

# Advertising Dynamics and Destination Evolution in Tourism Promotion for Africa

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## Abstract

This study's objective is to explore advertising dynamics and destination evolution in tourism promotion for Africa. A literature review approach using integrative literature method and content analysis were deployed. The results have indicated that as destinations evolve across different countries in Africa, the advertising dynamics exhibit either path dependency or path creation while other destinations display double trajectories of both path dependency and path creation in tourism promotion. The implication is for tourism stakeholders particularly destination marketing organisations to consider the advertising dynamics as their destinations evolve in the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) era so that repeat visitors fall back in love with tourism in Africa as well as attract first time visitors. The novelty of this paper is the contribution to knowledge in the scope of tourism in Africa by exploring advertising dynamics and destination evolution in the context of Africa tourism promotion and specifically explores forms of advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa's tourism promotion guided by the Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) theory.

**Keywords:** Advertising dynamics; destination evolution; tourism promotion; Africa

## Introduction

Tourism in Africa is a pathway not only to industrialisation and quality of life but also powering Africa (African Development Bank, 2018). The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has forced destinations to evolve in terms of re-building tourism in new ways (Asian Development Bank, 2020; Gossling et al., 2022; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020; Sharma et al., 2021). Although new ways under the umbrella of the 'new normal' like the increased use of Virtual Reality (VR) and Vlogging are forging ahead (Abad & Bordon, 2021; Jensen, 2020; Jude & Cike, 2020), traditional ways of advertising tourism products are still relevant, for example, television advertising through TV programmes. However, Zhou (2022) opined that tourism studies on emerging tourist destinations in the context of Africa still remains unknown.

With existing COVID-19 variants globally, African countries have to re-think their advertising dynamics as destinations re-open for tourism. In tourism promotion, advertising allows information on products and services to reach tourists in different geographical locations. Africa is considered as an emerging tourist destination that can offer tourists with tourism experiences that are authentic (Zhou, 2022). As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, some destinations have changed and rather evolved from over-tourism to non-tourism as coined by Gossling et al. (2020). Equally, the study by Wided and Hamid (2022) was interested on what changed in the tourism industry because of the pandemic and found that the mediator effects were connected to resilience network, organisational and individual factors.

Conversely, the sharp drop of tourist arrivals due to the COVID-19 pandemic and slow growth of tourism in the post COVID-19 pandemic, motivates this study's main objective in

exploring the concepts of advertising dynamics and destination evolution in the Africa's tourism promotion perspective. The specific objective is exploring forms of advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa's tourism promotion guided by the Evolutionary Economic Geography (EEG) theory. To address this specific objective, the research question is what are the forms of advertising dynamics as destinations evolve from the context of the Africa's tourism promotion perspective? The significance of this paper is that it can guide the tourism stakeholders particularly Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) to consider the advertising dynamics as their destinations evolve locally, regionally and internationally in the COVID-19 era for Africa tourism promotion.

## **Literature review**

### ***Africa's tourism promotion***

Tourism promotion in Africa is highly dependent on sources of information acquisition as highlighted by Eneyo et al. (2022). The research investigation by Eneyo et al. (2022) was done in Nigeria and showed that promotion of the Calabar Carnival as a tourist activity used communication tools ranging from billboards, flyers, magazines, newspapers, banners to posters but also adoption of promotion using personal selling, public relations, word of mouth, direct marketing, sponsorship and the internet. However, TV was not mentioned as a communication tool. In Tanzania, past studies including Mkwizu (2018) revealed that 92.2% of domestic tourists watched television and recommended for more TV programmes in promotion of tourism including establishing TV channels dedicated to tourism. At the end of 2018, the Tanzania Safari Channel was launched to cater for the promotion of tourism (Tanzania Safari Channel, 2018). In 2022, the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) complimented similar efforts to promote tourism in the post COVID-19 pandemic which have been made by the President of Tanzania who acted in the Tanzania Royal Tour film and participated in the launch during the months of April and May with the sole aim of promoting Tanzania to the world (TIC, 2022) by showing the abundant and unique endowment of the country to promote international tourism and domestic tourism.

Domestic tourism in Africa is seen as the alternative to strengthen tourism as an economic pillar and various forms of promotion were made during the COVID-19 pandemic to promote domestic tourism as well as international tourism including the use of virtual tours. Virtual tours for example, by Kenya and Egypt as evidenced in studies like El-Said and Aziz (2021) and Sallent (2020). Due to the virtual aspect which was accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, other African scholars have also published articles to shed light on virtual in tourism. For example, Mkwizu (2021) advocated for the need to re-conceptualise the term domestic tourism by re-defining domestic tourism in the 'new normal' as "residents visiting attractions physically or virtually within their own country." Therefore, Africa tourism promotion is done through various media and for purposes of this paper, Africa tourism promotion refers to the forms of advertising used for promoting tourism which include TV, social media, internet, mobile and virtual tour.

### ***Advertising dynamics***

Generally advertising has received various definitions and Moradkhani (2014) referred to advertising as the activity of producing advertisements for commercial products and services. Salehi and Farahbakhsh (2014) added that advertising should be used by the tourism industry as the prime tool for successful promotion. Likewise, Ketabchi (2004) stated that advertising in tourism involves the use of print, television and radio stations. Instead, Doraszelski and Markovich (2007) viewed advertising dynamics from the perspective of advertising towards consumers good will for the firm and awareness of the firm also known as awareness

advertising. Dynamics is change as a consequence of forces or powers inherent in things that change (van Geert, 2019) while advertising is impersonal communication of information about products, services or ideas through media (Bovee & Arens, 1992). This paper defines advertising dynamics as change of forms of advertising used in a destination due to shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ***Destination evolution***

According to Tripon and Cosma (2018), the term destination does not have a general definition but rather evolved due to competition, new technologies and demand. Further literature indicate that destination evolution is a term that has appeared in past tourism articles with various definitions. Examples of such published literature are Haywood (1986) and Ioannides (1992) referring to destination evolution as the impact of stakeholder's adaptability in response to external or internal influences. After review of literature, Mckercher and Wong (2021) concluded that destination evolution is considered as an ongoing process in tourist areas. Whilst this paper adopts the definition of destination evolution by Haywood (1986) and Ioannides (1992), there is the consideration that the COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted and reversed the many years of tourism development causing tourists around the world to face travel restrictions to destinations hence the drop-in tourist numbers leading to the need to re-vamp and re-open tourism worldwide including the continent of Africa.

### ***Theoretical frame***

In this paper, the specific objective is exploring forms of advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa's tourism promotion guided by the evolutionary economic geography theory. The evolutionary economic geography theory assumes that economic spaces are constructed and influenced by path and place-dependent processes over time (Boschma & Freken, 2006). Scholars such as Brouder et al. (2020) have used the evolutionary economic geography theory to understand tourism destination evolution with emphasis that the evolutionary economic geography theory is a powerful explanatory paradigm that can apply in tourism studies for fresh perspectives on change in tourism.

On the basis of fresh perspectives on change in tourism emphasised by Brouder et al. (2020), this paper considers that COVID-19 pandemic was unprecedented and caused change in the tourism sector worldwide including the African continent. Hence, the need for fresh viewpoints by connecting the concepts of advertising dynamics to destination evolution from the Africa tourism promotion perspective through the guiding lens of the evolutionary economic geography theory.

In tourism studies, scholars such as Sanz-Ibanez (2018) adopted the evolutionary economic geography theory and one of the key findings from the research was that the integration of evolutionary economic geography and the relation economic geography theory can be applied to address destination evolution processes from non-linear and non-deterministic. Subsequently, Sanz-Ibanez (2018) applied the concepts of economic paths like path dependence and path creation for purposes of analysing dynamics of regions. Further application of the evolutionary economic geography theory in this paper is to specifically explore forms of advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa tourism promotion.

### ***Advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa's tourism promotion***

On a global context, tourism studies like Pavlovich (2014) connected rhizomic approach to destination evolution and the highlighted findings showed that change occurred in an anti-hierarchically by spontaneous connectivity. Alternatively, Sanz-Ibanez (2018) stated that tourism destinations have dynamic systems and therefore, the management is necessary to

sustain competitiveness. In addition, Sanz-Ibanez (2018) was mostly concerned about changes in the evolution of tourism destinations by focusing on the dynamics of place rather than evolution of tourism activities. To build on the existing literature on destinations in the field of tourism, this study examined destination evolution by expanding the scope in exploring advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa’s tourism promotion since Africa as a continent was also disrupted by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Tourism in Africa has been affected by COVID-19 pandemic. For example, in Tanzania, the study by Henseler et al. (2022) investigated the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism sector. The findings were that COVID-19 impacted the economy negatively and positively, for instance, the income of households is below baseline compared to pre-COVID-19. Other studies on Africa tourism like Baipai et al. (2022) was conducted in Zimbabwe by focusing on agritourism and findings indicated that the critical success factors for agritourism sustainability included education of farmers, funding and marketing. Further literature on Africa tourism promotion is mentioned by Madondo (2018) in a comparative study of traditional advertising and online media for promoting tourism in Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa and found that traditional advertising media continues to be effective in promoting tourism even in the digital age.

Madondo (2018) added a qualitative approach as a methodological contribution with findings indicating that international tourists preferred online media whilst domestic tourists favoured traditional media and therefore, the study recommended for traditional media and online media to co-exist for a successful tourism promotion of Kwazulu-Natal. Likewise, in Tanzania, the launch of the Tanzania Royal Tour film to promote tourism with expected TV series to be aired in various TV channels (Tanzania Tourist Board, 2022) is another great example of tourism promotion after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 1 shows the forms of advertising dynamics in terms of forms of advertising pre-COVID-19 and during COVID-19 and post COVID-19.

Table 1: Forms of advertising

Source	Forms of Advertising dynamics (Pre COVID-19)	Forms of advertising dynamics (COVID-19)	Forms of advertising dynamics (Post COVID-19)
Sallent (2020)		Virtual advertising using Virtual tour safaris in Kenya	Virtual advertising using Virtual tour safaris in Kenya.
El-Said and Aziz (2021)		Virtual tours of heritage sites in Egypt	Virtual tours of heritage sites in Egypt
Statista (2022)	TV advertising Mobile advertising Internet advertising Radio advertising Newspaper advertising Out of home advertising Social media advertising	-TV advertising in (Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia) -Mobile advertising -Internet advertising -Radio advertising -Social media advertising -Out of home advertising -Strongest ad medium (TV & Video) for Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa while for Morocco (TV only)	-TV advertising in (Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia) -Mobile advertising -Internet advertising -Radio advertising -Social media advertising -Out of home advertising -Strongest ad medium (TV & Video) for Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa while for Morocco (TV only)
TIC (2022)			Tanzania Royal Tour film

Source: Compiled by Author

In summary, there are few studies on advertising dynamics in the African context and even fewer connecting to destination evolution. In Africa, international tourist monthly arrivals in 2020 were 533 thousand compared to 1.04 million in 2021 (Statista, 2021). This is an indication that tourism in Africa is bouncing back but at a slow pace. Similarly, Eutelsat (2022) noted that TV viewing in Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to be the fastest in the world in the next 5 years.

Statista (2021) revealed that in Africa, television advertising spending is led by South Africa (USD 436 million) followed by Nigeria (USD 276 million) and Morocco (USD 197 million).

## Methods

A literature review approach was adopted in this study. The literature review has been extensively used during the COVID-19 global pandemic and extended in the post COVID-19 pandemic as a methodology approach to create knowledge. Examples of studies that have adopted a literature review as a methodology include (Gao et al., 2022; Hattingh, 2022). The study by Hattingh (2022) which utilised a literature review method to investigate drive tourism in the context of South Africa found that drive tourism enables tourists to travel freely and safely. Similarly, Gao et al. (2022) applied a literature review approach with findings indicating that majority of tourism studies concentrated on service concept, service ecosystem and service process when investigating destination tourism.

In this study, the literature review approach has applied the integrative literature review method which involved gathering relevant information from books, journals, reports and conferences that are only related to advertising dynamics and destination evolution for tourism promotion. Selecting a literature review approach is a better way of research findings synthesis to uncover areas which need more research (Synder, 2019). Further comments from Synder (2019) is that “when integrating findings and perspectives from various empirical findings, the literature review approach can address research objectives with a power that no single study has”.

In the same way, Torraco (2016) considered integrative literature review that utilises existing literature for the creation of new knowledge. In this study, the integrative literature review is then analysed using content analysis. Additionally, the application of content analysis was to assist in analysing content from the integrative literature review. The use of both integrative literature review and content analysis in research has been applied by past tourism studies to provide insights on the research phenomenon as well as emerge similarities and differences in comparing variables. For instance, Mkwizu (2020) deployed integrative literature review approach with content analysis and found that digital marketing is an opportunity for promoting tourism that varies according to different countries within Africa.

## Findings and discussion

In reference to Table 1, the findings indicated that from the COVID-19 shocks, the trajectory is path dependency on mostly TV advertising in terms of forms of advertising for Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Tunisia. This suggests that findings align with statistics on TV viewing for Africa as declared by Eutelsat (2022) and also Madondo (2018) for use of traditional advertising media. Further findings show that the path creation for Kenya and Egypt in terms of forms of advertising is virtual advertising through virtual tour safaris and heritage sites in the COVID-19 pandemic. This implies that Kenya and Egypt as destinations have both path dependency and path creation for forms of advertising as the destinations evolved from the shocks of COVID-19.

These findings imply that destinations are evolving across different countries in Africa. More importantly is that as these destinations evolve due to the COVID-19 shocks, the advertising dynamics tend to exhibit either path dependency or path creation. Furthermore, the findings indicated that other destinations evolve by displaying double trajectories of both path dependency and path creation in tourism promotion as the case for Kenya and Egypt. Equally, in Tanzania, the path of forms of advertising were dependent on TV, internet and videos as the form of advertising during the COVID-19 pandemic and by adding film in the post COVID-19

pandemic hence displaying a path dependency on TV, internet and videos towards a path creation of film advertising for tourism promotion.

These findings are in line with the evolutionary economic geography theory from a fresh viewpoint of advertising dynamics and destination evolution from the Africa tourism promotion perspective in that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed tourism promotion in terms of forms of advertising used as destinations for different countries within Africa were experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, the findings highlighted that countries in Africa like Kenya and Egypt that were dependent by having a path dependency on TV advertising or mobile advertising used new ways of creating connection with tourists using virtual tours thus the trajectory towards path creation for the forms of advertising to promote tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, Kenya and Egypt displayed both path dependency and path creation for forms of advertising as these two countries' destinations evolved through the pandemic to promote tourism.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings, this study can conclude that as destinations evolve across different countries within Africa, the advertising dynamics exhibit either path dependency or path creation while other destinations display double trajectories of both path dependency and path creation in tourism promotion. Guided by the lens of the evolutionary economic geography theory, this study's findings have a fresh perspective in the application of the evolutionary economic geography theory by examining advertising dynamics and destination evolution from the Africa tourism promotion in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which changed tourism promotion for various African countries that experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, African countries such as Egypt, Kenya and Tanzania had trajectory of both path dependency and path creation for as advertising dynamics as the destinations for the countries were evolving in the COVID-19 pandemic to promote tourism.

The practical implication is for tourism stakeholders particularly Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) to consider the advertising dynamics as their destinations evolve locally, regionally and internationally in the COVID-19 era so that repeat visitors fall back in love with tourism in Africa as well as attract first time visitors. Limitations of this study are in the use of integrative literature and content analysis. Future studies may use cross-sectional design, quantitative and qualitative methods to further explore advertising dynamics and destination evolution in Africa tourism promotion.

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