
| Bibliography | 84 |
| APPENDICES | 89 |

List of tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 4.1.1 Demographic of Employees..... | 36 |
| 4.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of Tourists..... | 38 |
| Table 4.2.1 Market Segments and Base of Segment..... | 40 |
| Table 4.2.2 Parks' Target Market..... | 42 |
| Table 4.2.3 Unique Feature of ThePark | 43 |
| 4.2.3.1 Tourists' Reason to Choose the Park | 45 |
| Table 4.2.1 The Company's Marketing Mix Elements..... | 47 |
| Table 4.2.3 Base Segments and Marketing Mixes | 49 |
| Table 4.3.4.1 Promotional Strategies..... | 51 |
| Table 4.3.4.2 Advertising Media and Its Importance..... | 53 |
| 4.3.4.3 Sources of Information for Tourists OnBMNP..... | 55 |
| Table 4.3.4.4 Parks Web Site | 57 |
| Table 4.3.4.5 The Park Printed Promotional Material | 59 |
| Table 4.3.4.5 The Importance Of Intermediaries Used In BMNP | 60 |
| Table 4.4.1 Tourist Satisfaction TowardBale Big Five..... | 65 |
| Table 4.4.2 Tourist Satisfaction Toward Birding And Trekking | 66 |
| Table 4.4.2 Tourists' Satisfaction inPromotionAnd Pricing | 66 |
| Table 4.4.3 Tourists' Satisfaction Toward Intermediaries..... | 70 |
| Table 4.4.4 Tourists' Satisfaction To Ward Planning Process..... | 72 |
| Table 4.4.5 Tourists' Satisfaction Toward Peoples Providing | 73 |
| Table 4.4.6 Tourists' Satisfaction Toward Physical Evidence..... | 75 |

Table 4.5 marketing strategies to realize long term plan.....77

Table 4.6 Future strategies for tourism marketing in BMNP.....80

List of figures

2.1: Porter’s Strategies.....13

2.2 Conceptual Frame Workof Marketing Strategy.....26

3.1 Trekking Map of Bale Mountain National Park.....28

Abstract

Marketing strategies are among the factors which slow up Ethiopian tourism in general and BMNP in particular from rewarding its tourism potential. So far, various studies attempted to study on “impact of tourism on the economic growth”, “Tourism as Tools for Promoting Sustainability” and “Tourism Development” has been done in Ethiopia, and no study is conducted on assessment of marketing strategies for tourism promotion in Ethiopia particularly in BMNP to the best of the researcher’s knowledge. Thus this study was envisaged with the objective of examining strategic marketing, marketing mixes elements devised for strategic marketing and challenges to implement marketing strategy of BMNP Bale Zone, East Ethiopia. In order to achieve the objective of the study, both qualitative and quantitative research method were being used and the most important data were sourced by primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 24 employees of the park which were selected purposely from tourism department and 157 foreign and domestic tourists by using convenience sampling. The quantitative data was analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation when appropriate while qualitative data was used to substantiate the study. On the basis of the analysis of the data which was collected during the interview and surveys, the study revealed that Bale Mountain National Park has abundance of opportunities of ecotourism attraction. But its effective practice and implementation of marketing strategies is not promising due to Current international perceptions of Ethiopia, lack of manpower, Standard accommodations, financial problems and support of government body. Differentiation strategy is adopted to promote tourism attraction and the park is recognized as Premium Park with “one park many worlds” slogan by considering abundances of tourism attraction as a competitive advantage over other park within and out of the country. However the selected strategy is not effective due to lack of the organization marketing ability like promotion and distribution. As a result the park fails to communicate its tourism potential to the target market. Finally it is not enough that the country possesses a potential for becoming a covetable tourist destination. To turn that possibility into reality, marketing is a pre-condition.

Keywords: *BMNP, marketing strategy, marketing mixes elements and satisfaction*

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Definition and concept of related terms

Marketing: - is the process by which companies create and provide value for customers and make strong customer relationships so as to capture value from customers in return (Kotler 2012).

Tourism: - A very universal but broadly recognized definition of tourism is the one of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). "Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for break, business and other basis" (UNWTO 2010).

Tourism Marketing:- the essence of tourism marketing as a managerial process by which enterprises (organizations) in the tourism industry identify actual and potential dimensions of tourism demand, communicate with demand carriers to know, assess the tourism needs and stimulate their desires, motivations and preferences for designing and adjusting the tourism offer (goods and services) for the best fulfillment of their requirements and exigencies while maximizing organizational objectives (Kulcsár, 2011)

Strategy: - is a process which is used by a company to position and differentiate itself in the eyes of the customer and create value through a mix of activities different from those used by competitors (Porter, 1996).

Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their typical environment for not above one successive year for leisure time, business and other purposes. It is the largest and fastest growing industry, which has the best opportunity for creating many new jobs worldwide. It can be performed as business in rural areas since it does not have the need of year's long vocational trainings (Rannersmann, 2003). The travel and tourism industry has become a major supplier to the gross national product of several nations, with marketing tourist destinations and its products becoming a broadly acknowledged practice for both public and private sector organizations (Riege & Perry, 2004). Tourism industry is

considered as one of the major and mainly diverse industries in the world. Alongside the machinery and oil industry, this industry as a contemporary service industry and the means to build connectivity among nations and a variety of peoples in the world have been considered as the significant sectors (Iamso, Niroomand, & Rafsanjani, 2013).

Tourism is one of the main sources for foreign exchange income and the number one export group, creating considerably wanted employment opportunities for many developing countries. Globally, as an export group, tourism orders fourth after fuels, chemicals and automotive products. Tourism contribution to economic activity worldwide is estimated at some 5%. Its contribution to employment tends to be slightly higher relatively and is estimated in the order of 6-7% of the total number of jobs global (UNWTO, 2010). Tourism is, therefore, one of the few viable industries available to developing countries and it provides for many useful elements in diversifying their sources of foreign exchange earnings. For some, it is one of the few export opportunities available. Tourism is, thus, a powerful force in the economic development of these countries. Increased awareness of the potential that tourism seems to hold has been rising, and various developing countries have aggressively supported its development, Ethiopia being one of them (Mann, 2006)

Ethiopia has an abundance of attractions of numerous types ranging from wildlife, landscape culture, scenery, history and archeology sites that set it apart from its neighbors. Tourism sector in Ethiopia was actually a pioneer on the continent and a strong competitor to a current powerhouse on the continent Kenya. Ethiopia has as various attractions and a superior variety than its southern neighbor to share with tourists. However it just has not been able to capitalize on its resources like Kenya has (Melaku, 2010). The challenge is that however countries which are rich in historic, cultural and natural attraction resource give more attention to this industry, because of the lack of marketing; the function of this industry in the developing countries is paler than before (Iamso, et al. 2013). Accordingly accepting and appreciating the type of destination enables marketers to design suitable destination marketing strategies and deliver them to the right target markets (Buhalis, 2000).

Eco-tourism is an optional form of tourism and has become the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry, recently getting high attention by the world people. For eco-tourism, Mountains are vital assets for the eco-tourism development. Among Ethiopian natural attraction

four important national parks, a source of the world's longest river, listed on UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Krishnaiah and Eyobe, 2013). Ethiopia is one of suitable place for tourism attraction in that it needs to be competitive in attracting tourist in order to be competitive tourism destination and need to have appropriate marketing strategy in how to market its tourism potentials(Asmamaw&Verma, 2013).

So as to stay in the tourism marketing competition, organizations in both public and private sectors should identify their customers and be responsive to their demands. They should also be capable of making their potential customers aware of their products and services, encourage them and suggest them that they get benefit if they become real customers, namely to travel to the someplace and desired destination that has been organized with the function to travel. Marketing in the tourism industry is associated to identifying customers need and wants and creating the value (product/price) as per their need, communicating this value (promotion) to them, and delivering the value (channels) to satisfy their wants (Ndahimana, 2013). Thus marketing strategy is among the factors to consider so as marketing tourism potential in tourism destination.

1.2 statement of the Problem

Tourism is a very competitive industry; the traveler has a wide range of options and gives attention for those which are good value for money. Inadequate quality infrastructure, uncompetitive rates, indifferent or product with poor quality, complexity in getting access to information on travel and tourist destinations, unskilled service providers have really negative effect on the competitiveness of the tourism product (Kotler, Bowen, & Makens 2010).

In today's era marketing efforts are extremely more important than production and sales, the function of marketing is vital in service industry such as tourism industry, accordingly if a country has an adequate amount of facilities and possess potential of tourism but does not think about the marketing techniques and the introduction of this desirability in its programs, doubtlessly that country won't be doing well in growing and developing its tourism industry similarly due to the lack of marketing, the position of this industry in the developing countries is paler than before(Iamso, et al.2013). However marketing's contribution to travel and tourism has been undervalued by both policy makers and practitioners, leading to a misunderstanding of

the nature and value of the marketing discipline for the travel and tourism industry (Riege& Perry, 2004).

In Ethiopian case, there are many positive opportunities that exist for tourism development in Ethiopia – besides its having 8 World Heritage Sites. The majority of current tourism to Ethiopia is primarily cultural and historical, as recognized within the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2004), environmental and wildlife tourism has enormous potential to contribute to ongoing tourism growth for Ethiopia Tourism Commission. A major challenge is to recognize this tourism potential whilst structuring and managing tourism development to best benefit Ethiopia and its people for the long-term. Other challenges to overcome are the preservation of important sites, the lack of community-participation and benefit-sharing, infrastructure deficiencies, the lack of tourism facilities (hotels, lodges, etc), skilled human resources and management capacity, a negative image of the country and the lack of a marketing strategy (NBSAP 2004). Moreover Biazen, (2010) in his study of Ethiopian as a tourist destination state that many tourist come to Ethiopia have very little information and practical experience on Ethiopia tourism supply because of this reason the information they know in relation to Ethiopia and its tourism sites is not coincide with Ethiopia tourism potential on reality. The researcher also state that there is poor operation in marketing what Ethiopia really have because of this and related problems Ethiopia tourism authority is fail to attract market to tourism place.

A painful example stated is that Ethiopian national parks are able to attract fewer tourists than similar neighbor national parks particularly Kenya's national parks which attracts many more times than tourist arrivals as Ethiopia does (Melaku, 2010). As recognized in NBSAP although the country has many positive opportunities lack of marketing strategy is among the factors which hold back the country from using its abundance of resource to compete as a tourism destination with other countries like east African countries.

Bale mountain national park (BMNP) is one of the interesting tourism places in Ethiopia and rich with attractive topography and mammals. This make it attractive tourism place where many tourists come for visit. Assegid, (2011) in his study on ecotourism as a sustainable development state that Ethiopia and BMNP in particular is relatively unknown and does not have a place on the world tourism map and also the author state that marketing is a key component of tourism

development for Ethiopia particularly for BMNP but it is in immaturity stage and type of tourist that BMNP wish to attract has not been identified and known.

The Bale Mountains, with BMNP in its heart, are a unique natural heritage with exceptional attractiveness, different attractions and large tourism potential. In spite of its wildlife, trekking, scenic, and other attractions, as stated in General Management Plan of Bale Mountain National Park (GMP, 2007), shortage of tourism infrastructure, planning and marketing strategies currently inhibit BMNP from fulfilling its tourism potential. A distressing example that stated in the plan is that Bale Mountains remains unlisted on the World Heritage List despite meeting the criteria. Recent figures indicate that the tourists visiting BMNP is less than similar park in the country and the parks' financial capacity is too low. In contrast, the Simian Mountains National Park able to attract more tourists and it already potentially generates enough income to cover its basic management costs. These shows despite its attractiveness small number of tourist visit the area relative to similar park in the country (GMP, 2007).

As stated in general management plan of Bale Mountain National Park, NBSA and previous study conducted, marketing strategies are among the factors which slow up Ethiopian tourism destination in general and BMNP in particular from rewarding its tourism potential. Even though marketing role is significant in tourism sector to promote and attract tourists to the tourism destination, many previous studies in Ethiopia have been conducted on the “impact of tourism on the economic growth”, “Tourism as Tools for Promoting Sustainability” and “Tourism Development”, and the focus of marketing to promote tourism in Ethiopia in general and BMNP in particular is overlooked. As to the current researcher's knowledge, no research has been done on assessment of marketing strategies to promote tourism in Ethiopia and BMNP in particular. Therefore, this study through descriptive research assesses marketing strategies to promote tourism in tourism destination particularly in Bale Mountain National Park.

1.3 Research Questions

In light of the above mentioned problem statement, the following basic research questions were addressed:

- ✓ How does BMNP segmenting, targeting and positioning its market to achieve its stated goals?
- ✓ What are the marketing mixes elements devised for marketing strategies?
- ✓ How the tourists are satisfied with marketing mixes elements of BMNP?
- ✓ What are the problems encountered in implementing the marketing strategies?

1.4 Objective of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The main purpose of this study is to assess marketing strategy for tourism promotion particularly in Bale Mountain National Park

1.4.2 Specific objectives

In order to handle the research questions and realize general objective stated above the study was tried to deal with the following specific objectives:

1. To examine how the park segmenting targeting, and positioning its market
2. To identify the company's marketing mix elements that devised for marketing strategies.
3. To find out How the tourists are satisfied toward marketing mixes of BMNP
4. To identify problems encountering the marketing strategy implementation of BMNP

1.5 Significance of the study

Effective utilization of tourism opportunity in one country benefits the country as a whole and tourism destination, local community and tourism service providers in particular. Among the way of effectively utilizing tourism opportunity crafting or designing suitable marketing strategy play a key role in attracting tourism and promoting tourism product. As a result the finding of this study will have the following significance to government, tourism service providers, and local people and academic literature in a variety of ways.

- ✓ The research finding will help the Ethiopian Tourism Commission in order to take corrective action as per the finding to the study area and also the commission can use the finding to other national park in the country as best practice.
- ✓ For BMNP/tourism the study will reveal the major problems of marketing strategies in the destination.
- ✓ It will help the destination to design sound and promising marketing strategies to utilize the available resources to attract many tourists and compete well in providing convincing information to the target market.
- ✓ It will help the destination/BMNP to design marketing supporting activities to implement marketing strategies.
- ✓ For the local people, the results of this study will help them to know the associated benefits of tourism for them and the role to play in return.
- ✓ Moreover, the study would be contributed to academic understanding by clarifying tourism marketing strategies for tourism destination. By doing so, the study would also be contributed in addressing the shortage of empirical researches in this study area by illuminating tourism marketing strategies for tourism destination. Therefore it will help the other researchers as source of reference for study conducted on related areas.

1.6 Scope of the study

In order to make the study being manageable it is necessary to define the delimitation of the study. Thus, the study was delimited conceptually, methodologically and geographically. Conceptually, however, strategy is viewed from various angles beside those this study focus only on marketing strategies such as STP, marketing mixes elements and satisfaction. As a result the assessment of marketing strategies in this study was limited to these aspects of strategies.

Methodologically, the study is delimited to the descriptive research type and it describes appropriate marketing strategies to promote tourism attraction available in the area. In this context, the study deals with those tourists from foreign and domestic tourists and Employees of the organization. Geographically, the study is delimited to Bale Mountain National Park because of time and resource constraints it doesn't include all national park in the country.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized in to five chapters which are sub-divided into small sections. The first chapter deals with an overall introduction and provides an overview of the entire study. The second chapter presents the theoretical backgrounds and empirical literatures related to the study and elements of marketing strategy that considered in this study.

The third chapter presents the study design and methods used in the study. This chapter encompasses discussion on type and source of data, sampling design, data collection instruments and procedure and data analysis methods. The fourth chapter gives brief summary of the data and analysis i.e., it deals with the descriptive analysis. This chapter attempts to describe the marketing strategies of the park under consideration. Finally, the last chapter (fifth chapter) attempts to compare the result of this study with the previous research results, and concludes the result and forward relevant recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

2.1 Tourism industry

Tourism industry is considered as one of the major and mainly diverse industries in the world. Beside the machinery and oil industry, this industry as a modern service industry and the means to build connectivity among nations and a variety of peoples in the world have been considered as the significant sectors. Nevertheless countries which are rich in historic, cultural and natural attraction resource give more attention to this industry, because of the lack of marketing; the function of this industry in the developing countries is paler than before (Iamso, et al. 2013).

Ecotourism is usually considered to be not only nature-based tourism, but also responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the safety of local people. The principle of ecotourism includes minimizing environmental impact, constructing an environmental and cultural responsiveness and admiration, providing constructive experiences for both visitors and hosts, providing direct benefits for protection, provided that financial benefits and empowerment for local people, and raising sensitivity of countries political, environmental, and social weather of to host countries (Utarasakul, Lekprayoon, Pradatsundarasar and Thirakhupt, 2008)

The nature of tourism in BMNP is eco-tourism in nature and many stock holders are involved in providing recreational service and promoting eco-tourism in the district. Ecotourism is attractive subdivision of tourism where countries should exert much weight to earn more foreign currencies and create a center of attention for many eco tourists with much concern on caring the environment and improving the well-being of the local people (Ndahimana 2013).

2.1.1 Nature of tourism Marketing

Marketing in the tourism industry is associated to making the potential customers sensitive to the product and service available in the tourism area and persuade them and propose them that they satisfied and benefited if they become real customers. In the Countries that would like to benefit from the actions of tourism, national tourism organizations are accountable for this work. Whereas in the society that ought to try to win to attract the coming travelers, in the

process of marketing, tourism organizations in their marketing development pay special attention to the particular cultural groups, and they give emphasis to the attractiveness of the products they offer(Lamso, et al. 2013).

Tourism marketing is the systemic and coordinated efforts to optimize the satisfaction of tourism. The things that are closely related to the tourism are the main concern to make available to the tourist organizations. The tourism marketing is also supposed to be a device to make a possible reorientation in the business policy and overhaul in the management concept. Tourism marketing is an integrated effort to satisfy tourists by making the best possible services available to them. It is a device to transform the potential tourists into actual tourists. It is the safest way to generate demand and expand market. Further it is an effort to make possible harmony between the social interests and interests of tourist organizations. It is an approach to promote business, which feeds the organizations the necessary information for farming or revamping the marketing decisions. The tourism marketing is thus promotion or sales based on research on what are to be sold in the market (Musa, 2013).

2.1.2 Role of marketing in tourism

Marketing concept is the base of market oriented business. In competitive economy customers may select from whom and how to buy, while services program is persistently evolving in line with their demands. So as to be successful, the tourist enterprise must always offer better value, better than competitors, when it comes to quality, price and services. Marketing mixture of management activities should find the best way to fulfill customer's needs and follow new organizational changes. New organizational changes indicate new internal and external dimensions of marketing. Internal are connected to teamwork and creation of data basis concerning customers and business allies, and external with developing business relations, not simply with the customers, but also with the suppliers and distributors (Ilieska, 2002).

A concentrate on small site tourism though this is not able to deal with the reality of international mass tourism, it is unable to generate adequate income and job numbers needed for economic and social development. De-marketing messages in case when marketing promotion techniques have been advocated for focusing on the need to preserve sites they have been used to promote drawback and "stay away" messages to tourists however these contradict the wider

promotional marketing activity (Quan, 2000). Therefore tourism marketing both in developed and developing country is important for the growth of tourism sectors and it contributes to the economic development of a country.

2.2 Theory of Business Strategies

When talking about types of strategies, it is almost impossible not mentioning Porter's and Ansoff's approach. Porter (1996) determines three major types of generic business strategies: cost leadership, differentiation and focus. The focus strategy on the other hand can be differentiation focus and cost focus.

| Competitive scope | | Competitive advantage | |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Lower Cost | Differentiation |
| Competitive scope | Broad target | Cost leadership | Differentiation |
| | Narrow target | Cost focus | Differentiation Focus |

Figure 2.1 porter's strategy

The main idea behind the cost leadership strategy is the ability of companies to produce with lower costs compared to their competitors. The basis on which companies can manage to produce with lower costs can vary depending on the industry and the capabilities of the company itself. From this point of view the usage of economies of scale, access to raw material at a lower cost, technology are some of the factors that can enable the company to implement the cost focus strategy. According to the differentiation strategy, the company tries to differentiate itself from its competitors. The many basis of differentiation include but are not limited to the characteristics of the product itself, the capacities of the company to market the product, the capacities of the company to distribute the product to its customers. The main idea behind the focus strategy is the company narrowing its competitive scope. In other words the company should determine specific market niches in which it is going to compete and be better than other companies within that market niche. From this point of view cost focus and differentiation focus would be the two main approaches for the company. Each generic strategy is fundamentally different approach to creating and sustaining a competitive advantage,

combining the type of competitive advantage a firm seeks and the scope of its strategic target. Usually a firm must make a choice among them, or it will become stuck in the middle. The benefits of optimizing a firm's strategy for a particular target segment (focus) cannot be gained if a firm is simultaneously serving a broad range of segments (cost leadership or differentiation). Sometimes a firm may be able to create two largely separate business units with the same corporate entity, each with a different generic strategy (Porter, 1996).

With regard to how porters apply in tourism and travel, Evans et al, (2003), determine possibilities for the implementation of Porter's generic strategies in travel and tourism.

Cost leadership; achieving economies of scale by high volume sales possibly based on advertising and promotion, letting high fixed costs of investment in contemporary technology to be spread over a high volume of output. Obtaining 'experience curve' economies this can be achieved when the operator of an established theme park may be able to operate the park with lower costs than a new entrant since they might have experience of staff scheduling, minimizing power costs, purchasing new rides and waste disposal (Evans et at, 2003),.

Differentiation; This strategy can be functional in tourism destination by building a strong brand name through design, innovation, and advertising distinctive or superior product of tourism destination. The exceptional feature of tourism destination serves as means of differentiation and used to position tourism destination. This can be achieved through distinctive or superior product promotion. Kotler et at, (2010) propose that the positioning of product involves three steps which includes (1) identifying a set of possible competitive advantages on which to build a position; (2) selecting the right competitive advantages; and (3) effectively communicating and delivering the chosen position to a carefully selected target market.

Focus; in tourism focus strategy is applied when tourism organization is specializing in particular geographic destinations and resort destinations targeting particular market segments and creating the benefits sought for a particular group of buyers (Evans et at, 2003). Therefore from the above theory one can understand that porter's business strategy theory can equally applied in tourism industry like any other production and service industry.

2.3. Role of Marketing in Tourism Supporting Empirical Literature

Marketing activities are very important in scanning environment and in market researches, in order to create quality information basis for selection of prosperous tourism activities and programs (Ilieska, 2002). The author also states that contemporary market is characterized by very sensitive diversification and the complexity of the relationship in the sphere of the offer and other. That is why the promoted activities become more essential. This necessity is much emphasized in the tourist market. More over lamson et al, (2013) in their study on “The Role of Marketing on Tourism Industry” conducted in case of Iran, state that due to lack of attention to marketing and adopting new marketing strategies to attract and encourage tourists, Iran has failed to create high added value.

Riege and Perry (2004) conduct study on National marketing strategies in international travel and tourism, with particular reference to the marketing of Australia and New Zealand to target markets in Germany and the United Kingdom. They found that most organizations focused on a selective marketing approach aimed at covering a few target segments in markets. This approach helped organizations to aim at specific characteristics of diverse target segments and intermediaries and to inform them about the destinations' variety of products/service types.

Their finding also support the idea of market segmentation importance in tourism industries in that the finding indicate a mass marketing or extensive marketing approach was rarely perceived as appropriate. Only a few organization noted the use of a mass marketing (covering all segments) or extensive marketing approach (covering all or most segments) to try to reach numerous potential customers which show the same characteristics. Nevertheless, no organization indicated the use of a single marketing approach (covering one particular segment only). Tourism organization preferred to market to a few specific segments because of their limited financial resources and because it was found difficult to position a destination to appeal to all market segments. The empirical results on national marketing strategies in Australia indicate importance of market segmentation in tourism industries. Chandra and Menezes (2001) argued that destinations need to be positioned on attributes that are firstly meaningful to tourists, secondly are the destination's strength, and lastly can be fulfilled by tourism operators so as to promote place as tourism destination.

All empirical evidence in one way or another pointed the importance of strategic marketing like segmentation, targeting and positioning for tourism industries.

With regard to marketing mixes empirical evidence indicated that tourism destination needs to give priority to use effective marketing mix in order to attract a significant number of foreign and domestic tourists to visit the destination. Deb, et al, (2013) found that without effective and sufficient marketing mix in public and private sector of the industry, there is no possibility or little possibility to emerge tourism as a major contributor to the national economy. They opined tour operating firms need to give proper attention in developing the controllable marketing elements and careful attention is required to incorporate the factors affecting the choice of potential tourists. Kulcsár, (2011) who conduct study on “Considerations On Tourist Marketing Theory And Practice In Romania” also argued that tourist destinations and tourist entities operating in the tourism market should pay special attention to tourism marketing mix elements (product, price, distribution, promotion, people, physical evidence, processes). And this specific element of the marketing mix has a key role in creating the image of tourist destinations. The deep and continuous analysis of the tourism marketing mix – both of the basics and of the specific elements - as a tool for tourism marketing theory operationalization, should be a basic feature of any entity operating in the tourism market.

With regard to empirical evidence related to the importance of tourists satisfaction for tourism destination Yoon and Uysal (2005) conducted study on “An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty” in their study they found that tourism satisfaction is related to tourism behavior because it can determine whether the initial travel motivation has been fulfilled; if a tourist is motivated to visit a destination and the experience is what they had hoped for, they will be satisfied. Their finding also add that by satisfying the tourist, destination managers has a strong potential to create a repeat customer which brings a steady source of income with limited extra marketing expenditure. It also suggests that the destination is correctly positioned.

2.4.1 Empirical Evidences With Regard To Africa

Emilia, (2011) who conduct study on analysis of tourism motivation toward market segmentation and strategic management of Bucovina destination, support the importance of

segmentation in tourism industries and he conclude that the tourism segmentation should play soft variations around all the requirements for the tourists interested in all kind of products. The market segmentation should be done not between different type of tourism type, but on different tourism profiles (income, cultural background).

Awaritefe (2004) segmented tourists on the basis of their motives for travelling and why they chose one of seven destinations in Nigeria and he state that prior to segmentation, marketers need to determine why tourists decide to travel, and why those choose a particular destination as motivation driver behavior his study also reveal that segmenting tourists based on their motives is important base of segment in tourism and enable tourism sectors to attract more foreign and domestic tourists. Akinruwa et al, (2013) conduct study on Assessment of Service Marketing as a tool for Customers' Satisfaction in Service Industry in Nigeria and they found that with the trend of competitive business environment, management of service providers must key into the 7ps if they were to be relevant in the business. The study recommended that there is need for the service industries to adopt and improve on the provision of the 7ps for attaining optimal customers' satisfaction and thus, enhance other business performance metrics.

2.4.2 Empirical Evidences With Regard To Ethiopia

In Ethiopia case as per the researchers knowledge no research was conducted on marketing strategy of Ethiopia tourism however some report and some plan were justify the role of marketing strategy for tourism. Mann, (2006), state that to improve demand for tourism and to work on the image of Ethiopia he suggest different strategies, among different strategies marketing strategy is stated by the author the as means of improving the tourism in Ethiopia. Assegid, (2011) in his study on ecotourism as a sustainable development state that marketing is a key component of tourism development for Ethiopia. More over action plan like NBAP and GMP also state that marketing strategies as factors that should be considered in order to promote the tourism destination potential and build good image of Ethiopia in the international market.

2.4 Elements of marketing strategies

2.4.1 Market Segmentation, targeting and positioning in Tourism (STP)

Market segmentation

The starting point for successful marketing is to be aware of and satisfy consumer needs. Sometimes it is even achievable to satisfy one individual customer's needs. An individually customized tourism experience can be developed in the tourism industry; however the market for such high-end tourism products is little. This however does, not, mean that the only option is to call to the mass market. The intermediate solution is to know which groups of tourists have the same needs and develop tourism products that equivalent with group needs. This approach is referred to as market segmentation (Dolnicar&Kemp, 2008).

Market segmentation for ecotourism is important in the tourism industry in order to identify specific target markets and to develop the product and service packages that best suit each segment. Based on the market segmentation, policies can be set up by the government to encourage more Eco tourists. Dolnicar (2008) stated that market segmentation allows researchers and tourists as well as industry players to study the opportunities for competitive advantage in the marketplace. When segmenting a market, groups of individual are developed which are similar with respect to some personnel characteristics. Besides personnel characteristics, market segmentation can be done using geographic, demographic and psychographic. Geographic segments include region, size of area, population density and climate are often used in segmentation. As for demographic segmentation, among variables that are used by marketer are age, gender, family size, occupation, income, occupation, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and social class. Psychographic segmentation groups consumers according to their lifestyle. Some psychographic variables include activities, interest, opinion, attitudes and values. Behavioristic segmentation is based on actual consumer behavior towards products. Among behavioristic variables are benefit sought, usage rate, brand loyalty, user status, readiness to buy and occasions.

Market segmentation can be defined as the method through which people (both tourism providers and consumers) with the same needs are grouped together so that a tourism business/organization can use superior precision in serving and communicating with these. The tourism segmentation should play soft variations around every the requirements for the tourists attracted in this type of products. The market segmentation should be done not among different category of tourism type, but on different tourism profiles (income, cultural background). In this

direction should be directed the efforts, much more that in development of brand new tourism products, that are "artificial" and are not appropriate in the tourism landscape (Emilia, 2011)

Tourists are not all the same, they have different pictures of their ideal vacation. Tourists are heterogeneous. Market segmentation is the strategic tool to account for heterogeneity among tourists by grouping them into market segments which include members similar to each other and dissimilar to members of other segments. Both tourism researchers and tourism industry use market segmentation widely to study opportunities for competitive advantage in the marketplace (Dolnicar, 2004). Each destination offers a variety of products and services to attract tourists. From the destinations' point of view, it is very important to know why tourists choose (or not choose) this destination and how the tourists feel about a particular place they visited.

Analysis of tourist motivation tries to extend the theoretical and empirical evidence on the causal relationship among the push and pull motivations, satisfaction, and destination loyalty (Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

Authors such as Bloom (2005) suggest that tourists should be categorized according to common characteristics (demographics and geographic), needs, motives and drives (psychographics) or purchasing behavior (behavior) so they may be targeted.

In tourism field, the significance of market segmentation is not limited to a technique of segmenting a market and identifying target market, however it can also be used at a higher level to assist a marketing strategist to understand the relationship of a destination with its visitors and to understand the distinct characteristics of tourists for developing marketing strategies (Bloom, 2004). Koc and Altinay (2007) also indicated that a destination that targets the whole market without segmenting or clustering problems it usually ends up with wasted resources, unsatisfied customers, and missed a strategic marketing opportunity.

To identify segments, a problem of selecting the most appropriate technique or method of segmenting the market is often met by destination marketers (Bloom, 2005). Furthermore, Wirtz (2005) stated that a selection of segmentation variables is a critical issue to successful market segmentation. Segmentation variables can be broadly classified into general variables such as demographics and life style, and product specific variables which involve customer purchasing and intentions

Target Market Selection

Tourism destination cannot appeal to all tourists in the same manner. Thus Target market selection is an important step in establishing a market strategy. To specific the right target market, customers need to be put into separate sub-group or call market segmentation. It is accepted in general that there are a lot of consumers and their needs are various. In addition, they are different in their behaviors, attitudes, motives, age, income levels, education level, life style and other personality (Park and Yoon, 2009). Targeting is the next step in the sequential process and involves a business making choices about segment(s) on which resources are to be focused. Targeting is the actual selection of the segment. "A set of buyers sharing common needs or characteristics that the company decides to serve." Companies use target marketing to tailor for specific markets. There are three major targeting strategies: undifferentiated, concentrated, and differentiated. During this process the business must balance its resources and capabilities against the attractiveness of different segments (Kotler, 2010).

Positioning

In a complex environment, no firm can succeed by trying to be all things to all people. The firm should find a unique value that it can deliver to a given market with a unique sense of satisfaction (Mucui, 2013). Positioning is the use of marketing to enable people to form a mental image of your product in their minds (relative to other products). Positioning is how the product or service is to be perceived by a target market compared to the competition. It answers the question: "Why will someone in the target market(s) buy my product or service instead of the competitions?" An equivalent question is: "What should be the perceived value of my offering compared to the competitions?" (Kotler, P, 2007)

2.4. 2. Tourism Marketing Mixes

Tourism marketing as a distinct field of marketing services has been and will certainly be a discipline that will be studied in greater depth by experts in this field of great interest. Tourist destinations lead a fierce battle to capture and maintain consumer interest in tourism products and services. For this reason tourist destinations and tourist entities operating in the tourism market should pay special attention to tourism marketing mix elements (product, price, distribution, promotion, people, physical evidence, processes). A key role in assessing the

tourism services offered by a certain tourist destination lay with the universities that have as "task" superior human resource training in the tourism sector. This specific element of the tourism marketing mix has a key role in creating the image of tourist destinations (kulcsár, 2011)

Tourism in product

The tourism product vary from other products because of the wide range it covers, including such parts as accommodations, transportation, food, recreation and attractions. Frequently the product includes intangibles such as history, culture and natural beauty. Usually the nature of tourism product is service and the marketing of tourism product is different from other service to some degree. (1) primary products provided by recreation/tourism businesses are recreational experiences and hospitality, (2) as a replacement for moving product to the customer, the customer must travel to the product (area/ community), (3) travel is a major portion of the time and money spent in connection with recreational and tourism experiences, (4) is a main factor in people's decisions on whether or not to visit your business or community (Lovelock et al. 2004).

Promotion in Tourism

For marketing management decisions' knowing how customers acquire information is important. This is particularly true for services, travel and a tourism product as a result Promotion is acknowledged by many as a critical element in tourism marketing. Destination image is commonly accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism management and destination marketing. An important means of promotion for the tourism industry and influences destination image is information about a specific destination (Molina, et al. 2010).

Besides this the author also state that the information sources of tourist activities have changed greatly over the past fifteen years, due firstly to the impact of new technologies; secondly, to the change in tourist consumer behavior, thirdly to the increase in the number of tourist destinations, and finally to the growing competition among different destinations. As a consequence, information sources should meet one main objective in order to be considered as effective tools for destination promotion.

Promotion is a series of activities that can be used to persuade customers to buy the product and it includes information kits, web sites, advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, travel shows, and public relations. As competitive advantage has to be perceived by the target so as to create value, communication is the essential element of the firm. No matter what industrial sector it operates in four communication approaches are then likely: to present the competitive advantage itself, to emphasize the way employed to build competitive advantage, to show the value created for the customer and finally, to call attention to the corporate commitments of the firm (Jean-Marc & Denis 2010).

According to Belch (2004), Advertising is the most excellent way for initial publicity of tourist attractions. Advertising is defined as any paid marketing activity which motivates potential customers to obtain the goods and services. Advertising is in particular timed for general public. The result of advertising may be short-range or long-standing and it is very hard to get feedback from the customers instantaneously. This promotion tools is used to generate publicity and it gives basic idea of goods and services

If it can analyzed from organizational point of view the achievement of some promotional forums is in the promotional level of accomplished and subjective arrangements. One should pay a lot of concentration in the preparation of tourism and hotel management, since the business work is consisted of a variety of moments and communication activities, so one should make an effort to develop the process on time (Karolina 2004).

According to Bassey (2010) promotional strategies will serve as connect between the customers and the experience they are seeking. Since tourists have expectations, it has become essential that these requirements outline the basis of the promotional strategies of tourism destination. The development of effective promotional strategies demands in excess of just being aware of the tools of promotion. The peculiarities of talented tourism destination create it imperative for a special model that will cater for these complexities. Tourist demand is influenced by tourist needs and motivations.

Distribution of tourism products/services

The major distribution focal point for tourism is information, combination and travel display services. Many distribution channels assist in provided that information for potential tourists;

pack tourism products collectively; and also establish mechanisms that assist consumers to make, confirm and pay for reservations (Buhalis 2001).

The place (distribution) in tourism is providing a guideline about different tourist spot. It also provide the appropriate tour time and distances from various spot, give ideas different travel routes, selecting attractions and support facilities along different travel routes, and informing potential tourists (customers) about alternative travel routes (Aimin& Begum 2012) Distribution channels are extremely vital in tourism industry, since tourists must travel to destinations to use tourism services & goods and they have no idea about tourism products as a result suitable distribution channels strategies affect attraction of foreign tourists (Branch 2013).

The distribution of travel and tourism products/services is the largest part significant activity next to the tourism chain. The two main points need to be distinguished in distribution activity of tourism product/ service are; the level to which organizations become participant in organizing and structuring the overseas distribution channel, and organizations' responses and reaction to marketing and distribution strategies of intermediaries in overseas markets. Suitability of by-passing strategy for public and private travel and tourism organizations seems extremely limited. Nevertheless, co-operation strategies are extensively adopted in vertical marketing. These interactive forms vary on a continuum from very loose co-operative forms with fairly unrestrained level of binding forces or commitments founded on regulated distribution systems (Webster, 2005).

Pricing in tourism sectors

A travel company should be reasonable and pay a special attention to pricing. The provision of various discounts, special offers, as well as the development and implementation of bonus systems may become a marketing tool provoking extra demand for provided travel services. Nevertheless, in spite of the high importance of the price factor for travel decision-making, this does not mean it is the only criterion of consumer preferences. A travel agency should perform marketing measures, which will contribute to create added values in the form of nonmaterial capital (Volkov, 2013).

Physical Evidence

Physical Evidence is that which can be easily associated with the product by the customer. As the tourism product is highly intangible, the place, the decor, the people, and everything else in the tourism office may be related to the experience in store. For example, when tourists visit a historic place for the first time, they carry home not only the memories of beautiful structure, but they also remember all other factors like transport facilities available, the surrounding markets, the people's behavior, etc. as one whole experience (Aimin& Begum 2012).

Process

Process denotes the way in which a particular action is carried out. Tourism marketing should take care of all the procedures, schedules, mechanisms, activities and routines which are practiced when the tour is on. The processes followed form a part of the service delivery system and the customers often do not differentiate between the processes and the product. The process in Tourism include, (a) trip planning and anticipation, (b) travel to the site/area, (c) recollection, (d) trip planning packages. The trip planning packages include, maps, attractions en route and on site, information regarding lodging, food, quality souvenirs and mementoes (Kannan and Srinivasan 2009).

2.4.3 Customer Satisfactions

Customer satisfaction according to Thakur, (2011) was defined the extent to which customers are happy with the products and services provided by a business. The finding of his study shows that there is high level of customer satisfaction when customers' needs are discovered through market research and by adopting service marketing tools. It goes further to identify some factors that lead to high level of customers' satisfaction to include: products and service that focused on high level of value for the money, giving personal attention to the needs of individual customers and after sales service. Customers are in most cases appreciate the goods and services that after purchase make them feel special.

Gustafsson, Johnsonand Roos(2005) defined customer satisfaction as a customer's overall evaluation of the performance of an offering to date. The overall satisfaction has a strong positive effect on customer loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service

categories. Their research study was center on the effect of customer satisfaction, relationship commitment dimension and triggers on customer retention. Findings suggest that when satisfaction is measured as an overall evaluation of performance, it indeed predicts churn. Churn is a model used by Gustafsson, *et al* (2005) to measure customer satisfaction, affective commitment and calculative commitment. Conclusively, the analyses support the use of customer satisfaction, affective commitment and calculative commitment as separate predictors of churn. The importance of these 7ps cannot be overlooked by service providers as it enables them to shape the nature of its offer to customers' satisfactorily and the relevant of such company in the market depends on how best it can effectively utilize the tools of 7ps.

2.6 Tourism activities in Bale Mountain National Park

Tourism in the Bale Mountains developed and managed to improve the conservation of BMNP's exceptional resource values, to create livelihood opportunities for park-associated communities and to benefit the country as a whole whilst creating greater understanding and support locally, nationally and internationally (GMP 2007).

In BMNP five hundred fingerlings each of Rainbow and Brown Trout were introduced in the Danka and Web rivers respectively (Asmamaw&Verma 2013). In 1969 it was shown that the fish had begun to breed successfully which stimulated the formation of the Bale Fly Fishing Club. The rainbows did so well that stock was taken from the Danka and introduced into seven other streams. The large size and quality of the fish attracted many people to join, and by 1973 the Club had established an international reputation with many overseas members. Between 1970 and 1975, when the Club was disbanded, it is estimated that over 10,000 fish were caught by sport fishermen who spent significant sums of money. Since then there has been no formal management of the fishery, which is exploited mainly by villagers. Nevertheless the trout continue to breed and tourist fishermen are still successful, particularly in the Web, Danka and Shaiya rivers. Different recreational activity is performed in BMNP and different participants are involved including local community in providing recreational activity

Nature of tourism in BMNP involves many participants as stockholder in the area the objective of all stockholders is to maximize benefits so as to be benefited from the tourism activity in the area it need competitive advantage and positioning their tourism activity and natural resource in

the area. In order to be successful it is necessary to realize that good reputation is based upon quality and attractive product/services and putting customers in the first place. This is because the success of every business organization the degree of serving their customers more than competitors (GMT 2007)

2.7. Conceptual Framework

Marketing strategy at strategic level is about segmenting, targeting and positioning. In order to achieve the objective of strategic marketing, we need to have a strategy that includes different elements. Here there are four major elements that are used in the literature to explain the detail of marketing strategy. Marketing mix's strategies are element of marketing strategies which help the organization to achieve the objective of strategic marketing. Traditional marketing mix (4P) is more known to people. However many author suggest that this traditional marketing mix is more used in product marketing. As a result of unique service nature it's recognized that additional three P's need in service marketing. More over tourism is service marketing in nature and is unique in service marketing because of this additional Three P's are required in tourism marketing. Finally customer's satisfaction is the result of this entire strategies function. Therefore the conceptual frame work for this study include strategic marketing strategies (STP), marketing mixes elements and customer's satisfaction. Thus this study tries to asses these marketing strategies and directly or indirectly focuses on marketing related aspects.

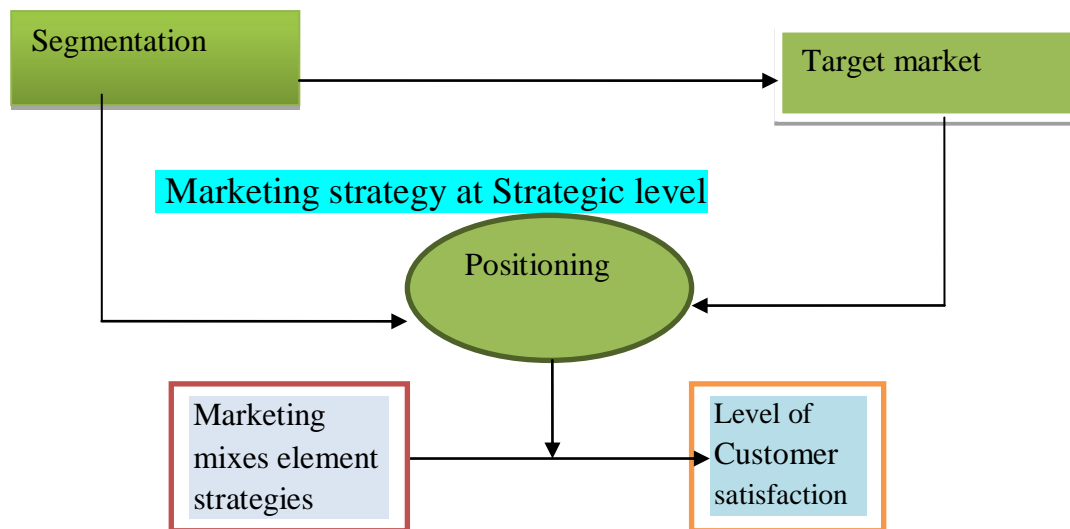


Figure 2.2 Framework of Marketing StrategySource: Adopted from Roger Brooks bank,

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Description of the study area

Bale mountain national park is one of the interesting tourism places in Ethiopia and rich with attractive natural resource. Bale Mountains National Park (6°29' to 7°10'N and 39°28' to 39°57'E) is located in Oromia region, southeast of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Bale Mountains are part of the Bale-Arsi massif, which forms the western section of the south-eastern Ethiopian highlands. The park covers the largest area above 3000 m. a. s. l. in Africa. TulluDimtuu, altitude 4377 m a. s. l. is the highest peak in the Park and the second highest peak in Ethiopia. Bale Mountains National Park gives the visitor opportunities for unsurpassed mountain walking, horse trekking, scenic driving and the chances to view many of Ethiopia's endemic mammals, in particular the Mountain Nyala and Semien Fox, and birds, such as the Thick-billed Raven, Wattled Ibis, Blue-winged Goose, and Rouget's Rail. This makes the place attractive tourism place and many tourists come to visit the area (GMP, 2007).

3.1.1 Sections of the Park

The park consists of three major ecological zones; namely Gaysay, the Sennatti and the Harena Forest.

Gaysay

Gaysay is the northern section of BMNP that extends from one mountain range to another. The altitude of this part ranges from 3000-3350m asl. When one explores the micro ecological variation within the Gaysay zone, the southern area is relatively dry and mainly covered by *Juniperusprocera*. Whereas the northern ridge is relatively wet greatly dominated by *Hageniaabssynica* and *Hypericumrevolutum* (, Gozalbez, et al. 2002)

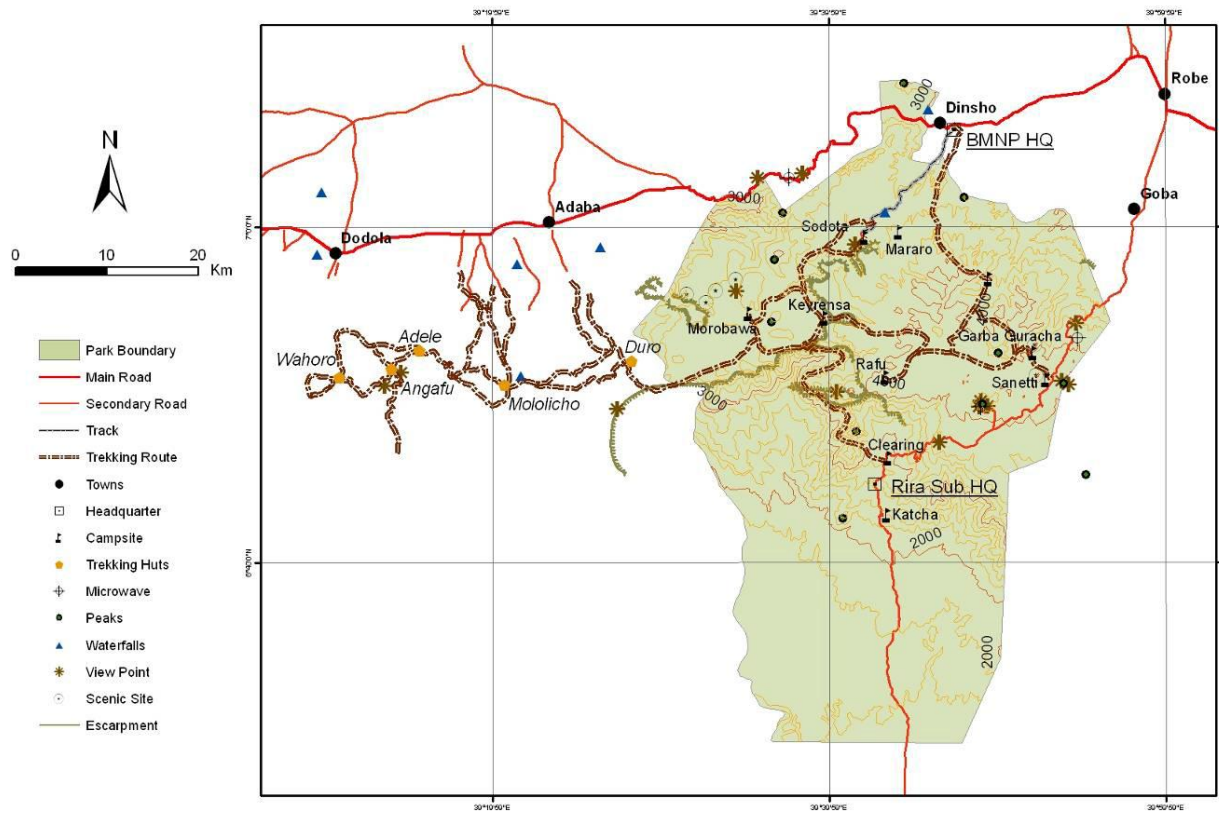
The Senatti Plateau

This section is the central part of the park. This zone is mainly dominated by afro-alpine vegetation type. The vegetation dominates the Senatti Plateau include *juniperusspp*(2800-3350 masl) followed by *HageniaHypericum* between 3350-3500 masl. The area between 3500-4000masl is covered by *Erica* shrub. Much of the Senatti plateau lies over 4000 masl and the highest peak, TulluDimtuu(4377m asl) belongs to this part(Gozalbez , et, al.2002).

The Haremma Forest

The Haremma forest is the most moist, extensive and largely natural forest remaining in Ethiopia. This forest extends between the geographical coordinates 39°-40° E and 6 °-7 ° N .The slopes of the southern escarpment falls rapidly in altitude from the tree line at 3200 to 2000m within a distance of only 8 km, Bale Eco-Region Sustainable Management Project (BESMP), (2006).

Figure 3.1 Trekking maps of the Bale Mountains



Source: GMP 2007

3.2 Research Design and Strategy

Based on its basic purposes, the major focus of this study was on the description of data related to marketing strategies and marketing activities in BMNP. So, the research design method used for this study was descriptive research design for fully answering research questions. From different methods of descriptive research design the study was utilized survey research design based on the purpose of the study. Moreover, the study also employed cross-sectional type of

survey research design in which data was collected at one time for the purpose at hand because the data was gathered only at one time from the respondents.

3.3 Data type and Source

In order to assess marketing strategies the researcher employed descriptive type of research. Description of the issues under the study needs relevant data which were used to meet the purpose of the study. In this regards, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative types of data. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data is important, since by combining qualitative with quantitative information, a deeper understanding of issues under the study can be achieved (Zikmund, 2005). These data types were obtained from both primary and secondary data sources. **Primary source:** Primary data was gathered from visitors (foreign and domestic) who have visited the park, employees of Bale mountain National park who are working under tourism base and tourism officers' through questionnaires and in depth interview.

Secondary source: secondary source was used to obtain the theoretical and empirical evidences. Secondary data were obtained from published and unpublished materials such as tourism and marketing journals and articles, text books such as tourism, marketing and strategy, thesis and dissertations as well as websites and organization's document such as GMP, brochures and reception book and NBAP to access the information concerning marketing strategies and tourism in general.

3.4. Sampling Design and Procedure

3.4.1. Sampling Design

The target populations of the study were the tourists (foreign and domestic) who have visited the park and employees of the park i.e. tourism officers, technical and marketing advisors and employees of Bale Mountain National Park who have been working under tourism provision. In order to determine the size of respondents from employees who are working under tourism base the researcher was utilize purposive sampling research method so as to select the right respondent. Because not all employees in the park have the knowledge about tourism marketing strategies of the destination it is difficult to gather data about strategies from all employees of the organization. Thus populations of the study were 2 tourism officers, 2 technical and marketing advisors and 20 guides were selected as a total population. Those respondents were

selected purposively because they are the only parts who have know-how about tourism and marketing strategies in the park. Therefore the total sample sizes from the employees were 24 respondents.

Likewise in order to determine it is difficult to consider scientific formula because even if the total number of tourists who have visited the destination in each year were known the number of tourists is varying throughout the year. More over the type of this survey was cross sectional and it is difficult to get the scientifically determined sample size at one time (during data collection period). Therefore to determine appropriate sample size from tourists (foreign and domestic) different previous published and unpublished study conducted by considering tourists as target population was reviewed. Accordingly many of published studies (Ndahimana, 2013;Masarrat, 2012 etc.) determine sample size purposively. Therefore to determine the sample size of tourists required for this study the researcher used non-probability sampling with judgmental/purposive technique in which the researcher selects the sample based on appropriate characteristic of the samples. The sample size for this research was 157 respondents, inbound tourists/ foreigners and domestic tourists who visited BMNP tourist destination. The researcher believes that this sample was most likely to provide the desired information and was a reasonable one in order to represent the true situation.

Moreover to determine the proportion of each tourist (domestic and foreign) the researcher based on data obtained from tourism provision and management program of BMNP. The data obtain shows that in 2005 E.C of the total visitors visit the park 55% were inbound/foreigner and the remaining were domestic tourists. Therefore the sample size of each visitors were 55 %(86) foreign visitors and the remaining 45 %(71) were domestic visitors. This percentage were considered in order to avoid miss representation of each tourists

3.4.2. Sampling Procedure

The sample size of respondents determined above will be selected by using non probability sampling techniques for tourist. From non-probability sampling convenience sampling was used this method was adopted because the target population of this study (tourists) is not available at one time and one place. Therefore those tourists who are available at the area during data collection were selected for the purpose of this study. Beside the data were collected only from

those tourists have visited all section of the park after their visit in the site camp so as to collect true information from the visitors.

The selections of the respondents from employees were carried out by using purposive sampling research method and the pre-determined sample size based on the employees know how about tourism marketing strategies were selected by the researcher and the researcher selectpre-determined 24 respondents from employees as a total population.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments

To assess the tourism marketing strategies in tourism destination this study were employed primary data collection methods. To this end two type of survey questionnaire and in depth interview was used to collect the necessary data. The questionnaire for tourists which is about satisfaction to ward 7ps was adopted from (Sereetrakul, 2012) and modified to fit with the purpose of this study. The questionnaire to be completed by employees has contains three parts. The first part has questions about the demographics of the employees such as gender, age, education, and year of experience. The second part has question about strategic marketing (STP) and the third part contain question about marketing mixes elements in this park as a tourism destination. Therefore 24 questionnaires were distributed to employees who have been working under tourism provision.

The second type of survey questionnaire was questionnaires to be completed by inbound/foreign and domestic tourists who visited the park. This questionnaire has two parts: The first part has questions about the demographics of the tourists such as gender, age, nationality, marital status and education. The second part has questions about the tourists' opinion on the 7Ps marketing mix. Therefore 157 questionnaires were distributed to tourists who visited and consumed the tourism product of BMNP destination and served by the destination tourism product vender. Thus 86 questionnaires for foreign tourists and 71 for domestic tourists, totally 157 questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the tourists. However out of these 148 were found complete and useable.

After the questionnaire was prepared in order to distribute the questionnaire and to collect necessary data the five tour guides from Nyaala guide association who have been serving in different tourists comp sites were selected to distribute and gather questionnaires. The data were

gathered from the lodge/tourists comp, in which the tourists reside, namely, Dinsho lodge, Senate lodge, Gaysay comp, and other tourist's site camp. Accordingly data were collected after the tourists visit the tourism attraction. To distribute questionnaire to employees the researcher himself was participated in distributing and collecting questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected by the researcher along with enumerators. But the interview with tourism officers is conducted by the researcher.

Moreover the researcher decided to use an interview to supplement the information collected using the questionnaire. Since tourism officer have more know-how about the marketing strategies in the organization this helps the researcher to obtain more information about what the overall marketing strategies in the organization looks like.

3.6 Methods of data processing and Analysis

The field editing for verification of data and post-coding method is followed towards data collected for fulfillment of the objective of the study. Then researcher analyzes and interprets the data collected from the respondent using qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. Quantitative way of analysis was used for the data which was collected from tourists and employees through structured questionnaire.

The qualitative type of analysis was applied for the data that was collected via depth interview from tourism officer. Qualitative analysis that was used in the analysis of data obtained through interview is Content Analysis which is used to analysis data obtain through asking who, what, where, and how questions in interview and it is used to substantiate quantitative data obtained through questionnaires.

In line with this, the study also uses descriptive statistics to make data analysis. Data collected from respondents was manually filled to computer then it imported to software called statistical package for social science (SPSS version 16) for analysis. For presenting data appropriately the researcher was used different types of descriptive data analysis methods those were frequency, percentage, simple tabulation, cross tabulation, mean and standard deviation and linker scale (five point scale) statement computations with this also data cleaning was made intensively using SPSS by identifying variables and missing values. Finally, based on the result from the analysis part, conclusion and recommendation are forwarded.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of the collected data using different descriptive statistics. There were two type of respondent for this study there were employees of the park and tourists visited the park. The first part of this chapter analyzes and presents the personal characteristics and personality traits of respondents (employees of Bale Mountain National Park and tourists visited the park), while the remaining sections of the chapter are organized according to the sequence of the objectives for which the study was conducted. As indicated before 24 questionnaires for employees and 157 for tourists were distributed. A 100% response rate from employees and 92% from tourists was achieved, the percentage was considered satisfactory. The responses of the respondents with respect to research question were discussed as follows.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Though many personal characteristics of respondents could be there, this study emphasized only on limited factors such as sex, age, year of experience and educational level for the selected park employees and sex, age, marital status origin (nationality) and educational level for tourists. Thus, the following table summarizes the personal characteristics of respondents by sex, age, year of experience and educational level.

4.1.1 Demographic profile of the surveyed employees

The survey result of this study for the characteristics of gender, age and educational of employees presented in table 4.1.1 below.

A look into demographic profile of the surveyed employees (which include tourism professionals only) the table above indicate that about 95.8% are male and 4.2% female, falling in the age group of 25-50. Another demographic included in this study was educational level and employees year of experience in the park. As it can be seen from Table 4.1.1, majority 8(33.33%)of the selected employees' educational level were Diploma followed by 5(25%) certificate. With regard to the employees year of experience, employees which have 6-8 and more than 9 years of experience are 8(33.33%) and 8(33.3%) respectively. And employees with 1-3 and 4-6 year of experience are 8(33.33%) portion of the total employees. The figure indicate that the number of employees with more than diploma education level were few in number

however majority of the employees have more than six year of working experience in the park. Thus we can conclude that employees of the organization under tourism base are not highly educated but they have high working experience in the organization.

Table 4.1.1 demographic characteristics of employees

| Employee's demographic profile | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| Characteristics | Response | Frequency | Percentage |
| Sex: | Male | 23 | 95.8 |
| | Female | 1 | 4.2 |
| | Total | 24 | 100.00 |
| Age: | 20-25 | 1 | 4.2 |
| | 26-30 | 8 | 33.3 |
| | 31-35 | 8 | 33.3 |
| | 36-40 | 5 | 20.8 |
| | >40 | 2 | 8.4 |
| | Total | 24 | 100.00 |
| Educational level | 11-12 | | |
| | Certificate | | |
| | diploma | | |
| | degree | | |
| | Master and above | | |
| | Total | | |
| Year of working experience | 1-3 | | |
| | 4-6 | | |
| | 7-8 | | |
| | >9 | | |
| | Total | | |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

4.1.2 Demographic Profile of the Surveyed Tourists

For tourists respondents demographic characteristics used for study were sex, age, marital status and educational level. Thus the following table below shows the result of the survey with regard to demographic profile of domestic and foreign tourists who were visited the park during this survey was conducted.

Table 4.1.2 Demographic characteristics of tourists

| Domestic tourists | | | | Foreign tourists | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| Characteristics | Categories | Freq(n=68) | %ge | Frequency(n=80) | %ge |
| Sex: | Male | 42 | 61.8 | 56 | 70.0 |
| | Female | 26 | 38.2 | 24 | 30.0 |
| | Total | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |
| Age : | 15-25 | 30 | 44.1 | 10 | 12.5 |
| | 26-35 | 32 | 47.1 | 29 | 36.2 |
| | 36-45 | 6 | 8.8 | 26 | 32.5 |
| | 46-55 | - | - | 10 | 12.5 |
| | >55 | - | - | 5 | 6.2 |
| | Total | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |
| Educational level | 1-10 | 4 | 5.88 | - | - |
| | 11-12 | 8 | 11.76 | 2 | 2.5 |
| | Certificate | 6 | 8.82 | 3 | 3.75 |
| | Diploma | 8 | 11.176 | 1 | 1.2 |
| | degree and above | 44 | 64.7 | 74 | 92.5 |
| | Total | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |
| Marital status | Single | 44 | 64.7 | 16 | 20.0 |
| | Married | 22 | 32.4 | 49 | 61.2 |
| | Divorced | 2 | 2.9 | 9 | 11.2 |
| | Widowed | - | - | 6 | 7.5 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As can be seen from the above table 4.1.2 majority of domestic and foreign tourists who are visit the park were male. Accordingly they account 42(61.8%) and 56(70%) tourists of domestic and foreign respectively. These results signify that from both sides male respondents are larger than the female counter parts. The male respondents share the major proportions in both groups of respondents. These show that male tourists dominate tourism activities in Bale Mountain National Park. Most of tourism activities in Bale Mountain National Park is ecotourism in nature therefore this finding shows that male tourists dominate ecotourism activities in tourism destination. This finding is inconsistent with the finding of (Weaver and Lawton, 2002) in which they found that more females dominated the ecotourism market.

The research divides the participants into five age groups as it can be seen in the above table. Majority of domestic and foreign tourists 32(47.1%) and 26(36.2) respectively fall within the second age category - between 26 and 35 years of ages. In the second place a total of 30(41.1%) of domestic tourists are into the 15 to 25 years group whereas 26(32.5) of the foreign tourists respondents fall into the third group 36 to 45. From the figure we can conclude that relatively domestic tourists are younger than foreign tourists however a look at the entire figure it show that age of tourists is varies.

Another demographic factor used for examining participants is their education background. The results of the analysis show that majority 44(64.7%) and 74(92.5%) of the domestic and foreign tourists respondents respectively are at degree and above as the highest level of education. Thus this figure encouraged to say that since the tourism activity in BMNP is natural based tourism activities (ecotourism) education is positively related to the participation in ecotourism destination. The finding of this study is similar with the finding of (Hvenegaard and Dearden, 1998) in which they found that Eco tourists have higher educational qualification compared to other consumers and there is consistent pattern with respect to the relationship between educational level of Eco tourists and ecotourism.

4.2. Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning Strategies of the Organization

Marketing strategy is the result of a firm's segmentation, targeting and positioning choices (STP process) at the level of the Strategic Business Unit. Market segmentation strategy plays an important role in the realization of tourism marketing objectives. A tourist market may be

identified corresponding to each tourism product. In that sense, one can define market is a set of actual and potential buyers of product. There are five segmenting variables: Geographic, Demographic, Geo-demographic, Psychographic and Behavioral (Kotler et. al.2012).

4.2.1 Different key Market segment and Bases of Market Segments in the Park

In order to know how many key market segments that park has been used as market segments for the park’s products and the base of segmentation the respondents from the employees were asked to list number of key segments in the park and base of segments to market. The following table summarizes the response of respondent employees with this regard.

Table 4.2.1 market segments and base of market segment

| Key market segments | Response | Frequency (n=24) | Percent |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| | Leisure | 23 | 95.83 |
| | Religion | 1 | 4.17 |
| | Education | 2 | 8.33 |
| | Business | 0 | .0 |
| Base of market segments | Geographic | 24 | 100 |
| | Demographic | 23 | 95.83 |
| | Behavioral | 2 | 8.33 |
| | psychographic | 1 | 4.167 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

Table 4.2.1 above reveals that majority 23(95.83%) of selected employees reflect leisure is market segments in this tourism destination. More over few respondents also induce that religion and education as park’s market segments. Beside the tourism officer agreed that leisure is the only market segment of the park for the time being and education is the future market segment and it is not considered as the current key segments of the destination. With regard to religion there is a place around Bale Mountain National Park which is called Dire Sheik Hussein but it considered as extension product and only domestic visitors were come to this for religion and few foreign visitors also visit the place. From this one can understand that the park as a

tourism destination market only one segment and didn't other market segments even if there is more segment opportunity.

With regard to base market segments as it can be seen from table 4.2.1 all respondents acknowledge that the park segment the market based on geographic location and 91.67% of the respondents also recognize that demographic is used as the base of segmenting the market in this tourism destination. Besides, the tourism officer reflect that the basis of the park's market segmentation mechanism is based on the nationality of tourists like domestic, foreign, and demographic characteristics such as age of tourist's, educational back ground (students and non-students). These indicate that, even though all the alternatives were the basis of market segmentation, geographic and demographic segmentation is the common form of the parks' base of market segmenting mechanism. If we compare this with the finding of this study among different mechanisms of segmenting the market this park as a tourism destination emphasis only on two ways of segmentation decisions and it ignore to segment the market based on behavioral and psychological bases. However in contrast to what are going on in Bale Mountain National Park, by acknowledging other authors Munnar, (2011) indicate that behavioral variables are the best starting point for building market segments in tourism. Moreover Awaritefe (2004) conducted study by segmenting tourists on the basis of their motives for travelling and why they chose one of seven destinations in Nigeria, and he state that segmenting tourists based on their motives is important base of segment in tourism and enable tourism sectors to attract more foreign and domestic tourists.

When we look at the importance of base of segments which is ignored by this park to consider, tourists are varies in their behavior even tourists from the same nation are behave in different ways to different tourism destination but the park fail to consider and it miss the opportunity to attract more tourists if it consider the behavior of the tourists visiting the park in segmentation decision. Moreover this implies that the park lack the opportunity to understand and find the main interests of customers (visitors) they look from the tourism products.

4.2.2 Market Targeting

It is generally accepted that there are a lot of consumers and their needs are vary. Target market selection is an important step in establishing a market strategy. One of the long term objectives

of BMNP is identifying the primary target market that provides the best balance between the conservation needs of BMNP and the economic needs of management, local communities and private sector investors (GMNP 2007). The following table shows whether the target market the park as a tourism destination would like to attract were identified.

Table 4.2.2 parks' target market

| Have the park identify its target market? | Response | Frequency | Percent |
|---|----------|-----------|---------|
| | Yes | 21 | 87.5 |
| | No | 3 | 12.5 |
| | Total | 24 | 100 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As the table above reveal that majority 21(87.5%) of the respondents reflect that the target market that the park would like to attract were identified however 3(12.5%) of the respondents oppose the idea. Beside the tourism officer was reveal that although it needs to attract more market in the future, the target market for the existing tourism product were identified. The park has natural resource potential and it can attract many visitors accordingly eco tourists is considered as target market for this park as a tourism destination from the countries around the world mainly foreign visitors from developed countries and Ethiopian higher educational institution employees and students.

4.2.3The Bale Mountain National Parks' Positioning Strategy as a Tourism Destination

It is generally known that customers in one market segment have wants and needs that differ in some way from those of customers in other segment. Positioning allows the marketer to take advantage of difference in customers' needs by identifying uniqueness of its offers and communicating to the target market in the segments. So as to identify the parks' positioning strategies for its tourism product this study was tried to identify whether the park identifies its unique feature and communicate it to the market. Table 4.2.3 below summarizes the response of the respondent employees about the park's unique feature and its communication to the market.

Table 4.2.3 unique feature of the park and its communication

| Does the park identify it's the unique feature | Does the park's unique feature communicated consistently and cohesively in all media to the customers? | | | | | | |
|--|--|------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Response | Yes | | No | | Total | |
| | | Freq | Percent | Freq | Percent | Freq | Percent |
| Yes | 3 | 15 | 17 | 85 | 20 | 83.33 | |
| No | 0 | 0.0 | 4 | 16.67 | 4 | 16.67 | |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As it can be seen from the above table majority 20(83.33%) of the respondents reflect that the unique feature of the park is identified however 17(85%) of these respondent felt that the unique tourism attractions available in the park are not communicated consistently and cohesively in all media to the customers. And only 4(16.7%) of the respondents indicated that the unique feature in the park is not identified and communicated consistently and cohesively in all media to the target customers. The response implies that the unique tourism attraction available in the park is identified but it doesn't communicate to the customers. Beside this the tourism officer state that there were unique tourism attraction in the park and it also recognized as a competitive advantage of the park over the competing parks within and out of the country. Consequently the park named as "Premium Park" in Ethiopia and also by recognizing abundances in types of tourism product in the park "One Park Many World" slogans was given for the park. However despite this entire thing which enable the park to position as a tourism destination and attract more tourists to the area to be competitive tourism destination within and out of the country it fails to communicate consistently and cohesively its exceptional tourism potential in all media to the market. The above data is encouraging to say that that the unique feature of the park is identified but it does not communicated to the customers. When the above finding is compared with the theory of positioning which is proposed by kotler et al. (2010) in which he state that positioning strategy is built up on the company's unique features that differentiate it from other competitors in the market and it involves identifying and communicating it to its target customers. Accordingly he proposes three steps for effective positioning strategies. This includes (1) identifying a set of possible competitive advantages on which to build a position; (2) selecting the right competitive advantages; and (3) effectively communicating and delivering

the chosen position to a carefully selected target market. Therefore the above finding indicate that the positioning strategy of the park is not effective as the park fail to go through last steps to communicate and deliver its exceptional tourism potentials and the chosen name and slogan to the market to position it as attractive tourism destination in tourism market and attract more tourists as other competing park with in and out of the country.

4.2.3.1 Reason to choose and Tourists feeling about BMNP over other Tourist Destination

Different tourists are visit particular tourism destination for different reason and they have different feeling to different tourism destination. Accordingly this study identified why tourists choose this particular park to visit and how different section of the park is looks attractive for each tourists (domestic and foreign tourists).This helps the park to build its positioning strategies on this reason and tourists feeling toward different section of the park (tourism attraction) as a tourism destination. In trying to find out which part of the park is more attractive for tourists, the researcher divides the park into five sections depend on the similarity of topography and tourism product exist in each parts of the park.

The following table indicates the response of respondent tourists' reason to visit the park and their feeling toward each section of the park.

4.2.3.1 Tourists' reason to choose the park and more attractive and recommend part of the park

| Characteristics | Domestic tourists | | | Foreign tourists | |
|---|---|-------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| | Categories | Fre (n=68) | percent | Fre (n=80) | Percent |
| choose and their feeling about Bale Mountain National Park over other tourist destination | Attractions of the area | 32 | 47.1 | 42 | |
| | Accessibility | 17 | 25 | 3 | 3.8 |
| | Quick access to travel information | - | - | 7 | 8.8 |
| | Safety and Security | 15 | 22.5 | 28 | 35 |
| | Price | 2 | 2.5 | - | - |
| | Other reasons | 2 | 2.9 | 3 | (3.8%) |
| | Total | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |
| | which part of the park is more attractive and recommend for other | Gaysay Grasslands | 14 | 20.6 | 15 |
| Park Headquarters | | 16 | 23.5 | 4 | 5 |
| Sanetti Plateau & Upper Web Valley | | 22 | 32.4 | 25 | 31.5 |
| Moorlands and Forest | | 6 | 8.8 | 4 | 5 |
| Harena Forest | | 10 | 14.7 | 32 | 40 |
| Total | | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As it can be seen from the above table main reasons raised to justify why tourists chose BMNP to visit and no other tourism destinations, majority 32(47.1) of domestic and 42(52.5%) of

foreign tourists were choose BMNP for tourism attractions of the area(variety of tourism attraction), 5(22.5%) and 28(35%) of domestic and foreign tourists respectively were choose BMNP for its security. 17(25%) of domestic tourists choose BMNP to visit for its accessibility reasons while none of foreign tourists choose for this reason. While 2(2.5%) of domestic tourists were choose for its price none of foreign tourists respondents choose for its price. And 7(8.8%) of foreign tourists choose for its quick access to travel information in contrast none of the respondents from domestic tourists were choose BMNP for its quick access to travel information. Thus it's sought to identify the common and different reason for domestic and foreign tourists to visit BMNP. From the above result we can understand that tourism attraction in the park was the main reason for both types of tourists to visit the park followed by safety and security in the area. With regard to accessibility it is the reason only for domestic tourists to visit BMNP. This is because of the convenience of the park to domestic tourists than foreign tourists. With regard to quick access to travel information only foreign tourists choose BMNP for this reason. From this we conclude that the most of tourists come to the park because of its tourism attraction and safety and security in the area. This could also be considering as the competitive advantage for the park to position it as a tourism destination with a varieties of tourism product and safety and security.

If we presented the above main reasons for visitors who come in BMNP the following question highlight the main attractions of BMNP in order of their importance from the point of view of those who have visited it. Accordingly for majority 32(40%)of foreign tourists Harena Forest is a considered as attractive part of the park, followed by 25(31.5%) Sanetti Plateau, 15 (18.8%) Gaysay Grasslands and 4(5%) Park Head Quarter This figure induced that Harena forest and Sanetti plateau are attractive for foreign tourists and recommended section of the park by foreign tourists to other.

Similarly from the majority 22(32.4%) of domestic tourists point of view Sanetti Plateau is the most attractive and recommended section of the park however in contrast to foreign tourists' park head quarter is selected as more attractive section of the parkby 16(23.6%) of domestic tourists next to Sanetti plateau followed by 14(20.6%), Gaysay Grasslands. Moreover in contrast to foreign tourists few domestic tourists place Harena forest as attractive section of the park.

Thus the figure indicates that Sanetti Plateau and park head quarter are the attractive section of the park for domestic visitors.

From the above analysis it's evident to say that each section of the park is looks attractive for and recommended by each tourists (foreign and domestic tourists) who visited the area in different ways. More over each section of the park has different in its topography, wildlife and birds which are serves as tourism attraction that tourists come for visit. Therefore on can conclude that different tourist (foreign and domestic tourists) have different feeling to different tourism attraction available in the park which need different marketing practice to position each tourism attraction in each market segments(foreign and domestic tourists) . This finding is consistency with Yoon and Uysal, (2005) in which they state that different tourists have different feeling about different tourism attraction based on geographic, demographic and other characteristics of visitors and it requires separate marketing activities to satisfy each group of visitors.

4.3 Marketing Mixes

4.3.1 Marketing Mixes Elements of BMNP

It is obvious that marketing mixes is a means of implementing designed strategic marketing to achieve competitive advantage by directing it toward particular group in market segments. Thus, it is sought to see what marketing mixes elements are devised for designed strategic marketing strategy of particular organization. Table 4.3.1 below shows the marketing mixes elements of the park.

Table 4.3.1 The Company's marketing mix elements

| Which tourism marketing mix strategies are applied by BMNP to promote its' tourism attractions? | Response | Freq | %ge |
|---|-------------|------|---------|
| | Product | 24 | 100.00 |
| | Promotion | 24 | 100.0 |
| | Place | 24 | 100.00 |
| | Pricing | 24 | 100.00 |
| | Process | 4 | 16.667 |
| | Packaging | 11 | 45.833 |
| | Partnership | 12 | 50.00 |
| | Programming | 7 | 29.1667 |
| | People | 17 | 70.8333 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As it can be seen from the table above the figure indicate that except for classical marketing mixes i.e. (product, place promotion and price), people and partnership which acknowledged by all respondents, majority 17(70.833%)and half (50%) of the respondents respectivelyas the parks' marketing mixes not all respondents or majority of respondents acknowledge other marketing mixes as being applied mixes in the park as means of implementing strategic marketing strategies. Beside this tourism officer was witnessed about the marketing mixes elements formulated to implement the overall parks' business strategies with respect to tourism. Accordingly he revealed that by stating differentiation with low volume high value as the parks' business strategic, the park have clear classical marketing mixes(product, promotion, place and price) and strategies. In line with these the park also offers tourism marketing mixes like; planning, programming, partnership and people but not clear-cut strategies was formulated for these mixes. The employees and tourism officer response induced that all contemporary tourism

marketing mixes were applied but except for classical marketing mixes there were no clear-cut marketing mixes strategies for sustainable tourism marketing to implement the parks' business strategies. Therefore one can conclude that other than classical marketing mixes no clear-cut strategies were planned for tourism mixes elements (people, Process, Programming, Partnership and Packaging) which have significant impact on marketing for tourism services. In contrast to this finding Butler (2001) state that effective tourism marketing mixes (packaging, partnership, people and programming) frame work assists tourism manager to deliver and manage sustainable tourism products offers to the market.

4.3.2 Marketing Mixes separately designed for each group in the Segments

Not the same marketing mixes element strategies are equally fit for each groups in each segments. Tourists are different in their personality accordingly they need different marketing mixes which best suit for their needs. In order examine whether the park serve different group of market in each segments with different marketing mixes strategies the respondent employees were asked to respond. Table 4.3.2 Base of market segments and marketing mixes strategies applied for each market group in the segments

| Marketing mixes strategies applied for each group in the segments | In which base of segments does the park applied separate marketing mixes strategies for each group in the segments. | | | |
|---|---|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Geographic | | Demographic | |
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Product | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Price | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 |
| Place | 22 | 91.67 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Promotion | 24 | 100 | 0 | 0.0 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As it discussed in section 4.2.1 above two base of market segments are used to segment the market in this tourism destination (BMNP). Accordingly as it can be seen from the table above all respondents argued that separate marketing mixes strategies is applied for each group in the parks' market segments (demographic and geographic) but the respondents revealed that not all

marketing mixes strategies are separately applied for each group in segments . Accordingly all 24 (100%) respondents reflect that separate pricing and promotion strategies are applied for each group in the geographic segments (foreign and domestic tourists) and majority 22(91.67%) of the respondents said that separate place strategies is applied for each group within this segments. With regard to demographic segments all 24(100%) respondents revealed that a separate pricing strategy is the only mix which is separately applied for each group in the demographic segments.

Beside this by stating demographic and geographic as the only base of market segments in this tourism destination tourism officer felt that separate price, place and promotion strategy is designed for each group in the geographic segments and price is the only marketing mixes strategies which is separately set for each group of market in the demographic segments (different price set based on age, student and non-student).Therefore the response indicate that no separate product strategies were applied for each group in geographic segment and pricing is the only mix which is separately applied for each group in demographic segments. Uniform tourism products are offered for all segments (demographic and geography) and for each group of market in each segments. In contrast the finding of this study in 4.2.3.2 section shows that different tourism attraction available in this tourism destination is not equally attractive for each market (foreign and domestic tourists) and they have different feeling toward different tourism attraction available in the park. So one can conclude that in this particular tourism destination marketing mixes elements devised other than prices are not taking the difference in demographic characteristics of tourists in to account. Similarly no diversified product strategies were applied for each market (foreign and domestic tourists) in geographic segments.

4.3.4 Promotional activities in Bale Mountain National Park

Theoretically, destinations are promoted by the use of one or combination of promotional tools (advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, public relations and internet,).

4.3.4.1. The most commonly used promotional strategies in BMNP.

The aim was to identify the promotional strategy used to promote tourism attraction available in Bale mountain National Park. According table 4.4.1 below summarize the response of respondents employees of this tourism destination.

Table 4.3.4.1 Promotional Strategies being used in BMNP

| What promotional tools are used to promote tourism attraction available in destination | Response | Frequency (n=24) | Percent |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------|
| | Advertising | 24 | 100 |
| | Sales promotion | 7 | 29.2 |
| | Public relation | 5 | 20.8 |
| | Personal selling | 11 | 45.8 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

The views of the respondents were varied on the methods used for tourism attraction promotion in Bale Mountain National Park except for advertising strategy. All respondents argued that advertising strategy is the most commonly used promotional strategy for promoting tourism attraction in this tourism destination. 45.8% of the respondents indicated that the most commonly used strategy for promoting domestic tourism was personal selling. 20.8% felt public relation was promotional strategies used by BMNP and 29.2% felt that sales promotion was used as a promotional strategy used by the park. Beside tourism officers and technical and marketing advisor revealed that the promotional tools mostly used to promote this tourism destination is advertising through different media followed by personal selling through the use of tour guide and reception personnel. However they state public relation like tourism affair is the most commonly used to promote tourism product by different tourism destination however tourism destination in Ethiopia in general and BMNP in particular is less competitive to promote tourism potentials in the destination through tourism affairs. Therefore we can conclude that advertising strategy is the most commonly used promotional strategy and public relation is the least promotional strategies used in promoting tourism attraction available in Bale Mountain National Park. This result is consistent with the finding of (yibabal, 2010) in which he found Ethiopian room in trade fairs is usually less competitive than that of Kenya and Tanzania, mainly because the budget allocated is so small and the attention given is so little.

4.3.4.2 Advertising Media and its Importance.

In this study it has been found that advertising is the most promotional tools used to promote tourism attraction of BMNP. It is generally known that not all advertising media is equally

important to promote the organization products and identifying the important advertising media helps the organization to promote its product effectively. Advertising media used by this destination and level of its importance shown in table 4.4.2 below.

Table 4.3.4.2 Advertising media and its importance

| Description | | Degree of importance | | | | | Total |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| | | Very important | Important | Neutral | un important | Very un important | |
| Television | Count | 16 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| | % within the Television | 76.2 | 23.8 | .0 | .0 | .0 | 87.5 |
| Radio | Count | 5 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| | % within the radio | 25 | 65 | 10 | .0 | .0 | 83.33 |
| Newspaper | Count | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| | % within the newspaper | 0 | 50 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 8.33 |
| Broachers | Count | 17 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| | % within themagazines | 70.83 | 29.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Internet | Count | 20 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| | % within theInternet | 83.33 | 16.67 | .0 | .0 | .0 | 100 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

As it can be seen from the above table the advertising media used in this destination rated by employees. Accordingly with regard to brochures and internet all 24 (100%) of selected staff revealed that they have been used as advertising media by this destination (BMNP) and concerning to their importance to promote the destination majority 17(70.833%) and 20(83.33%) of them rate brochures and internet respectively as very important advertising media to promote tourism attraction available in the tourism destination. With regard to television majority 21(87.5) of the respondents reflect that television as advertising media and all this respondents argued that television as important (70.8% very important and 29.2 % important) advertising media to promote tourism attraction available in this destination.

Concerning to radio as advertising media majority 20 (83.33%) of them said that radio is advertising media used and majority 18(90%) including (5(25%) very important and 13(65%) important) of them rate it as important advertising media to promote tourism attraction in the destination.

From the above figure one can understand that except newspaper all advertising media (internets, brochures, television and radio) are advertising media used by this tourism destination to promote tourism attraction available in destination. With regard to their importance internets and brochures are very important advertising media to promote tourism attraction available in the destination while radio and television are important advertising media for this tourism destination. Therefore the study indicates that internet and brochure are vital means of promoting tourism attraction in available in Ethiopian national park in general and BMNP in particular. This finding is consistency with the finding of Molina, et al. (2010) in which they state that important point for developing countries is that the internet can play a vital role in attracting tourism and it will end in the highest profitability by lowering cost. Moreover they also found that printed materials are important means of promoting tourism attraction available in particular tourism destination in that potential customers “will compare the brochure of one destination or supplier with the brochure of its competitors, and it is likely that the one with the best brochure will receive the business.”

4.3.4.3 Sources of Information for Tourists on Bale Mountain National Park

Tourists can obtain information about ecotourism places through several channels, such as magazines, newspapers, travel agents, radio and television, friends, relatives and other sources. The table 4.4.3 shows source of information for tourists.

4.3.4.3 Sources of information for tourists on Bale Mountain National Park

| Description | Domestic tourists | | | Foreign tourists | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| | Response | Fre | perc ent | Fre | Percent |
| Source of information | Recommendation of a travel agent | - | | 3 | 3.75 |
| | Visiting relative | 5 | 7.35 | - | |
| | Family history | 4 | 5.88 | - | |
| | brochure presenting | 18 | 26.47 | 15 | 18.75 |
| | Information on the Internet | 5 | 7.35 | 42 | 52.5 |
| | Article on a television / radio | 29 | 42.64 | 7 | 8.75 |
| | Previous visits | 2 | 2.94 | 3 | 3.75 |
| | Recommendation of a friend /relative | 5 | 7.35 | 10 | 16.25 |
| | Decisionafter visiting Tradefair | - | - | - | - |
| | Total | 68 | 100 | 80 | 100 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

Respondents were asked to reflect from where they get information about BMNP and the study found that the most popular source of information for tourists are different based on their geographic locations (domestic and foreign). The finding show that article on television/radio is

the most popular source of information for domestic tourists in which majority 29 (42.65%) of domestic tourists are obtain information about BMNP. Whereas internet is the primary source for foreign tourists which majority 42(52.5%) of the foreign respondents obtain information about BMNP. The second source of information for tourists about BMNP was brochures in which 18(26.47%) and 15 (18.75%) of domestic and foreign tourist respectively get information about BMNP from its brochures. The third source of information for foreign tourists was recommendation of a friend /relative 10 (16.25%) followed by Article on a television / radio 7(8.75%). From domestic side recommendation of a friend /relative, Information on the Internet and Visiting a friend / relative were place in the third as a source of information. The other source of information that convinced domestic and foreign tourists to come BMNP was Family history 4(5.88%) and Recommendation of a travel agent 3(3.35%) respectively.

Thus from these figure it can be induce that the source of information for domestic and foreign tourists who were visit the BMNP is different. This may be because of accessibility of promotional tools. From the figure above television/radio is the most popular source of information for domestic tourists however internet is the main source of information for foreign tourists who come to visit BMNP. The figure shows that internet is the main source of information for foreign tourists to visit this tourism destination and television/radio is the primary source for domestic tourists to visit the destination. This implies that different promotional strategies and promotional tools are required for different market segments (domestic and foreign tourists). On the other hand tourism affairs is one of the most commonly used marketing tool because it is cheap and does not require expertise however none of foreign and domestic tourists got information from tourism affairs about BMNP. This implies that tourism destination in Ethiopia in general and BMNP in particular less competitive in advertising about truism destination in Ethiopia through trade fairs. This result is consistent with previous studies undertaken in Ethiopia by (Yabibal, 2010), which found that Ethiopian room in trade fairs is usually less competitive than that of east African country like Kenya and Tanzania. Moreover, it isalso similar with the evidence by Molina, et al. (2010) finding, they found that internet can play a vital role in attracting tourism for many developing countries as their main customers, i.e. the developed countries, widely use the Internet to trade and travel and high percentages of its population are familiar with and connected to the Internet.

4.3.4.4 Weather the Parks have its own website and how often this website updates

In this study it has been found that internet is the very important advertising media to promote tourism attraction in tourism destination and it has been used by BMNP. Thus by considering a website as a means of promoting tourism product in tourism destination and 10 years long term plan of the park in which it state developing website for the park and updating it regularly as one of the parks' specific objectives, this study was tries to look at how this website is update. The following table shows the results from the respondent employees.

Table 4.3.4.4 Park's website and how often this website is updated

| Description | | How often is this website updated? | | Total | |
|-------------------------------|-----|--|----------------|-------|--------|
| | | monthly | when necessary | | |
| Does the park have a website? | yes | Count | 4 | 20 | 24 |
| | | % within Does the park have a website? | 16.7% | 83.3% | 100.0% |
| | | % of Total | 16.7% | 83.3% | 100.0% |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

The above table shows that all respondents argued that the park have its own website. With regard to how often this website have been update, majority (83.3) of the respondents revealed that the website is up dated when necessary and 16.7% of the respondents felt that the website is updated monthly. With regard to the frequency of website update the tourism officer Witnessed that the website was updated if necessary it was updated two or more times within a month if new thing is made in the park and if it is necessary to display on the parks website page. Internets which are one of the basic promotional tools that are used in the tourism industry have been also used in BMNP to promote tourism attraction in the park.

4.3.4.5 The Park's printed Promotional Materials

The information about a concrete destination which is occasionally demanded by tourists is a particularly important means of promotion for the tourism industry. This study has been found that printed material like brochures and other promotional activities have been conducting in this tourism destination. Thus it sought to identify whether this tourism destination evaluating promotional activities and all employees are awareness about marketing strategies are also important issues to realize long term plan and strategic business of tourism destination. The following table shows whether the park offer printed promotional materials, evaluate promotional activities and employees' awareness about marketing strategies.

Table 4.3.4.5 The Park's Printed Promotional Material

| Description | Response | Freq | %ge |
|---|---------------|------|--------|
| Does the park offer printed promotional materials? | yes | 24 | 100 |
| | Total | 24 | 100.00 |
| Does the park evaluate the advertising and promotion plans? | Never | 19 | 79.16 |
| | Some times | 3 | 12.5 |
| | Almost always | 2 | 8.33 |
| | Total | 24 | 100.00 |
| Do you think all employees are aware of the strategies of the marketing plan? | Yes | 5 | 20.8 |
| | No | 15 | 62.5 |
| | I don't know | 7 | 16.7 |
| | Total | 24 | 100.0 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

All respondents reveal that printed materials were offered to promote tourism attraction available in the park. A look into evaluating advertising and promotion plan majority 19(79.16%) of the respondents respond that promotional plan is never evaluated and 3(12.5%)

reveal that promotional plan were sometimes evaluated. Whilst the remaining 2(8.33%) reflect that promotional plan is almost always evaluated. With regard to employees awareness about majority (62.5%) of the respondents felt that the employees were not aware about the marketing strategies,20.8% of respondents reveal that the employees are aware about marketing strategies and the remaining (16.7%) of the respondent reflect they don't know whether the employees know marketing strategies or not. From these figure it can be generalized that printed promotional materials were offered for the customers to promote tourism attraction available in BMNP however promotional was never evaluated. With regard to employees awareness about marketing strategies from the figure above it encourage to say the not all employees are aware of marketing strategies.

4.3.5 The Intermediaries used in the Availing and Accessing of BMNP Tourism Products to the Customers and its Importance

The importance of intermediaries used in availing and accessing tourism product were measured using 5-point likert scale (1= very unimportant 2 = unimportant 3= neutral 2=important 1= very important) were the higher numbers indicate higher level of importance for intermediaries 1.e. the mean greater than 3 is to ward important and less than 3 is implies to ward unimportant of the intermediaries. The following table shows the importance of intermediaries used in availing and accessing tourism product available in this destination to the customers.

Table 4.3.5 importance of intermediaries used in availing and accessing BMNP tourism product

| Origin of tourists | Description | Very important | important | Neutral | Unimportant | Very unimportant | Mean |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|------|
| Domestic tourists(n=68) | tour guide | | 9(13.2%) | 26(38.8%) | 29(42.6%) | 4(5.9%) | 2.59 |
| | Eco tour operator | | 29(42.6%) | 30(44.1%) | 7(10.3%) | 2(2.9%) | 3.83 |
| | travel guide | | 26(38.2%) | 16(23.5%) | 8(11.8%) | 18(26.5%) | 3.79 |
| | travel agent | 1(1.5%) | 4(5.9%) | 21(30.1%) | 32(47.1%) | 10(14.7%) | 2.32 |
| Foreign tourists(n=80) | tour guide | 31(38.8%) | 26(32.5%) | 18(22.5%) | 5(6.2%) | | 4.04 |
| | Eco tour operator | 54(67.5%) | 24(30%) | 2(2.5%) | | | 4.65 |
| | travel guide | 23(28.8%) | 26(32.5%) | 31(38.8%) | | | 3.90 |
| | travel agent | 38(47.5%) | 31(38.8%) | 6(7.5%) | 5(6.2%) | | 4.28 |

Source: Own survey result, 2014

It was found that in availing and accessing the tourism products in this tourism destination the tourists rate the importance of the following intermediaries as follows: out of contacted domestic tourists 9(13.2%) of them rate tour guide as important, 26(38.8%) were neutral, 29(42.6%) of them replied that they are unimportant intermediaries in the availability and accessibility of BMNP tourism product while the remaining 4(5.9%) said that these intermediaries are very unimportant. Whereas from the side of foreign tourists they reflect the importance of tour guide in the availability and accessibility of BMNP tourism product as 31(38.8%) very important, 26(32.5%) important, 18(22.5%) Neutral and the remaining 5(6.2%) believed that tour guide is unimportant. This explains that for majority of domestic tourists tour guides were unimportant and neutral whereas for majority of foreign tourists tour guide were

very important and important. Moreover, the mean score of foreign tourists is 4.04 but that of domestic tourists is 2.59 this shows that there is significance difference in the importance of tour guides for each market (domestic and foreign tourists). Thus from this figure we conclude that tour guides are not equally important for domestic and foreign tourists and they are more important for foreign tourists in availing and accessing tourism product in this tourism destination. From the organizations' point of view tour guides are more important to distribute its tourism product for foreign tourists.

Concerning eco tour operators importance domestic tourists rate as, majority 30(44.1%) of domestic tourists rate as neutral, 29(42.6%) important, 7(10.3%) unimportant while 2(2.9%) said that they are very important intermediaries in the availability and accessibility of BMNP tourism product. The average mean scored of domestic tourists with regard to the importance of eco tour operator were 3.39. According to this result mean score fall in the important range therefore it is evident to say that eco tour operator is important in availability and accessibility of tourism product for domestic tourists. Foreign tourists were also asked to rate the importance of this intermediaries in availability and accessibility of tourism product. Accordingly 54(67.5%) were rate as very important, 24(30%) said that they are important while the remaining 2(2.5%) of them said that they are neutral. The mean scored for this intermediary were 4.65 shows that eco tour operator is very important for availing tourism product for foreign tourists. Thus from the figure above we conclude that eco tour operators are important in the availability and accessibility of tourism product for both market (foreign and domestic tourists). However the degree of importance is different in each market and it is highly important in accessing tourism product for foreign tourists. This is supported by the mean scored for each tourist shows significant differences and high in foreign tourist than domestic tourists. Clearly, this suggests that Eco tour operators are very important for foreign tourists and important for domestic tourists.

Regarding to travel guides importance both foreign and domestic tourists were rate it as follows, from domestic tourists respondents 18(26.5%) of them rate this intermediaries as were very unimportant, 8(11.8%) unimportant while 16(23.5%) of them were neutral about the importance of travel guide and 26(38.2%) of domestic tourists were rate tour guide as important in making the tourism product available and accessible to the market. The related mean scored were 3.79

which shows tour guides are important in making tourism product available to the domestic markets. Likewise foreign tourists also rate the importance of tour guides as, 5(6.2%) of the contacted foreign tourists rated tour guide as unimportant, 18(22.5%) were neutral, 26(32.5%) of them said that they are important intermediaries in the availability and accessibility of tourism products while the remaining 31(38.8%) said that these intermediaries are very important. With regard to the mean scored for the importance of tour guide by foreign tourists were 3.9 which fall within the same range with the mean score for domestic tourists. Thus From the above analysis it is evident to say that travel guide is important for both domestic and foreign tourists. More over the mean scored in each category didn't show significant differences therefore it is possible to say that travel guide intermediaries are equally important in each market (domestic and foreign tourist) to make BMNP tourism product available and accessible to the target market. Therefore one can understand that whether this tourism destinations (BMNP) target market is domestic or foreign tourists travel guides are equally important in the availability and accessibility of tourism products to the target market.

With regard to the importance of travel agents the respondents reflect that, from the domestic tourists side majority 61.8 %(47.1% unimportant and 14.7% very unimportant) of them rate travel agent as unimportant whereas 7.4 %(1.5% very important and 5.9% very important) of them said this intermediaries is important. The remaining 30.1% of domestic tourist respondents are neutral about this intermediary. The analysis indicates that travel guide is unimportant for domestic tourists in accessing BMNP tourism product. Thus, from this we can conclude that for this tourism destination (BMNP) travel agents are not important to reach its tourism product for domestic visitors. This can be due to the fact that domestic visitor are not search for travel agent to get to the tourism destination. This can also be supported by the mean score of respondents' response. The mean scored for domestic respondents' response is 2.32 which is shows unimportance of this intermediary for domestic tourists.

On the other hand, foreign tourists also forwarded their view regarding to the importance of travel agents in BMNP. Accordingly majority 69% (including 47.5% very important and 38.8% important) of foreign tourist respondents said travel agent is important in availing and accessing tourism product of BMNP. The figure indicates that majority of the respondents from the foreign tourist rate travel agents as very important and important to make tourism product

available and accessible for the tourists. More over the average scored with respect to the importance of travel agents were 4.04 which indicate the travel agents are important to make tourism product available and accessible for the tourists. From the above analysis it evident that travel agents are not equally important for each markets (domestic and foreign tourists) to market tourism product available in BMNP. And travel agents are more important for foreign tourists to get access of BMNP tourism products. From the above discussion about intermediaries used in availing and accessing tourism product it is encouraging to say that not all intermediaries are equally important for tourism destination to get its product to reach its target markets (domestic and foreign tourists) and are not equally important for each market (domestic and foreign tourists) to get the destination tourism product

4.4 Tourist's Satisfaction toward Marketing Elements

It is widely accepted that one of the key elements of successful destination marketing is tourist satisfaction because it influences the choice of destination the consumption, and the decision to return (Kasim and Ngowsiri 2011) Accordingly, (Yoon and Uysal, 2005) stated that the improvement of tourist satisfaction affects to the result of retention or the expansion of the number of the tourists and ultimately enhances profitability. Thus it's sought to identify level of tourists' satisfaction toward marketing mixes elements of tourism organization. This study tries to find out how tourists are satisfied toward marketing mix of tourism destination in east Ethiopia BMNP in particular. So as to know the level of tourists satisfaction the responses of the respondents for the variables indicated below were measured on five point Linkert scale with:(1= very dissatisfied, 2= dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4= satisfied and 5= very satisfied) the higher value is toward satisfaction i.e. were any value less than 3 is towards dissatisfaction and the higher numbers indicate higher satisfaction.

4.4.1 Tourists' Satisfaction toward Tourism Product of BMNP

BMNP as a tourism destination in east Ethiopia offers variety of tourism product. The major tourism products in this tourism destination includes Bale Big Five (Gaint molerata Ethiopian wolf Bale monkey Menilick bushbuck and Mountain Nyaala), birding and trekking. Thus the level of tourists' satisfaction toward this tourism product influences the success of this tourism

destination marketing. The following table shows level of tourists' satisfaction toward Bale Big five.

As it can be seen from table 4.4.2 below tourists' satisfactions toward Bale Big Five were; domestic and foreign tourists are very satisfied toward mountain Nyaala since the mean scored by each tourists was more than 4.21 this is particularly true for foreign tourists who have a high average of 4.59 out of 5 the S.D is also high for domestic tourists than domestic tourists shows that domestic tourists are varies in their level of satisfaction than foreign tourists. With regard to Menilick bushbuck both foreign and domestic tourists are satisfied as the mean scored shows higher i.e. 4.10 and 3.79 however the mean scored shows slight differences as a result foreign tourists are relatively highly satisfied with the standard deviation of .306 and .706 for domestic and foreign tourists respectively which is less in case of foreign tourists which implies they are not different in their level of satisfaction. Therefore we can conclude that mean scored for Menilick bushbuck from each respondent doesn't show significance difference which implies more or less both foreign and domestic tourists are equally satisfied with this tourism product. Concerning to tourists satisfaction toward Gaint molerata while domestic tourists remain neutral toward this product foreign tourists are satisfied by this product. The respective average scored for this product from both side were 3.08 and 3.78 with standard deviation of .715 and .763 by domestic and foreign tourists respectively.

Table 4.4.1 Tourist satisfaction toward Bale Big Five

| Origin of tourists | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists(n=68) | Mountain Nyaala | 68 | 4.23 | .826 | -1.135 | .269 |
| | Menilick bushbuck | 68 | 4.10 | .306 | 2.673 | .291 |
| | Gaint molerat | 61 | 3.08 | .714 | .447 | .306 |
| | Bale monkey | 68 | 3.35 | .842 | .172 | .291 |
| | Ethiopian wolf | 68 | 4.34 | .660 | -.496 | .291 |
| Foreign tourists (n=80) | Mountain Nyaala | 80 | 4.59 | .496 | -.367 | .291 |
| | Menilick bushbuck | 80 | 3.79 | .706 | -1.000 | .269 |
| | Bale monkey | 80 | 3.78 | .729 | -.630 | .269 |
| | Ethiopian wolf | 80 | 4.45 | .634 | -.723 | .269 |
| | Gaint molerata | 80 | 3.78 | .763 | -.295 | .269 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

With regard to Bale monkey the mean and standard deviation scored with this regard were 3.35 and 3.78 and .842 and .729 from domestic and foreign tourist side respectively. The average scored by both group of respondents is greater than neutral and it is toward satisfaction however the average is higher for foreign tourists which shows they are more satisfied by this tourism product the S.D scored is also less for foreign tourist's shows that they are not varies in their satisfaction toward this tourism product. The other type Bale Big five products is Ethiopian wolf a look at the tourist satisfaction with this product both domestic and foreign tourists are very

satisfied by this product. The corresponding averages scored were 4.45 and 4.34 which high average out 5 it shows high satisfaction of each group of respondents. Therefore it is evident to say that both foreign and domestic tourists are highly satisfied while they visit Ethiopian wolf in this tourism destination (BMNP). From the figure above we can conclude that except for Gaint molerata in which foreign tourists satisfied and domestic tourists remain neutral both foreign and domestic visitors satisfied when they visit Bale Big Five in Bale Mountain National Park.

4.4.1.2 Tourist Satisfaction with Birding and Trekking in BMNP

The Bale Mountain National Park offer guided wilderness trekking amidst juniper woodlands, over rugged and breath-taking mountains and through thick tropical forest. Moreover BMNP is recognized by the African bird club as the 4th best birding sites in Africa. Thus it is considered as among BMNP tourism product. This study is tries to find out how tourists are satisfied with this tourism product while they visit BMNP.

Table 4.4.2 Tourist satisfaction toward birding and trekking in BMNP

| Origin of tourists | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic(n=68) | Birding | 68 | 4.04 | .721 | -.066 | .291 |
| | Trekking | 49 | 3.14 | .612 | -.081 | .340 |
| Foreign (n=80) | Birding | 80 | 4.48 | .573 | -.521 | .269 |
| | Trekking | 80 | 4.24 | .534 | .163 | .269 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

As it can be seen from table 3.1.2 domestic tourists are satisfied by the birding activities in BMNP with the average score of 4.04 and .721 corresponding standard deviation. With regard to foreign tourists level of satisfaction with birding activities in BMNP they are highly satisfied as the mean scored 4.48 out of 5 with .573 corresponding standard deviation which implies high satisfaction of tourists by birding. From this figure it is evident to say that even though the level of satisfaction is high for foreign tourists toward birding activities both foreign and domestic tourists are satisfied when they visit birds in this tourism destination. The difference in their level of satisfaction may be because domestic tourists have more probability to visit such type of bird even outside the park this is particularly true for visitor around the park. For foreign tourists maybe it's the first time to observe such kind of birds as most of birds in BMNP are endemic birds. From the marketing point of view it implies separate product strategy is required for each market (domestic and foreign tourists).

The other tourism product for BMNP is trekking with regard to tourists satisfaction toward this tourism product foreign tourists are highly satisfied with this activities. The corresponding mean and standard deviation were 4.24 and .534 respectively. From the domestic tourist side some of them were not respond to this question for those who respond to question the corresponding mean scored =3.14, S.D= .612 by this activities. The mean scored doesn't show significance gap above neutral scale thus it can be considered as neutral toward this activity. This may be due to the fact that most domestic tourists who visit this park were university students as a result they don't spend more than two or three days in BMNP and they do not participate in trekking through horse riding many of them visit only park head quarter, seniti plateau and Gaysay section of the park. 4.6.2

4.4.2 Tourists Satisfaction towards Promotion and Pricing.

The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction toward promotional activities and price expense in BMNP. The table below shows tourists level of satisfaction toward promotional activities and price expense in this tourism destination.

Table 4.4.2 level of foreign and domestic tourists' satisfaction in promotional activities and pricing of BMNP

| | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists (n=68) | promotion activity of BMNP | 65 | 3.49 | 1.226 | -.296 | .297 |
| | convenience of information | 68 | 4.16 | .908 | -.454 | .291 |
| | product and service price | 68 | 3.85 | 1.055 | -.405 | .291 |
| | expense for tourism | 68 | 3.93 | .498 | -.162 | .291 |
| Foreign tourists (n=80) | promotion activity of BMNP | 80 | 2.35 | .982 | -.266 | .269 |
| | convenience of information | 80 | 2.40 | .648 | 1.384 | .269 |
| | product and service price | 80 | 4.54 | .594 | -.891 | .269 |
| | expense for tourism | 80 | 4.30 | .701 | -.493 | .269 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

As it can be seen from Table 3.2 above domestic tourists have scored average of 3.49 with 1.226 S.D for “kinds of activities to promote tourism in BMNP” item. The average scored by domestic tourists for kinds of activities to promote tourism in BMNP implies tourists are satisfied but the standard deviation is greater than one they are highly vary in their level of satisfaction. With regard to Convenience of tourism information they are satisfied (mean scored=4.16 with .908

S.D) which implies tourism information in BMNP is convenient to domestic tourists. Thus it is notable that domestic tourists are satisfied by promotional activities in BMNP. From foreign tourists' side the average scored for kinds of activities to promote tourism and convenience of tourism information in BMNP was less than that of domestic tourists and they are not satisfied with kinds of promotional activities and convenience of information in BMNP. The corresponding average scored were 2.35 for kind of promotional activities and 2.40 for convenience of information in BMNP with .648 and .594 S.D respectively. This shows foreign tourists dissatisfaction with promotion activities. The conclusion can be drawn that while domestic tourists are satisfied foreign tourists are not satisfied with the tourism promotional activities and convenience of information given on BMNP.

With regard to price as can be clearly seen from table 3.2 above domestic tourists are satisfied with the price of product and service in BMNP(mean = 3.85 and S.D = 1.055) while foreign tourists are more satisfied with this. It is also interesting to note that give a very high rating for the “reasonability of tourism expense and price of product and service” item (mean =4.30 &4.54 S.D= .594 &.70). Beside domestic tourists they are satisfied with the reasonability of tourism expense (mean = 3.93 S.D= .498). Clearly, this suggests that although both groups are satisfied with the price foreign tourists are more satisfied than domestic tourists.

4.4.3 Tourists Satisfaction toward Intermediaries

It was found that in availing and accessing the tourism products different intermediaries were used by this tourism destination. The tourists rate their level of satisfaction toward these intermediaries: except for tour guides not all domestic tourists were respond for those intermediaries used in availing and assessing tourism product. More over all respondents of domestic tourists were not responding to travel agents. This is due to the fact that they were not using these intermediaries. Accordingly the following table shows the level of tourists' satisfaction toward those intermediaries used in availing and accessing the destinations' tourism products.

Table 4.4.3 tourists' satisfaction toward intermediaries

| | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists | tour guides | 68 | 4.06 | .896 | -.759 | .291 |
| | eco tour operators | 5 | 3.80 | .200 | .447 | -2.236 |
| | travel guides | 27 | 3.15 | .907 | .689 | .448 |
| Foreign tourists(n=80) | tour guides | 80 | 2.69 | .936 | .005 | .269 |
| | eco tour operators | 80 | 3.05 | .967 | .675 | .269 |
| | travel guides | 80 | 2.74 | .853 | .036 | .269 |
| | travel agent | 80 | 2.55 | .899 | .276 | .269 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

As it can be seen from the above table those domestic who use intermediaries rate the level of their satisfaction toward tour guides as satisfied and they scored mean = 4.06 and S.D = .896 for this intermediary. Foreign tourists, on the contrary are not satisfied with tour guide the corresponding scored mean and S.D are 2.69 and .936 respectively. The mean of both group shows significant differences which implies they level of satisfaction is different. With regard to travel guide domestic tourists give a moderate rating for this intermediary 3.15 and they are neutral with how this intermediary makes tourism product available and accessible in BMNP. However foreign tourists give low rate for the “Convenience and service of Travel guides” item (mean= 2.74, S.D = .853) and “Convenience of travel information and service provided by Travel agents” item (mean = 2.55, S.D .899). This figure indicates that foreign tourists are not satisfied with travel guide and travel agent. With regard to eco tour operator only 5 respondents

were respond for this question accordingly the scored mean for this intermediary is 3.80 with S.D .200 and it shows they are satisfied with this intermediary. From the foreign tourists respondents all were responded to this question and the corresponding mean scored is 3.05 with S.D =.967. The figure indicates that foreign tourists were not satisfied toward the convenience and service of eco tour operators when they use tourism product in this destination. If we look at the entire analysis about tourists satisfaction toward the convenience and service of intermediaries used when they visit the park except for eco tour operators foreign tourists are not satisfied in contrast domestic tourists are satisfied with those intermediaries. Therefore we can conclude that foreign tourists find it difficult to search for information.

4.4.4 Tourists' Satisfaction toward Tourism Planning Process in BMNP

Process is another marketing mixes in tourism and service market the respondents were asked to rate how this tourism destination tourism process. The following table shows the tourists satisfaction with tourism planning process.

Table 4.4.4 Tourists' satisfaction to ward planning process

| | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists(n=68) | tourists satisfaction to ward How BMNP is well-planned in trip planning and anticipation | 68 | 4.12 | .856 | -.673 | .291 |
| | Trip planning packages: maps, attractions en route and on site, information regarding lodging, food, quality | 65 | 3.55 | .811 | -.089 | .297 |
| Foreign tourists (n=80) | tourists satisfaction to ward How BMNP is well-planned in giving service to tourists for their convenience | 80 | 2.45 | .855 | .595 | .269 |
| | Tourists' satisfaction to ward Trip planning packages. | 80 | 2.88 | .736 | .006 | .269 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

Domestic tourists gives satisfied rating for tourism process both for “How BMNP is well-planned in trip planning and anticipation” (mean= 4.12 with S.D = .856) item and “Trip planning packages” item (mean = 3.55 S.D= .811). Foreign tourists, on the contrary, are displeased with the tourism process issue in BMNP. Consequently they give low rate for the “How BMNP is well-planned in trip planning and anticipation” item (mean = 2.45 with S.D

=.855) and “Trip planning packages” (mean = 2.88 with S.D =.736). Thus the finding indicates that the way in which a particular tourism (tour) process is carried out is not satisfy foreign tourists. BMNP tourism is not well-planned in trip planning and anticipation as well as trip packaging this is particularly true for foreign tourists who have low average rate for tourism process.

4.4.5 Tourists’ Satisfaction toward Peoples Providing Service

Table 4.4.5 Tourists’ satisfaction toward peoples providing service in BMNP

| | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists (68) | people in the accommodation | 62 | 3.44 | .898 | .270 | .304 |
| | tourism officials | 68 | 4.06 | .896 | -.759 | .291 |
| | People giving service in restaurant /food shops. | 68 | 3.88 | .368 | -3.307 | .291 |
| | people giving service on transportation | 68 | 3.79 | .407 | -1.488 | .291 |
| Foreign tourists(80) | people in the accommodation | 80 | 1.66 | .745 | 1.208 | .269 |
| | tourism officials | 80 | 2.85 | .781 | .271 | .269 |
| | people giving service on transportation | 80 | 2.85 | 1.233 | .086 | .269 |
| | People giving service in restaurant /food shops. | 79 | 2.56 | 1.248 | .496 | .271 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

People are one of the elements of service marketing mix. This study focused on people in the accommodation, tourism officials, people giving service in restaurant /food shops and people giving service on transportation.

With regard to the service provided by people in the accommodation domestic tourists are satisfied with this service (mean=3.44 with S.D= .898). Likewise domestic tourists also gives satisfactory rate for “service from tourism officials” (mean= 4.06 with S.D = .896), “people giving service on transportation” (mean=3.88 with S.D = .368) and “people giving service in restaurant /food shops” (mean= 3.79 with S.D = .407). They believe that they get good service from people in the BMNP is satisfactory. However foreign tourists, on the contrary, give a low rating for the service from people in BMNP and they are displeased with the issue. Accordingly the mean scored and corresponding are 1.66 and .745 for the services given by people in the accommodation, 2.85 and .781 for the service of tourism officials, 2.85 and 1.233 and 2.56 and 1.248 for the service provided from people in transportation and restaurant respectively. From this figure one can understand that the foreign and domestic tourists are varies on the satisfaction to ward people elements in the park. This marketing mixes element satisfies domestic tourists but foreign tourists are displeased with the issue.

4.4.6 Tourists’ Satisfaction toward Physical Evidence

As the tourism product is highly intangible, the environment in which the service is delivered, transport facilities available, the surrounding markets, and everything else in the tourism office may be related to the experience. Table 4.5.6 indicates responses of tourists toward different physical evidence in this tourism destination.

Table 4.4.6 Tourists' satisfaction toward physical evidence

| | Description | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Domestic tourists (68) | The accommodation provided for tourists. | 65 | 3.52 | 1.091 | -.805 | .297 |
| | Availability of transportation infrastructure | 68 | 3.75 | .936 | -.260 | .291 |
| | Atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops | 63 | 3.57 | .946 | -.094 | .302 |
| | Ancient remains, temples, museums, and palaces | 58 | 4.14 | 1.115 | -1.067 | .314 |
| Foreign tourists (80) | The accommodation provided for tourists. | 80 | 1.65 | .748 | 1.236 | .269 |
| | infrastructure | 80 | 3.54 | 1.078 | -.223 | .269 |
| | Atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops | 80 | 2.28 | .711 | -.239 | .269 |
| | Ancient remains, temples, museums, and palaces | 79 | 3.90 | 1.172 | -.926 | .271 |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

As it can be seen from table 4.5.6 above domestic tourists are satisfied with the physical evidence in the park and the corresponding averages scored for physical evidence were; “the accommodation provided for tourists” (mean = 3.52 with S.D = 1.091), “Availability of infrastructure” (mean = 3.75 with S.D = .936), and “atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops” (mean = 3.57 with S.D = .946). As it can be seen from the figure the average rate scored for those physical evidence are fall within the satisfied range which in turn implies the satisfaction of domestic tourists with the physical evidence. However foreign tourists oppose the idea of domestic tourists by giving a very low rating for physical evidence except for “availability of infrastructure”. Thus foreign tourists are very dissatisfied for the tourism accommodation provided and the atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops. The respective average rate scored were; for “accommodation provided for tourists” (mean =1.65 with S.D = .748) and “Atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops” (mean = 2.28 with S.D = .711). On the other hand foreign tourists are satisfied with the availability of infrastructure (mean 3.54 With S.D =1.078).

From the above analysis about tourists’ satisfaction toward marketing mixes elements of the park except for product and pricing foreign tourists are displeased. This implies that despite the attractiveness of the tourism product in the tourism destination which is considered as core product other marketing mixes designed for this tourism destination is poorly designed to attract more tourist particularly foreign tourists as it affect positive word of mouth. This finding is similar with (yibabal, 2010) in which he found that Lack of improvement in service dissatisfied tourists visit Ethiopia and they are most likely to certify the negative images to their friends or countrymen have thereby perpetuating the poor image Ethiopia has in the minds of world.

4.5 Strength and weakness of Bale Mountain National Park

The strength and weakness of BMNP have been identified in GMP but it is also important to identify what is considered by the visitors as strength and weakness when they visit particular tourism destination. The next table shows the strength and weakness of this destination by visitors when they visit the place.

Table 4.5 **Strength and weakness of Bale Mountain National Park**

| Description | Domestic tourists | | | Foreign tourists | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------|---------|------------------|---------|
| | Response | Freq. | Percent | Freq | Percent |
| Please identify any strength you have observed in BMNP as a tourism destination | Variety of Tourism attractions | 68 | 100 | 75 | 93.75 |
| | Friendliness of People | 11 | 16.2 | 46 | 57.5 |
| | Culture | 26 | 38.2 | 32 | 40 |
| | Value for Money | 14 | 20.6 | - | - |
| | Safety & Security | 39 | 54.7 | 57 | 71.25 |
| | Air Access | 10 | 14.7 | 51 | 63.75 |
| Please specify any weakness you observed in BMNP as a tourism destination. | Standard of accommodation | 56 | 82.35 | 80 | 100 |
| | Lack of Consumer Awareness | 28 | 41.17 | 56 | 70 |
| | Quality of Service | 49 | 72.05 | 68 | 85 |
| | | | | | |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

All domestic tourists mentioned the Variety of Tourism attractions as the single most important strength of BMNP as a tourism destination, followed by Safety & Security in the area, which was mentioned by majority 39(54.7%) of domestic tourists as key strength of BMNP. Whereas 26(38.2%), 14(20.6%) and 11(16.2%) of them mentioned culture, value for money and Friendliness of People as the strength of BMNP as a tourism destination respectively. Likewise from the foreign tourists side majority 75(93.75%) of the respondents argued that Variety of Tourism attractions is the key strength for BMNP as a tourism destination followed by Safety &

Security of its area, which was mentioned by the majority 57(71.25) of respondents. And 46(57.5%) and 32(40%) of the foreign tourists respondents reflect friendliness and culture of its people respectively as strength of BMNP as a tourism destination and none of foreign tourists reflect value for money as strength for BMNP as tourism Destination. Moreover none of the respondents (domestic and foreign tourists) mentioned Festival and Events as strength of BMNP.

From this we can say that Variety of Tourism attractions is the number one strength with 93% of the respondents indicating as such in both domestic and foreign tourists. Safety & Security is second with 71.25% and 54.7% of foreign and domestic tourists indicate such. With regard to other strength the domestic and foreign tourists are different in their response particularly in Friendliness of People in BMNP more than half of foreign respondents consider as strength however only few respondents from domestic consider it as strength of BMNP as a tourism destination. Therefore it's evident to say Variety of Tourism attractions and Safety & Security are the key strength for BMNP as a tourism destination. Besides the tourism officers of the park also revealed that one of the key strength of BMNP which is considered as competitive advantage of the park over other competing park in the country and even in the east Africa were range of tourism product and uniqueness of the tourism product. There are plenty of endemic wildlife and birds in BMNP this gives the park competitive advantage over other competing park in the country as well as in the east Africa. The tourism officers also state that safety and security is strength and opportunities for BMNP as a tourism destination. This finding is consistent with the finding of (Yabibal, 2010) in which he found Ethiopia has immense tourism potential: natural, cultural and historical.

With regard to the weakness of BMNP as tourism destination standard of accommodation was regarded as the major weakness as all of the contacted foreign tourists and majority 56(82.35%) of domestic tourists indicated as such. Likewise 49(72.05%) and 68(85%) of domestic and foreign tourists respondents respectively revealed that quality of service were another major weakness of BMNP as a tourism destination. Lack of Consumer Awareness is also considered by significant number of respondents (41.17% and 70% Of domestic and foreign tourists respectively) as a weakness of BMNP as a tourism destination. With regard to Airline access it considered by 51(63.75%) of foreign tourists as weakness while only 10(14.7%) of domestic

tourists consider it as weakness of BMNP. Furthermore with this regard the tourism officers and other employees of the park believe that standard of accommodation and quality of service were the primary weakness of BMNP as a tourism destination. With regard to tourism accommodation it was believed that there was no standard accommodation with in the park as well as in the city around the park but Bekele Molla and wabe Shebelle hotel is the only accommodation which is found in Robe and Goba town 35km far from Dinsho Park and 15km from senate plateau. Moreover none of the respondents consider range of product as weakness. A look at the above figure we can conclude that standard of accommodation and quality of service are primary weakness of BMNP as a tourism destination followed by Lack of Consumer Awareness and air access.

The key strength of BMNP is remains on its diversity of tourism attraction followed by safety and security in the area. As a result ranges of tourism product in the area attract the customers from different parts of the worlds. With regard to the weakness standard of accommodation, lack of customers' awareness and quality of service are the weakness of the park. Actually tourism attraction (tourism product) is core tourism product the reason why the customers come to particular tourism destination. It is obvious that to attract more customer core product should be supported by supportive product and services. Thus it's evident to say that BMNP is failing to develop supporting process that is going to provide realization of its strengths.

4.6 The Park's Marketing Strategies to Realize Long-term Plan

As stated in GMP, BMNP has long term (10 years) marketing plan that creates a strong image for Ethiopia and the Bale Mountains National Park on the global tourism market. Is the current marketing strategies are effective to realize this plan? The following table shows how marketing strategies of this park is effective to realize long term plan.

Table 4.6 response of the employees on marketing strategies to realize long term plan

| Do you know the park's 10 years plan with respect to tourism | | How would you rate the Park's overall marketing strategies to realize this plan? | | | Total |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| | | Effective | Indifferent | Least effective | |
| Yes | Count | 3 | 12 | 9 | 24 |
| | % do you know park's long term plan? | 12.5% | 50.0% | 37.5% | 100.0% |
| Total | Count | 3 | 12 | 9 | 24 |
| | % do you know park's long term plan? | 12.5% | 50.0% | 37.5% | 100.0% |
| Mean | 2.37 | | | | |
| S.D | 1.135 | | | | |

Source: Own survey data (2014)

In order to know how marketing strategies were effective to achieve long term plan the respondents were asked if they know long term plan and how they rate marketing strategies to realize it. All respondents (100%) were replied that they know the park long term plan and also half 12(50%) of the respondents reveal that the marketing strategy is indifferent to achieve marketing plan. 9(37.5%) of the respondent felt that marketing strategy is ineffective and 3(12.5%) of the respondent believe that the marketing strategy is Least effective to achieve marketing plan. Beside this the interview was also conducted with tourism officers and asked how he would rate over all parks' marketing strategies and he state that the overall marketing strategies were ineffective to realize long term plan. Mainly because of poor marketing supporting activities by the park members and government marketing strategies is less effective

to create and build image of Ethiopia in general and BMNP in particular. From this figure one can understand that the overall marketing strategies of the park were ineffective to realize the parks' long term plan. Therefore we can conclude that marketing strategies of this tourism destination is not effective to realize long term marketing plan of the destination due to less focus given for marketing activities both by government and park members.

4.7 Future action for Marketing Tourism in Bale Mountain National Park

To encourage and attract more domestic and foreign tourists to this tourism destination the employees strongly recommend promotional activities on international media like BBC and other international media and improvements of accommodation standard in each tourism site and in the main get of the park (park head quarter). The following table indicates the action to encourage tourism in the tourism destination.

Table 4.7 Future strategies for tourism marketing in Bale Mountain National Park

| What activities should be done to each market (foreign and domestic tourist) to encourage domestic and international tourism in BMNP? | | |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Categories | Freq | %ge |
| Increase value for money on product offer | 6 | 25 |
| Encourage more travel to group domestic and foreign tourists through the use of special rates on low peak seasons | 6 | 25 |
| Matching product and service to consumers | 5 | 20 |
| Making use of special events to target domestic and foreign tourists to reduce seasonality | 7 | 29.16 |
| Total | 24 | 100.0 |

Source: Own survey data(2014)

In order to encourage domestic and international tourism in Bale Mountain National Park, respondents felt that there is need to use of special events to target domestic and foreign tourists to reduce seasonality 7(29.16%). The respondents also reflect that there is need to increase value for money for the domestic and foreign tourists on products offer 6 (25%). There is need to matching product and services to consumers' need i.e. longer stays, experience and activities, 5 (20%). And 6 (25%) of the respondents reflect that so as to encourage domestic and international tourism it needs to encourage more travel to group domestic and foreign tourists through the use of special rates on low peak seasons. Therefore from the above figure induce that in order to encourage tourism in this destination reduce seasonality, match product and service to customers and increase value for money on product offers are the issue to be addressed to encourage the tourism in this destination.

Interview Analysis

To gather more information about marketing strategies about Bale Mountain National Park interview questions were forwarded to the tourism officer of the park. Accordingly the interviewee's responses to the questions are depicted briefly as follows. However, some of interview responses are presented and analyzed in the questionnaire analysis part as a supportive response.

The park's strategy with regard to tourism is differentiation strategy with high value low volume strategy. The park follows this strategy because the park have abundances of the range of tourism product which is unique and only found in this park. Accordingly the long term objective of the park with regard to tourism is to be among the five tourism destination as result to be competitive in tourism industry to be named as top five tourism destination this strategy is preferred. This strategy is followed by this organization or destination by considering characteristics of the product i.e. variety and uniqueness of the product however basis of differentiation is not limited only to product itself rather the company's' capacity to market the product should considered. In contrary to the theory of differentiation the company or destination is concentrate only on the characteristics of product and lack the ability to market the product. More over low volume high value strategies in tourism destination is about setting high value for tourism product and attract low volume of tourists. In this tourism destination (BMNP) despite the park name as "Premium Park" the price for the tourism product is very low.

This is because the price for the tourism product and entry fee is set at the federal level and the park is not allowed to rise or reduce the price of the product and entry fee. With regard to price the tourism officer revealed that even tourists themselves complains why the price is too low. Therefore these indicate that the destination strategy and supportive activities to realize and implement the strategy is not in line with each other.

One of the major challenges to implement marketing strategies is many national parks in Ethiopia is usually they don't see themselves as tourist destinations and seldom have a marketing platform. Often they don't even cooperate with tourist boards. Likewise BMNP face a challenge of not considering itself as a tourism destination to implement marketing strategies and inadequate support from both Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MOCT) and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau (OCTB).

The boundary BMNP is not appropriately demarcated. Current international perceptions of Ethiopia also another challenge to implement the selected marketing strategy as Ethiopia is not much known for its national parks, which leading to a lower rank in Africa. Changing the current international perception about Ethiopia national park requires effective and efficient image building promotion strategy but this is difficult for BMNP as it requires budget and experts. Beside this less awareness of eco tour operators about Ethiopian National Parks tourism attraction is another challenge to implement marketing strategy.

Lack of manpower; the tourism officer complain that neither the ministry nor they themselves have the required skilled experts. The training institute of the ministry produces good quality graduates but they are so small in number that it is difficult for them to get as many of them as they need. Besides private graduates are criticize that in most cases they are less effective than traditional tour guide.

Financial problems; there is inadequate fund to implement marketing strategy the source of finance for the park are NGOs and private organization this is not enough to implement marketing strategy some marketing strategies like promotion is performed by private and NGOs.

The opportunities to implement the selected marketing strategies are mainly tourism potential of the destination. The park as a tourism destination has abundance of tourism product many of tourism products in the park is endemic for the country and some of these tourism products

found only in this park. There is also an improvements on the infrastructure specially road have been improved. Security in the tourism destination and Friendliness of People are also considered as opportunity to implement marketing strategy designed.

The target market that considered by this destination are eco tourists from different part of the world. Most of the visitors come from developed countries such as UK, German, French, Spain, Italy, check and Israel. The major competitors for this park are Simien Mountains National Park with in Ethiopia and Kenya, Tanzania, south Dyersburg and Goessa which were found out of Ethiopia the major competitors of the park.

The park has many competitive advantages over these competitors these were includes;

- ✓ Unique tourism product:-there is diversity of birds and wildlife many of those are endemic to the country and some of them are found only in this park.
- ✓ Trekking:- BMNP is the only mountain park with the capacity to 4000 car at a time
- ✓ Diversity of tourism product: - Fauna, Flora, Landscape , water body and cultural site

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn based on the findings obtained in the analysis and discussion part. The recommendation guided by the research finding is also part of this chapter. Finally, it winds up by showing limitation of the study and suggesting for further research.

5.1. CONCLUSION

Marketing strategy is one means of achieving long term and short term objective of tourism organization. This paper assesses marketing strategies to promote tourism in Bale Mountain National Park which is found in Eastern part of Ethiopia. To this end, the findings obtained from the analysis of 24 purposely selected staff, 148 tourists (68 domestic and 80 foreign tourists), interview with tourism officer and reviewed documents was used in order to assess marketing strategies. The study covered strategic marketing (STP), marketing mixes, tourist's satisfaction toward marketing mixes and prospects of implementing marketing strategy.

Regarding to demography of the consumers (tourists) majority of domestic and foreign tourists visiting BMNP are males. Most of tourism activities undertaken in BMNP are eco-tourism activities and the target market of the destination is eco tourists. This shows that male tourists dominate eco-tourism activities in BMNP. Concerning to age of the visitors majority of them are fall within the range 15-45. Relative to foreign tourist domestic tourists are young visitors. As a result majority (64.7%) of domestic tourists are single whereas majorities (61.2%) of foreign tourists are married.

With regard to educational level this study found that domestic and foreign tourists have high educational level on one hand and the employees of the park were less educated even if they have high experience in the area. Thus high quality service diversified tourism product with different package and experienced and highly educated human resource is required.

Most of domestic and foreign tourists visit the park because of its tourism attraction potentials as it has diversified range of tourism product. As mentioned earlier, it is not enough that the country possesses a potential for becoming a covetable tourist destination. To turn that possibility into reality, marketing is a pre-condition. The park's strategy with respect to tourism is differentiation strategy with high value low volume strategy to take the advantage of diversified tourism attraction and achieve its long term objective. But the selected strategy is not

a promising due to lack of the organization marketing ability like promotion and distribution. More over the attention given for the park not as a tourism destination, international current perception about Ethiopian parks tourism potential and lack of experienced manpower challenge the implementation of marketing strategies. As a result BMNP as a tourism destination is unable to attract more tourists to compete with other tourism destination.

Leisure is the only key market segment for Bale Mountain National Park. There are five segmenting variables: Geographic, Demographic, Geo-demographic, Psychographic and Behavioral. However geographic and demography are the only base of market segments used in Bale mountain National Park. Each group of market in the segments is varying in their need and interest and each group need different mixes that best suit their interest. However in case of this destination promotion, distribution and pricing marketing mixes are the only separately applied mixes for geographic base of segments (domestic and foreign). And pricing strategy is the only marketing mixes which applied for each group of customers in demographic segments. The target market for the park were recently identified and targeted to eco tourists from abroad and within the country. Most of foreign visitors were from developed countries such as from UK, German, French, Spain, Italy, check and Israel. Likewise most domestic tourists who are visiting this park were higher educational institutions employees and students. With regard to positioning strategy the park identifies its possible competitive advantage over its competitors and selects the right competitive advantages that enable it to position it as a tourism destination in tourism industries. Consequently the park renamed as Premium Park with slogan of “one park many worlds”. Majority of domestic and foreign tourists come to visit the park mainly because of tourism attraction available in the park. However the park fails to communicate these advantages to the target market consistently and cohesively in all media to its target market.

Different tourist (foreign and domestic tourists) have different feeling to different tourism attraction available in this tourism destination which need different marketing practice to position each tourism attraction in each market segments(foreign and domestic tourists) however only limited marketing mixes strategies were separately applied for each group in the market segments.

Not all marketing mixes are equally exploited in Bale Mountain National Park. The park has clear cut classical marketing mixes strategies (product, promotion, place and price). Other than

classical marketing mixes no clear-cut strategies were planned for tourism mixes elements (people, Process, Programming, Partnership and Packaging) which have significant impact on marketing for tourism services. With regard to promotional tools advertising and sales promotions are leading promotional tools used in Bale Mountain National Park. With regard to publicity it is one of the most commonly used marketing tool because it is cheap and does not require expertise and it is recommended by different scholars however this destination is not utilize this promotional tools to promote its tourism attraction. With regard to advertising media television, radio, printed materials (broachers) and internet are important advertising media used by the park to promote tourism destination and attraction available in the area.

Different promotional strategies and promotional tools are required for different market segments (domestic and foreign tourists). Accordingly for this destination (BMNP) television/radio is the most popular source of information for domestic tourists and internet is the main source of information for foreign tourists who come to visit this park. With regard to intermediaries used in availing and accessing tourism product they are equally important for tourism destination to get its product to reach its target markets (domestic and foreign tourists) and are not equally important for each market (domestic and foreign tourists) to get the tourism product in a particular tourism destination.

With regard to tourists satisfaction to ward marketing mixes the result of the finding shows that the level of their satisfaction is different based on their origin (domestic and foreign) and type of marketing mixes. Product offer for tourists by the park satisfy the visitors even if the degree of satisfaction for each segment (domestic and foreign) is different. While domestic tourists are satisfied foreign tourists are not satisfied with the tourism promotion activities and convenience of information given on BMNP. Foreign tourists find it difficult to search for travel information and travel guide on BMNP. Accordingly relative to domestic tourists' foreign tourists are not satisfied with intermediaries used in availing and accessing the tourism products in BMNP. Bale Mountain National Park tourism is not well-planned in trip planning and anticipation as well as trip packaging. This is particularly true for foreign tourists who are displeased with the tourism process of the park. Foreign and domestic tourists are varies on the satisfaction to ward people elements in the park. This marketing mixes element satisfies domestic tourists but foreign tourists are displeased with the issue.

Bale mountain national parks' strength as a tourism destination is its tourism potential (diversified tourism attraction) and safety and security. But its effective practice and implementation of marketing strategies to take the advantage of its strength and opportunity is not promising due to lack standard of accommodation, lack of customers' awareness and quality of service. Mainly because of poor marketing supporting activities by the park members and government marketing strategies is less effective to create and build image of Ethiopia in general and BMNP in particular.

5.2. RECOMMENDATION

Even though the role of marketing strategy is recognized for tourism destination and marketing strategy is designed and implementing by this tourism destination (BMNP), it has some problems. Therefore, the study recommends the following points

- ✓ The ministry should be better organized and run tourism sectors by well qualified experts that can strengthen its capacity to regulate the smooth functioning of the whole system and provide reliable and up to date information to tourists.
- ✓ Training and other updated courses should be conducted at regular intervals to update the personnel with efficiency and satisfy the customers as they have high educational background.
- ✓ The market segments should diversify by considering education for higher education institution students and employees and religion for domestic tourists by extending the boundary of the park to the place called DIRE SHEIK Hussein so as to reduce seasonality problems.
- ✓ More bases of segments like behavioral and psychological base should consider in order attracting more tourists to the tourism destination.
- ✓ Effective tourism marketing mixes (packaging, partnership, people and programming) frame work should have to design to deliver and manage sustainable tourism potentials of the destination.
- ✓ The exceptional tourism potential should have to promote to the customers in order to build the image of Ethiopia in general and BMNP in a particular as tourism destination with attractive and exceptional tourism potentials.
- ✓ The government should take necessary measures to implement marketing strategies to encourage the promotion of positive image of tourism in the country.

- ✓ Image of Ethiopia should be raised in the eyes of foreign nationals and to attract tourists - innovative ways of marketing strategy accompanied with efficient and effective measures should be taken. Ethiopian Embassies in abroad, foreign embassies present in Ethiopia, official tours authorities abroad (if any) should work in this respect.
- ✓ In the tourism base, marketing mix strategy should be designed for each group of market in each segment.
- ✓ Tourism supporting service and tourism marketing mixes should be improved to satisfy tourists
- ✓ Although a specific project appraisal is needed to show the profitability of the sector, it is evident that more hotels and lodges are critically needed. The government should invest heavily in these infrastructures or create good climate for foreign investors since in a case they are not in a good condition, affect the tourists' satisfaction and the result is to hinder the promotion of national park in a country as a tourism destination, in the country like what is going on currently.
- ✓ The whole Parks' boundaries should be fenced to avoid animals which can damage tourism attraction.

5.3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

As it is generally know every research study has its own limitations; this research also has a few limitations. One of the short comings of this study is regarding the study design. Since the study design was cross-sectional design, it is limited to provide true inferences from sample tourists that would have been possible if longitudinal design was used. On the other hand, the sampling technique was convenience sampling (drawback of convenience sampling) In its scope because of time and resource constraints the study is limited to a single national park, hence, it does not truly indicate about marketing strategies of other national park elsewhere in the country.

Lastly, few empirical researches have been done in the same area of study and hence intensive review of past studies was limited. For an intensive and comprehensive understanding of the area of study, the researcher suggests that further research comparative research on assessment of the marketing strategies for promoting the tourism. Also, an assessment of marketing strategies for promoting e-tourism in Ethiopia would be a valuable addition to this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1; Questionnaire to be filled by tourists visiting Bale Mountain National Park

This questionnaire is designed by MBA student Elias Mohammed for the purpose of collecting data for conducting study on the title Assessment of Marketing Strategies in Tourism: a Case Study in Bale Mountain National Park-Bale Zone for partial fulfillment of the requirements of Masters of Business Administration. You are politely requested to provide the required and correct data as per the questionnaire because it has a great role for the attainment of the objective of the study. The information that you provide is only for academic purpose and therefore all information provided shall be treated with maximum caution and confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation in advance!!!

N.B:

Writing your name is not necessary

Please carefully read each of the following questions and put the tick mark (√) in the appropriate box representing your choice.

Part –I:Demographic profile

1. Sex: 1. Male 2. Female

2. Age : _____(years)

3. Marital status:

1. Single

2. Married

3. Divorced

4. Widowed

4. Nationality1. Ethiopia ,2. Non Ethiopia

5. Educational level:

- 1. 1-8
- 2. 9-10
- 3. 11-12
- 4. certificate
- 5. Diploma
- 6. Degree and above

Part-II: marketing strategies and tourist attraction of Bale Mountain National Park

Note: 1= Verydissatisfied 2= dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4 = satisfied 5=Very satisfied

To what extent are you satisfied with the following marketing mixes?

| No | Marketing mixes | Possible responses | | | | |
|----------|---|--------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | Product | | | | | |
| | Mountain Nyaala | | | | | |
| | Ethiopian wolf | | | | | |
| | Bale monkey | | | | | |
| | Menilick bushbuck | | | | | |
| | Gaint molerata | | | | | |
| | Birding | | | | | |
| | Trekking | | | | | |
| 2 | 2. Promotion | | | | | |
| | kinds of activities to promote tourism in BMNP | | | | | |
| | Convenience of tourism information in BMNP | | | | | |
| 3 | Price | | | | | |
| | Expense for tourism in BMNP. | | | | | |
| | Products and services price in BMNP. | | | | | |
| 4 | Place the way various tourism products offered by BMNP is interesting and fast | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Convenience and service of Tour guides in BMNP | | | | | |
| | the way various tourism products offered Eco tour operators in BMNP | | | | | |
| | Convenience and service of Travel guides in BMNP | | | | | |
| | Convenience of travel information provided by Travel agents | | | | | |
| 5 | Process of Service | | | | | |
| | How BMNP is well-planned in giving service to tourists for their convenience | | | | | |
| | Travel to the site/area | | | | | |
| | Trip planning packages. | | | | | |
| 6 | People | | | | | |
| | Service from people in the accommodation. | | | | | |
| | Service from the tour guide or tourism officials. | | | | | |
| | Service from people giving service on transportation. | | | | | |
| | Service from people giving service in restaurant /food shops. | | | | | |
| 7 | Physical Evidence | | | | | |
| | The accommodation provided for tourists. | | | | | |
| | Atmosphere of Restaurants/food shops | | | | | |
| | Ancient remains, temples, museums, and palaces. | | | | | |

2. How would you rate the importance of the following intermediaries used in the availability and accessibility of tourism products to the market. (Put a tick mark (✓) in the appropriate box provided).

Note: 1= Very unimportant 2= Neutral 3 Important = 4= important 5= Very important

| No | Intermediaries | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Tour guides | | | | | |
| 2 | Eco tour operators | | | | | |
| 3 | Travel guides | | | | | |
| 4 | Travel agents | | | | | |

3. What are the key strengths you observe in the BMNP as a tourism destination? (Additional answer is possible)

1. Natural Tourism attractions
2. Friendliness of People
3. Culture
4. Tourism Accommodation
5. Value for Money
6. Festivals and Events
7. Safety & Security
8. Other (please specify) if any _____

4. Please identify any weaknesses you may have observed in the BMNP as a tourism destination? (Additional answer is possible)

1. Air Access
2. Standard of accommodation

3. Range of Products
4. Lack of Consumer Awareness
5. Infrastructure
6. Quality of Service
7. Other (if any) please specify

5. What motivate you to visit Bale Mountain National Park?

1. Previous visits
2. Recommendation of a friend /relative
3. Information on the Internet
4. A brochure presenting
5. Family history
6. Visiting a friend / relative
7. Recommendation of a travel agent
8. An article in a newspaper / magazine
9. Article on a television / radio
10. Decision after visiting Trade fair
11. Other please specify (if any) _____

6. Which part of the park is more attractive and you recommend for your friend to visit?

1. Gaysay Grasslands
2. Park Headquarters
3. Sanetti Plateau & Upper Web Valley

4. Moorlands and Forest

5. Harena Forest

7. How do you rate the slogan of Bale Mountain National Park “One Park, Many Worlds”?

1. Excellent

2. Good

3. Satisfactory

4. Weak

5. Very weak

8. Why you choose Bale Mountain National Park over other tourist destination in Ethiopia?

1. Attractions of the area

2. Accessibility

3. Quick access to travel information

4. Security / Safety

5. Price

Thank you for your time. I again want to assure that this questionnaire would be treated with confidentiality

Appendix 2; Questionnaires to be filled by employees of Bale Mountain National Park

This questionnaire is designed by Masters of Business Administration (MBA) student Elias Mohammed for the purpose of collecting data for conducting study on the title **Assessment of marketing strategies in tourism: A case study in bale mountain national park-Bale Zone** for partial fulfillment of the requirements of Masters of Business Administration. You are politely requested to provide the required and correct data as per the questionnaire because it has a great role for the attainment of the objective of the study. The information you will provide is only for academic purpose and therefore all information provided will be treated with maximum caution and confidentiality.

N.B:

Writing your name is not necessary

Put this tick mark “√” for your choice in the box provided

Thank you for your cooperation in advance!!!

Part I. Demographic Profile

Gender

1. Male

Female

1. Age _____ (in years)

3. Educational level

1. 9-10

2. 11-12

3. Certificate

4. Diplomas

5. Degree

6. MA/MSC/MBA and above

7. Other (if any) _____

4. Position

1. Senior Manager

2. Manager

3. Staff

5. How long have you been an employee of Bale Mountain National Park (BMNP)?
_____ (in years)

Part II. Segmentation targeting and positioning strategies to position tourism attractions for Sustainable Tourism Marketing

1. Have the park identified its target market for its different market segment?

1. Yes

2. No

3. I don't know

2. How many different key segments (leisure, business, religious etc) does your organization market? (Tick all that apply)

1. Leisure

2. Business

3. Religious

4. Educational

5. Other (if any) please specify _____

3. What are the bases used by the park in segmenting the market? (Mark the appropriate answer, more answers possible)

- 1. Geographic location
- 2. Psychological or life cycle
- 3. Economic situation
- 4. Demographic
- 5. Other (if any) please specify _____

4. Does the park have separate marketing mixes strategies for each market segment?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. I don't know

5. If the park have separate marketing mixes strategies for which base of segments does the park applied separate marketing mixes strategies.

- 1. Geographic location
- 2. Psychological or life cycle
- 3. Behavioral
- 4. Demographic
- 5. Other (if any) please specify

6. For your answer in Q5 which marketing mixes strategies is separately applied for each group in the segments. (Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box provided).

| Base of segments | Marketing mixes strategies | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| | Product | Price | Place | Promotion |
| Demographic | | | | |
| Geographic | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--|--|--|--|
| Behavioral | | | | |
| Psychographic | | | | |

7. What activities should be done to each market (foreign and domestic tourist) to encourage domestic and international tourism in BMNP?

1. Increase value for money on product offer
2. Matching product and service to consumers
3. Provide group travel, affordable and travel voucher options
4. Encourage more travel to group domestic and foreign tourists through the use of special rates on low peak seasons
5. Promoting interprovincial travel by encouraging touring and publicizing hidden secretes in different part of the park and experience
6. Making use of special events to target domestic and foreign tourists to reduce seasonality and provide customize services

8. What is the park's slogan? _____

9. Does the park identify the unique feature or tourism attraction of BMNP so as to positioning it in the market place?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

10. does the park's unique feature communicated consistently and cohesively in all media (Internet Radio, Newspaper, Magazines, and Television etc.) to the customers?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

11. What are the primary tourism activities tourists participate in BMNP? (? (Mark the appropriate answer, more than one is answers possible)

1. Sightseeing 有
2. Visit endemic wildlife 有
3. Birding 有
4. Curio/handcraft collection 有
5. Trekking 有

6. Fishing 有

Part III. Marketing mixes strategies of Bale Mountain National park

1. Here is a list of Contemporary Marketing Mix strategies to position tourism attractions for Sustainable Tourism Marketing, applied by many tourism sectors. Among those which tourism marketing mix strategies are applied by BMNP to promote its' tourism attractions? (Tick all that apply)

1. Product 有
2. Place
3. Promotion
4. Pricing
5. Planning
6. Packaging
7. Programming
8. Positioning
9. People
10. Partnership

2. Does the park have a website?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

3. How often is this website updated?

1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Every six months or more
5. When necessary

4. Does the park offer printed marketing material (brochures, pamphlets, visitor guides)

1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know

5. What are the promotional strategies adopted by the park? (Tick all that apply)

1. Advertisement

2. Sales promotion

3. Public relation

4. Personal selling

5. If any other medium, please specify _____

6. If the park adopts advertisement as promotional strategy, please specify the media used for it. (Tick all that apply)

1. Television

2. Radio

3. Newspaper

4. Broachers

5. Direct Mail

6. Internet

7. Other (if any) please specify _____

7. On the rate 1 to 5, where 1 represents "very unimportant" 2 "unimportant" 3 "neutral" 4 "important" and 5 very important, how would you rate the importance of the above promotional tools which are by BMNP to promote tourism attraction available in the area? (Please put a number of your choice for each provided box).

1. Television

2. Radio

3. Newspaper

4. Broachers

5. Direct Mail

6. Internet

7. Other (if any) please specify and rate it

8. Does the park evaluate the advertising and promotion plans?

1. Never

2. Sometimes

3. Almost Always

9. Do you know the park's 10 years plan with respect to tourism?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know

10. How would you rate the Park's overall marketing strategies to achieve its long term plan?

1. Most effective

2. Effective

3. Indifferent/neutral

4. Ineffective

5. Least effective

11. Do you think all employees are aware of the strategies of the marketing plan?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know

12. Does the park work with partnerships that share the same business objectives in order to meet the overall demands of tourism customers?

1. Yes

2. No

3. I don't know

13. What actions would you like to see the BMNP take to strengthen its position in the market?
