



**The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations
on Marketing and Promoting Tourist Destination
Sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism
Bureau**

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**The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations on Marketing and Promoting
Tourist Destination Sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO COLLAGE OF HUMANITIES,
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**ADDIS ABEBA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, LANGUAGE
STUDIES, JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION
SCHOLL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION
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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this Project work entitled “The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations on Marketing and Promoting Tourist Destination Sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau” is my own work. I have carried out the research work independently with the guidance and support of the research advisor Amanuel Gebru (PhD). This study has not been submitted for any degree in this University or any other University. It is offered for the partial fulfillment of the degree of Masters on Public relation and strategic communication.

Signature _____

Name: Fekadu Gedif

Date: May, 2011

CERTIFICATION

As research Project advisors, we here by certify that we have read and evaluated this project work prepared, under our guidance, by FekaduGedif entitled “The Practices and Challenges of Public Relations on Marketing and Promoting Tourist Destination Sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau”. We recommend that it submitted as fulfilling the project work requirement.

AmanuelGebru(Ph.D)

Advisor

Signature

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to examine the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. Most importantly, it examine the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions, the roles of public relations practitioners do bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, and the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. The study used both qualitative as well as quantitative method, and the data collected through questionnaire and interview. Then, the quantitative data was analyzed comparing the mean with the expected mean and one-sample t-test, and the interview data also analyzed through word description. Finally, the study found out that there was practice of public relation in tourism bureau especially on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. There was different communication tools in order to marketing and promoting tourist destination sites such as TV program, radio, prints, You Tube and others though the effort that was made in Gonder city by far than Bahir Dar city because Gonder city's promote tourist destination sites through BBC and CNN. Besides, there were executive and technician roles of public relations in their bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites though their effort was not found to be significant. However, most of the interviews indicated that the public relation officers were assigned without their profession and they did not have managerial role in the bureau, so they are working as technician. In addition, there were challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. These can be lack of understanding among the staff (i.e. both top managements and staffs), lack of equipments and resources, and others. Hence, we can assume that the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges that affect marketing and promoting of tourist destination sites in the region. Finally, possible recommendation forwarded.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Tourism has become a major industry as it makes significant contributions to many economies. Hence, it is an important part of national development. The media in general public relation in particular have significant role to tourism development as it presents information about tourism through, newspapers, magazines, films, house journals, photographs, displays and exhibits, booklets and brochures and other media outlets (Santos, 2006). In relation to this, Godahewa (2011) holds the view that, the stronger the destination positioning and brand recall, the greater the chance of attracting these new tourists. Having decided on the destination, tourists may then seek specialist assistance to decide on the accommodation, travel arrangements, tour guide support etc.

Public relations may support the tourism public sector, building a positive image and a favorable attitude towards the tourism product, respectively the tourism destination envisaged (Stancioiu, 2000). The explanation lies in the fact that in the tourism sector, a favorable image creates motivation in making the decision to buy the tourism product. In this case, the final image appears like the result of a bidirectional process: from the offerer, who projects and transfers an official image, respectively from the potential tourist, who perceives that reality in a certain way, from the perspective of preferences, experiences or the information obtained from other reference sources, other than the official ones (Jansson and Falkheimer, 2006).

Public relations in tourism are a key element of the marketing mix, which resorts to “general influence tools’ such as the relations with the media materialized in press tours, conferences on tourism, fairs and expositions, promotional activities, special events (Kotler, Rein, Haider, 2001). Creating a positive image which may mean respect and professionalism should constitute a

reference point throughout this entire process, because public relations aim at “building” a favorable climate not only at the level of the tourism market, but also at the level of the entire ensemble, with all its internal and external components (Bucur-Sabo, 2006).

In the tourism sector, public relations are more than a necessity. To meet the constant challenges, the public relations in the tourism sector should evolve towards turning into a management function, which should lead to responsible approach. The literature argues that the public relations represent the fifth “P” of a marketing strategy: product, price, position and promotion (Wilcox et al., 2009). In the same vein, Mathieson and Wall, (2006) indicated that tourism is both an economic and a social phenomenon that is an agent of change in these areas as well as for the environment. Tourism involves the tourists, the destination and its people, and the routes and means by which they are brought together. This is the moment in which public relations should make their presence felt, offering efficient communication and promotion strategies related to tourist destinations. Thus, it is expected that tourists will visit the tourist areas with the highest development potential, both in terms of the sights and the opportunities provided.

Promoting a tourism destination should consider a series of factors which function as conclusive points for the public, such as: natural factors, relief, geographical positioning, landscape, vegetation, fauna, climate; the general factors of human existence and activity, traditions, folklore, language, mentality, hospitality, culture; the human element, the behavior and attitude of the local population, of the representatives of the various public or private institutions towards tourists; the general infrastructure, transportation and (tele)communication, tourism equipments, accommodation and food facilities, sports and entertainment (Minciu, 2000, pp. 147-151).

The importance of tourism marketing as emphasized by Hannam (2004) was in recognition of the emerging challenges posed by the growing number of tourists’ destinations which have placed at the disposal of a tourist a variety of attractions in abundant quantity from a large

number of competing nations. The increasing competitive tourism market has made the products marketing a very important factor in order to gain better destination patronage and to attract more consumption of services and generate repeat businesses and loyalty (Yuju-Wang, 2007).

Theoretically, marketing strategy is useful in targeting and developing new market segments and also helps to improve poor public relations which occurred as a result of several unfortunate events. Thus, for a destination to gain from the global tourism share, as evident in the present age, the conscious creation and marketing of place products must be held sacrosanct. In effect, these products in other words known as tourism products are important for destination marketing as they influence people's perception of the place and can affect their choice and behavior towards the place (Dore and Crouch, 2003).

The purpose of marketing and communication in the opinion of, is to inform, persuade, encourage, or more specifically, to influence the potential customer or trade intermediaries (travel agents, tour operators, reservation services, hotel and charter broker) through communications, to think and act in a certain manner. Communication may be undertaken in a variety of ways, including advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling and publicity, and public relation. On the other hand, advertising is an activity designed to spread information with a view to promoting the sales of marketable goods and services. It operates in two ways; first by spreading information amongst consumers about the possibilities of consumption, and second, by seeking to influence their judgment in favor of the particular goods or services which are subject of the advertisement. Marketing involves all promotional activities designed to transmit to the public specific and detail information on aspects of tourism destination such as accommodation, transportation, attractions, prices of services, and other logistics for tourists to make their choices (Bhaita, 2006).

Esu and Ebitu (2010) emphasized that destination promotion has the potentials of producing benefits such as creation of awareness and interest in the destination and the attractions;

differentiate the destination and its product offerings from competing destinations; communicate the physical and psychological benefits of products packaged by the destination to the market; build and maintain the overall image and reputation of the destination; persuade tourists to visit the destination and increase length of stay in the destination; and assist the destination management to level out peaks and valleys result from seasonality of demand.

A study like Ajake (2014) study found out that all the marketing strategies were influential on aggregate representing 39 percent, however festivals/events and security/environmental beautification were rated very high as the most influential marketing strategies on tourists' choice of destination attraction. Besides, Touhid (2014) studied the current situation of Pietarsaari including all tourism resources accommodation, transportation, attractions and events, and he revealed that tourism marketing of a small town is not an easy process. It will require solid plans and putting them into action.

Huertas (2008) empirical study results revealed that the great majority of communications activities that both institutions for the promotion of tourism and private organizations carried out were public relations activities. Therefore, it may be concluded that these communicative activities have firmly taken root in the tourism industry.

Moreover, there are also different studies that have been conducted on public relation and tourism related issues. For example, Esu (2006) on ecotourism marketing, Esu and Ebitu (2010) on promoting tourism destination, Egboyi (2007) on tourism development, Amalu and Ajake (2012) on tourism and employment structure and others were some of the researches.

In Ethiopian context, there are some studies that have done in relation to tourism, public relation and other related issues. Some of these are Yabibal (2010), Mekonnen (2016) Behailu and Haftamu (2017), Behilu (2018), and others. However, they did not give much attention to public

relation practices and challenges towards tourist destination sites. Hence, the current researcher examined the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The importance of public relations work in the tourism industry and to defend its role for its practical application and found out that the development of public relations activities and the great need that exists for public relations theoretical framework within the tourism industry. Public relation is crucial in the promotional activities and the communications of companies and tourism institutions. In spite of this, there is a lack of association between theory and practice in public relations in the tourism industry. On the one hand, the theory, models and concepts of public relations have neither been developed nor applied in this industry, which continues to be conceptually dominated by marketing. Public relations activities are prevalent in the practices of the industry: public relation is the predominant activity in promotion and communication in the tourism industry. This lack of association is perpetuated because the model of tourism marketing which pioneered the industry's promotional activities, and is still prevalent today appropriates the public relations function and subordinates it to marketing. This situation is due to the fact that experts in the field have yet to make a clear distinction between the different areas of communicative disciplines (Huertas, 2008).

Ajake (2014) noted that several marketing strategies/programs and large volumes of advertising messages about the tourism potentials of his study areas are made available to persuade tourists to make their choice and which destination to visit. These include festivals/events; packaging souvenirs/gift items; paradise in the cloud; meet me in cross river; destination events and security/environmental beautification. In addition, tourism marketing communication tools such as television, radio, internet, handbills, billboards, flyers, family and friends' recommendation, travel agency desk information etc. were considered. These marketing strategies and marketing

communication tools requires intermittent evaluation to determine their level of influence on tourists' decision to choose a specific destination for visit.

Buckley (2009) study suggested that that media coverage has vital importance in promoting tourism areas and encouraging the tourists to visit the areas by giving relevant information. Besides, Godahewa (2011) study pointed out that tourism development is not limited to increasing the number of hotels, restaurants, and other facilities, but it has far more to do with creating the culture of tourism and refining the way it is perceived by the people.

Ning and Liu (2014) focused on analyzing Beijing's marketing materials that include websites, brochures and videos towards international and domestic tourists by content analysis. The finding of the study sated that Beijing's current marketing strategies are clarified according to the potential differences towards the international and domestic tourists. In addition, Huertas (2008) carried out a study on public relation and tourism: fighting for the role of public relation in tourism, and found out that the development of public relations activities and the great need that exists for public relations theoretical framework within the tourism industry.

Furthermore, there are studies that focused on tourism destination promotion by (Okpoko, 2002), on development of attraction by (Okpoko, 2006), on tourism attractions marketing strategies by (Bhaiti, 2006; Esu, 2006; Esu and Ebitu, 2010; Ajake and Amalu, 2012b); on purpose of marketing and communication tools by (Crouch and Dore, 2002), on distribution channels of tourism products by (Cooper et al., 2008) among others.

According to United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) (2015), Ethiopia is a country with untapped tourism potential. The contribution of tourism to the overall development is, therefore, well recognized and is given significant attention in the Growth and Transformation

Plan. Ethiopia is currently experiencing rapid growth in international tourism. Hence, tourism is a sector that holds a bright promise for our country Ethiopia. In this regard, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has placed considerable emphasis on developing and managing tourism in a competitive and sustainable way. The ministry has collaborated with the eastern Africa member states under the umbrella of IGAD in developing a regional sustainable tourism master plan for 2013-2023. The master plan sets out a vision for sustainable tourism development in the country and includes strategic programs, priority projects, and activities in a 10 years implementation framework. In this sense, it marks an important milestone for the systematic development of Ethiopia (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2009).

Despite the immense statements that exist in the country in terms of both cultural and natural resources for tourism development, the country continues to lag behind other economies in the region in terms of tourism growth and development. This could be attributed to several changes the country's tourism industry faces, among them is lack of marketing strategy. Hence, in order to achieve the growth and transformation plan of sustainable development of tourism, the role of media is indispensable (Behailu, 2018).

Yabibal (2010) also reported that Ethiopia has immense tourism potential owing to its natural, historical and cultural endowments. However, the reasons behind the sector's poor performance have not been studied in a comprehensive way. In this regard, Behailu and Haftamu (2017) argued among other things the media play a crucial role in image building and promotion of tourist sites of the country.

In Ethiopian context, there are some studies that have been carried out on public relation and tourism with other related matters such as Mekonnen (2016) carried out a study on the role of media in tourism promotion a case study in Ethiopia, and the study asserted that to change distorted

images in the international media, the country should use its enormous tourism potential by designing well promotion and marketing strategy.

Yabibal (2010) studied on tourist flows and its determinants in Ethiopia and found out that Ethiopia is better rated in inherited endowments than in created and supporting resources (like tourism infrastructure). Yet almost every rating exhibits considerable improvement after tourists visited the country, suggesting that the famine-related bad image of the country still hinders Ethiopia's tourism sector.

Behailu and Haftamu (2017) investigated the potential attributes of the six selected heritage sites in South Gondar for tourists and examine the challenges for availing them to tourists. Then, the study revealed that lack of organized effort to provide opportunities for travel agents, tour operating companies, tourist Information centers, and museums were regarded as challenges for availing these sites for tourists.

Behailu (2018) study focused on the status of PRs role in Ethiopian government institutions, and he indicated that a lot of activities have been undertaken in the communication job process. However, many of them are subjected to publicity and community affairs; the communication core job process has its own annual plan subordinated to the strategic plan, but research and evaluation activities are insignificant; there are not familiar with the notion of the formal crises management and communication which in turn doesn't let them prepare a formal kind of crisis inventory and management plan.

However, the aforementioned studies showed that they did not give much emphasize for the practice and challenges of public relation department towards tourist destination sites in the region. This indicates that there is research gap in the area, and thereby the current researcher

instigated to carry out his study on this area. Therefore, the current researcher examined the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau.

1.3. Research Questions

At the end of this study, it answered the following research questions.

1. What are the major public relations activities practiced in the ANRSCT bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions?
2. What roles do the public relations practitioners mainly play in the bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region?
3. What are the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions?

1.4. Objective of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study examined the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

The following were the specific objectives of the study.

1. To examine the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions.
2. To assess the roles of public relations practitioners do bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites.

3. To investigate the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study might helpful in the following ways.

1. It would help to identify the ANRSCT bureau public relations activities for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. In doing so, the top management, PR officers, and other stakeholders work together in order to fill the limitation accordingly and improve their practices on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites.
2. It should provide information about the role of PRs on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. As a result, the bureau can sort out the gaps that observe in PRs and make discussion about it and make improvement on the role of PRs on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites.
3. It would show the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region, and thereby the executive bodies, PR officers, hotels, travel agencies, tour operators and others understand the limitations and work in order to fill the gaps by minimizing the challenges.
4. It might help other researchers, PR officers, journalism and communication students who are studying in this area as reference material.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study focused on examining the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. Most importantly, the research examined the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions, the roles of public relations practitioners do bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, and the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region respectively. Hence, other issues that have any relation to this study were not being

included in it. In addition, data collected from communication or public relations managers, tourism officers (i.e. official public institutions which promote local tourism), tourism companies like hotels, travel agencies, tour operators etc. through in-depth interview and questionnaire.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

With undertaking this study, the research report encountered some limitations. Some of these may be negligence of the respondents to fill the questionnaire with regards of the practice and challenges of public relation in marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. If the research report had a chance to draw data from all participants and analyzed the data, the results of the study would have been comprehensive. Therefore, other researcher should take into consideration the limitation of the study to make it fulfilled.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This research paper has five chapters. Chapter one contains background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study. The second chapter constitutes review of literature that highlights the concepts of public relations, the role of public relations, the relation between public relation and tourism, public relation tools, challenges of public relation, and other issues. In chapter three, design of the study, the participants, sampling and sampling techniques, data gathering instruments, procedure for data collections, and methods of data analysis presented. Then, chapter four focuses on data presentation, analysis, and discussion of finding. Finally, chapter five deals with the summary of finding, conclusion and possible recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW LITERATURE

2.1. Definitions of Public Relations

There are different scholars that define public relation but they did not agree on single definition of it. For example, tools Harlow, quoted in Wilcox et al (2003) said that public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal.

There are several definitions of public relations. The definitions may vary based on the scholars' perspective towards the function of public relations in different paradigms. Some scholars credit public relations for the heightened attention to public accountability and social responsibility among government administrators and business executives. Others emphasize the function's role in making organizations more responsive to public interests and more accepting of their corporate social responsibility. However according to Broom (as cited in Eadie, 2009, p.697) "Whatever name is used, the basic concept and motivation of public relations are similar from one organization to the next-large or small, local or global. All organizations strive to establish and maintain relationships with those identified as important to their survival and growth". Having this taken for granted, it is worth to consider some definitions given to public relations to have a comprehensive image on the area.

Cultip, Center and Broom (2000) define public relations as a management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the

public. Wilcox et al (2000) also states “Public relations is the art and social science of analyzing trends ,predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders ,and implementing planned programs which will serve both the organization and the public interest” (p.6). According to Van Heerden (2004), public relations is also seen as a means of helping organizations anticipate and respond to public perceptions and opinions, to new values and life styles, to power shifts among the electorate and within the legislative bodies, to other changes in the social and political environment. In this regard, Wamser (2006) strengthen that public relations affects a society in many ways, from district economic contribution, such as promoting a product or company to public diplomacy and nation building campaigns.

L’Etang (1996) also stated that pubic relation contains many key concepts and saves us ploughing through hundreds of definitions, it describes what PR does rather than what it is, or it should be. Besides, he described the attempts to define public relations as largely ‘constructed in an attempt to be all things to all people simultaneously. In relation to this, Wilcox et al. (2003) suggested that public relations is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization’s and the public interest.

In the above definitions, we could articulate some basic functions of public relations. To this end, Harllows’ deified public relations is the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintains mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interests ;helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilized change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principle tools (Harllow, quoted in Wilcox et al, 2003).

Publicrelationstodayreflectstheevolvingrolesoforganizations insociety, the growingpower of the media andpublicopinion,theincreasinginterestinapplyingthefindingsofthesocialsciences,

and the never-ending march of social and cultural change. Contemporary public relations developed during four eras: (1) public-be-damned, (2) public-be-informed, (3) mutual understanding, and (4) mutual adjustment (Broom, 2009, pp. 92–93).

In addition, “Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (Broom, 2009, p. 7). This definition positions the practice of public relations as a management function and implies that management in all organizations must attend to public relations. It also identifies building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics as the moral and ethical basis of the profession. And finally, it suggests criteria for determining what is and what is not public relations.

Public relations is the distinctive management function which helps establish and maintains mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interests; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilized change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principle tools (Harlow, quoted in Wilcox et al., 2003:7).

2.2. Public Relations and Tourism

Tourism has become a major industry as it makes significant contributions to many economies. Hence, it is an important part of national development. Public relations is significant to development tourism as it presents information about tourism through, newspapers, magazines, films, house journals, photographs, displays and exhibits, booklets and brochures (Santos, 2006). Godahewa (2011) holds the view that, the stronger the destination positioning and brand recall, the greater the chance of attracting these new tourists. Having decided on the destination,

tourists may then seek specialist assistance to decide on the accommodation, travel arrangements, tour guide support etc. (Urry, 1990).

Branding and positioning the destination is therefore a very important aspect for emerging tourism markets. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization, media reporting is significant to tourism because the vast majority of travel decisions are made by people who have never seen the destination first hand for themselves (UNWTO, 2007). Tourists usually decide on the destination first based on what they have heard or seen from the media. Campbell (2005) affirmed that tourist actions are known to be influenced by media providing people with fragments, narratives and representations of potential tourist spaces. No matter how attractive a tourist destination is, many people are unlikely to go there if they do not know about it (Okon, 2013). Therefore, media reports provide tourists and potential tourists an image of the kinds of tourism experiences to expect at various destinations.

It is worth noting that, tourist services are relatively expensive and is acquired less frequently than other goods and services as they are not basic needs but fulfill the desire to enrich one's knowledge and experience and to be esteemed (Ravar, 2011). Communication and promotion is therefore vital in the development of the industry. A good destination exposure is able to provide the customer with a tangible image of the intangible services he or she is about to experience (Godaheva, 2011). The public relation's media outlet become important in giving exposure to tourism products as it has the characteristics needed in presenting the tourism experiences and services a destination offers in a more efficient and cost effective medium. While media can contribute positively to the development of the tourism industry, there have been occasions where media publicity has adversely affected tourism in several destinations. This is to say that, media, when mishandled, can have negative effects on tourism.

Public relations have fundamental role to the development of modern day tourism (UNWTO, 2012). Tourists usually decide on a destination first based on what they have heard or seen from the media (Godaheva, 2011). Tourism, the press and other media, including modern means of electronic communication and others should provide accurate and reliable information of tourism services (UNWTO, 2002). Also awareness is raising and image building needs well-organized and coordinated promotion involving editorial coverage in appropriate media (National Tourism Development Plan, 2013).

Godaheva (2011) pointed out that development of tourism is not limited to increasing the number of hotels, restaurants, and other such facilities, rather it has far more to do with creating the culture of tourism and refining the way it is perceived by the people. He further asserted that the media, especially the local media, play an important role in this regard by working closely with governments and the tourism promotional institutes in promoting and developing the tourism industry. The public relations supports in the growth, development and promotion of tourism by creating better awareness and understanding to cater for the needs and requirements of both domestic and international tourist.

2.2.1. Marketing and Promotion of Tourist Destination

Tourism marketing is one of the main parts of tourism business. In tourism, the destination plays the greatest role. Thus, the perspective of a destination is the greatest challenge for tourism marketing. Currently, marketing of tourism destinations is a new trend in tourism marketing. Therefore, the development of tourism marketing of a destination is very important in the tourism industry. Tourism destination marketing can be divided into two kinds. One is big cities, normally most of them turn out to be a popular destination and thus needs less marketing. Another is small towns, generally; they have lots of tourism potential but are less known and need excessive marketing. Therefore, doing research and trying to develop tourism marketing of a small town is somewhat challenging (Touhid, 2014).

At the moment, tourism is considered one of the fastest growing and most competitive businesses in the world. Each country and tourism business tries hard to get more tourists and concentrate on their destinations. Still tourism needs marketing more than other things as the customer of this industry has many choices and different motivations for traveling (Raju 2009, 116.). Every year one billion international tourists rising in the world and it is anticipated the increase will grow more day- by - day. It seems that the opportunities in tourism industry are infinite. There are still many tourism businesses that failing to accomplish achievement. There are many tourism destinations that are struggling while the climate of that place is the right for tourism. All of these major problems can be fixed by marketing.

The purpose of marketing and communication in the opinion of Bhaita (2006), is to inform, persuade, encourage, or more specifically, to influence the potential customer or trade intermediaries (travel agents, tour operators, reservation services, hotel and charter broker) through communications, to think and act in a certain manner. Communication may be undertaken in a variety of ways, including advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling and publicity, and public relation. On the other hand, advertising is an activity designed to spread information with a view to promoting the sales of marketable goods and services. It operates in two ways; first by spreading information amongst consumers about the possibilities of consumption, and second, by seeking to influence their judgment in favor of the particular goods or services which are subject of the advertisement (Bhaita, 2006). Marketing involves all promotional activities designed to transmit to the public specific and detail information on aspects of tourism destination such as accommodation, transportation, attractions, prices of services, and other logistics for tourists to make their choices.

Marketing is the procedure where a business organization endorses their services and products. It also defines that a business organization aims to spot customer needs and give them better

service than their opponent business organizations. Tourism marketing seems to be somewhat little complex because it's joint of many other industries such as accommodation and transportation. Tourism marketing is related to the travel and tourism organizations where the industry offers tourism products to their customers (Touhid, 2014).

The tourism industry has finally embraced marketing concepts that other industries have been using successfully for decades. Marketing is a very important matter in travel and tourism industry as it is the most important management influence that can bring the size and behavior into the foremost tourism market. In the whole market, there are many submarkets and sectors. Various organizations are offer many products. The Travel and tourism market can be better understood by demand and supply. Marketing has a relation between supply and demand that focuses on dealings, in where the customers choose and exchange their money to get any travel experiences or products. The ethics of marketing are related to tourism resources without any charge, an example could be a national park or ancient towns. Marketing plays a great role for national tourism organizations and other organizations who do not sell products directly though they have a relation with their commercial partners (Middleton & Clarke 2001, 4).

The importance of tourism marketing as emphasized by Hannam (2004) was in recognition of the emerging challenges posed by the growing number of tourists' destinations which have placed at the disposal of a tourist a variety of attractions in abundant quantity from a large number of competing nations. The increasing competitive tourism market has made the products marketing a very important factor in order to gain better destination patronage and to attract more consumption of services and generate repeat businesses and loyalty (Yuju-Wang, 2007).

Theoretically, marketing strategy is useful in targeting and developing new market segments and also helps to improve poor public relations which occurred as a result of several unfortunate events (Dore and Crouch, 2003). Thus, for a destination to gain from the global tourism share, as evident in the present age, the conscious creation and marketing of place products must be held sacrosanct. In effect, these products in other words known as tourism products are important for

destination marketing as they influence people's perception of the place and can affect their choice and behavior towards the place.

However, Bhaita (2006) observed that tourism product is not the tourism destination, but it is about the experience of that place and what happens there. The peculiarity of a tourism product is that, it cannot usually be sampled prior to purchase, it is not like a car or a cooking range of gas burner, refrigerator, or bookshelf which can be inspected before purchase (Seth, 2006). It requires purchase decisions to be made on the basis of available information and the projected and perceived images/brand of the destination. This attribute has made marketing and promotion in tourism clearly an essential factor for sustainable tourism development.

According to Mathieson and Wall (2006, p.17), "tourism is both an economic and a social phenomenon that is an agent of change in these areas as well as for the environment. Tourism involves the tourists, the destination and its people, and the routes and means by which they are brought together". This is the moment in which public relations should make their presence felt, offering efficient communication and promotion strategies related to tourist destinations. Thus, it is expected that tourists will visit the tourist areas with the highest development potential, both in terms of the sights and the opportunities provided.

Promoting a tourism destination should consider a series of factors which function as conclusive points for the public, such as: natural factors, relief, geographical positioning, landscape, vegetation, fauna, climate; the general factors of human existence and activity, traditions, folklore, language, mentality, hospitality, culture; the human element, the behavior and attitude of the local population, of the representatives of the various public or private institutions towards tourists; the general infrastructure, transportation and (tele)communication, tourism equipments, accommodation and food facilities, sports and entertainment (Minciu, 2000, pp. 147-151). A definition of the tourism destination that reveals the importance of the geographical space and

the attractions that are within the space is offered by Medlik (2003, p.163) who argues that “countries, regions, towns and other areas which attract tourists, are main locations of tourism activity, and tend to account for most of tourists’ time and spending. They are the main concentrations of tourist attractions, accommodation and other tourist facilities and services, where the main impacts of tourism - economic, social, and physical - occur”. Special attention should be given to the surrounding environment. The impact of tourism upon the environment, the steady development of the tourism sector accompanied by the constant care for nature should constitute new directions of action in the tourism industry. In this context, tourism may represent an opportunity for the preservation of the environment, through the implementation of certain strategies and techniques which may enable the sensible management of tourist destinations, as well as environment protection.

Esu and Ebitu (2010) emphasized that destination promotion has the potentials of producing benefits such as:

- (i) Creation of awareness and interest in the destination and the attractions;
- (ii) Differentiate the destination and its product offerings from competing destinations;
- (iii) Communicate the physical and psychological benefits of products packaged by the destination to the market;
- (iv) Build and maintain the overall image and reputation of the destination;
- (v) Persuade tourists to visit the destination and increase length of stay in the destination; and
- (vi) Assist the destination management to level out peaks and valleys result from seasonality of demand.

Although several studies have been carried in the study area, however, most them are focused on factors affecting ecotourism marketing (Esu, 2006), promoting an emerging tourism destination (Esu and Ebitu, 2010), tourism development (Egboyi, 2007) and tourism and employment

structure (Amalu and Ajake, 2012). These studies have not critically considered the influence of marketing strategies on tourists' choice of their destination.

From the literature reviewed so far, adequate attention appears to have been given to studies of tourism destination promotion (Okpoko, 2002), development of attraction (Okpoko, 2006), tourism attractions marketing strategies (Bhaiti, 2006; Esu, 2006; Esu and Ebitu, 2010; Ajake and Amalu, 2012b); purpose of marketing and communication tools (Crouch and Dore, 2002) distribution channels of tourism products (Cooper et al., 2008) among others. In Nigeria and Cross River State, very little or no work has been done to assess the influence of tourism marketing strategies on tourists' choice of any destination area. Several marketing strategies/programs and large volumes of advertising messages about the tourism potentials of the study areas are made available to persuade tourists to make their choice and which destination to visit. These include festivals/events; packaging souvenirs/gift items; paradise in the cloud; meet me in Cross River; Destination events and security/environmental beautification.

In addition, tourism marketing communication tools such as television, radio, internet, handbills, billboards, flyers, family and friends' recommendation, travel agency desk information etc. were considered. These marketing strategies and marketing communication tools requires intermittent evaluation to determine their level of influence on tourists' decision to choose a specific destination for visit.

2.2.2. Forms of Tourism in Destinations

Tourism products can include tangible and/or intangible elements (Carvalho and Costa, 2011). A tourism destination can be identified with services such as hotels, restaurants, nature sites etc. Tourism is however not limited to the production of goods or services. Sociological and cultural features of the local population and tourists' behavior can influence tourism experiences as well. Weiermair (2006), cited in Carvalho and Costa (2011), therefore described a tourism product as an experience.

There are many forms of tourism experiences available at various destinations. Some destinations may offer more than one of these forms of tourism. The following are some forms of tourism experiences available at various destinations around the world:

□ Pleasure tourism involves travel to improve the physical and spiritual well-being of an individual. This may take the form of a Spa experience at a destination. Business tourism comprises traveling in relation to business. Most business tourism destinations feature conference centers that cater to the needs of business tourists.

□ Nature-based tourism includes all forms of tourism where relatively undisturbed natural environments form the primary attraction or setting (Buckley, 2009). It can include consumptive and adventurous as well as non-consumptive contemplative activities, which in turn can include ecotourism (Buckley, 2009; Weaver, 2008).

□ Cultural tourism usually involves travel to experience the essence of assorted cultures, such as cultural festivals. Cultural tourism encompasses the visiting of historic and heritage sites as well. The main motivation behind this is to obtain knowledge about a destination. Arts, music, traditions and history are the main components of culture in a destination.

□ Recreation tourism features rejuvenation and revitalization. It involves the activity of traveling for pleasure, to see sights. Cruising while vacationing or simply relaxing on a beach constitute this form of tourism. These activities are sometimes classified under nature tourism.

□ Sports tourism involves either taking active part in or just watch sports events. The Olympic Games and the World cup for instance and world championships attract visitors from around the world. Hall (1992), cited in Hinch and Higham (2001) defines sports tourism as Travel for non-commercial reasons to participate or observe sporting activities away from the home range.

□ Health/Medical tourism was defined by the International Union of Tourist Organizations (IUTO), the forerunner to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as ‘the

provision of health facilities utilizing the natural resources of the country, in particular mineral water and climate’ (IUTO 1973: 7, cited in Hall, 2013).

□ Adventure tourism is a type of tourism, involving exploration or travel with perceived (and possibly actual) risk, and potentially requiring specialized skills and physical exertion. The Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) defines adventure tourism as a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment, and cultural immersion (ATDI, 2010).

□ Ecotourism attracts nature loving tourists who love to go green destinations to enjoy the view of parks and gardens. Ecotourism is tourism and recreation that is both nature based and sustainable. It minimizes negative impacts upon the natural and socio-cultural environment (UNWTO, 2002).

2.2.3. Public relations and Responsible Tourism

The literature defines public relations like a strategic form of communication, which focuses on obtaining the public’s understanding and acceptance regarding the process of establishing a good relation between an organization and the public, especially in terms of shaping reputation and communicating information (Gaither, 2008, p.19). Through the communication and promotion strategies which they develop, public relations facilitate the building of confidence-based connections between the various organizations and the many categories of public, creating interactive relationships between the various levels of society. The British Institute of Public Relations qualifies public relations like a “management reputation”, given that public relations are focused on reputation –the result of what you do, what you say and what other say about. Therefore, the practice of public relations is the discipline which centers on reputation, with the purpose of gaining understanding, the support and influence of public opinion and behavior (Petrovici, 2011, p.18).

Public relations represent a unique way of promoting the organization, its products or services, by building a higher visibility in the public space. The public relations activities imply conscious, planned and long-term efforts in building and maintaining relations of mutual trust and understating both with the public opinion as a whole and the different target groups (Kunczik, 2002, p.11). In this respect, public relations aim at building positive relations between an organization and its public, an organization and the environment, by means of a two-way communication (DiMeo, 2002, p.151).

In the tourism sector, public relations are more than a necessity. To meet the constant challenges, the public relations in the tourism sector should evolve towards turning into a management function, which should lead to responsible approach. The literature argues that the public relations represent the fifth “P” of a marketing strategy: product, price, position and promotion (Wilcox et al., 2009, p.16). According to specialists, cultivating public relations takes longer, but when they are actuated, they can contribute to promoting the company on the market (Kotler, Rackham, 2006, pp.68-78).

The major challenge consists in identifying the most efficient ways of promoting tourist products, building a positive image, increasing the visibility of tourist destinations, in order to attract a significant number of tourists. According to specialists, a tourist product may be approached from a global perspective, regarded like a unitary whole, respectively from an individual perspective, due to its intrinsic features, namely: unique elements, which individualize the product even more; location at the “source”, which means that tourism planning should occur only in areas with tourism potential (beach, mountains, mineral springs, thermal waters, historical monuments etc.); developed tourism infrastructure, respectively transportation, accommodation, food and entertainment units with specific equipment; a varied segmentation of consumers, with needs, tastes and different motivations (Gherasim, 1999, p.33).

Public relations may support the tourism public sector, building a positive image and a favorable attitude towards the tourism product, respectively the tourism destination envisaged (Stăncioiu, 2000, p.50). The explanation lies in the fact that in the tourism sector, a favorable image creates motivation in making the decision to buy the tourism product. In this case, the final image appears like the result of a bidirectional process: from the offerer, who projects and transfers an official image, respectively from the potential tourist, who perceives that reality in a certain way, from the perspective of preferences, experiences or the information obtained from other reference sources, other than the official ones (Baud-Bovy, and Lawson, 1977, p.43).

Public relations in tourism are a key element of the marketing mix, which resorts to “general influence tools’ such as the relations with the media materialized in press tours, conferences on tourism, fairs and expositions, promotional activities, special events(Kotler, Rein, Haider, 2001, p.177). Creating a positive image which may mean respect and professionalism should constitute a reference point throughout this entire process, because public relations aim at “building” a favorable climate not only at the level of the tourism market, but also at the level of the entire ensemble, with all its internal and external components (Bucur-Sabo, 2006, p.229). The ongoing transmission of messages meant to inform consumers about tourism products, with the intention of developing a positive attitude towards the product and company, respectively to generate favorable changes in their consumption mentality and habits represent an instantiation of tourism promotion (Bucur-Sabo, 2006, p.222).

From the perspective of public relations, this implies the management of the communication between the company and the target public, by means of constant and proper informing of the various categories of audiences (Grunig, Hunt, 1984, p.6). Materials for promoting tourism destinations include: magazines, brochures and tourist guides, which may contain information about certain events, characteristic of a certain area or scheduled activities (audio-visual presentations, expositions), rules of conduct for tourist safety; maps and information on tourist attractions; information centers in public spaces, parks, shops, stations and restaurants; graphic

boards placed on tourist tracks and in belvedere points (Henche, 2004, p. 194). In their turn, interpreter guides also play an essential part by the accuracy and coherence of the information provided during tourist circuits. The promotion actions performed by public relations cannot be efficient without properly specialized and trained staff, which may provide quality services and meet the clients' expectations. In this case, public relations play a strategic part not only in attracting tourists to the various destinations, but also in maintaining their satisfaction after they arrive at the respective destinations. In coordinating these efforts, there may be engaged all the responsible factors, from local or regional tourism agencies to counseling authorities, organizations, local collectives, public authorities etc.

An internationally topical subject is the concept of responsible tourism. Responsible tourism is about taking responsibility, responding, taking action to address the social, economic and environmental issues of sustainability that arise in destinations (Goodwin, 2011, pp.5-6). According to the Cape Town Declaration (2002, pp.3-4), environmental concerns should be managed, "throughout the life cycle of tourist establishments and operations including the planning and design phase"; the responsible tourism is defined as having a number of characteristics: minimizing negative economic, environmental, and social impacts; generating greater economic benefits for local people and enhancing the well-being of host communities; involving local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances; contributing to the conservations of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity; providing more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues; providing access for physically challenged people; being culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and building local pride and confidence. Responsible tourism recognizes the diversity of the world's cultures and environments and encourages the positive interaction between the tourism industry, local communities and travelers" (Coppola, 2010, p.51). At the same time, responsible tourism offers an opportunity to connect with the people who create the holiday experience, stimulating the holidaymakers to talk about their experiences and to tell stories (Krippendorf, 1999, pp.15-22). As John King (2002, pp.105-108) observes, the

travel is about “experiences, fulfillment and rejuvenation” rather than about “places and things” and that this lifestyle market is of increasing importance.

In terms of public relations, responsible tourism represents a process of responsabilization of the public as well as of the tourism agents regarding the need of practicing tourism responsibly, with all the resulting implications. Responsible tourism aims at the responsible consumption of tourist products, respectively the impact and benefits that this type of tourism should have upon the environment and local communities, economically, socially and environmentally.

2.3. Systems Theory

Our organizations are living systems, existing in a turbulent environment that constantly tests their abilities to survive...the force of fierce global competition, dizzying technological advances, vacillating economics and highly sophisticated and demanding customers (Cutlip et al. 2000). Any discussion of public relations and its role in organizations inevitably begins the question like ‘What is an organization?’ Because answering that question helps to reveal the pivotal nature of communication and therefore the strategic input that public relations can have.

Many public relations scholars (Grunig and Hunt 1984) refer to systems theory to explain the structure and operation of organizations and their interaction with the environment. In essence, systems theory describes an organization as a set of parts (or subsystems) which impact on each other and which together interact with the organization’s environment. Besides, Cutlip *et al.* (2000: 229) describe a system as a set of interacting units which endures through time within an established boundary by responding and adjusting to change pressures from the environment to achieve and maintain goal states. Hence, systems theory provides a useful theoretical underpinning for thinking about the role of public relations because it stipulates that an organization’s well-being (or otherwise) is dependent on establishing and maintaining relationships both within itself and with its environment.

System theory has to adjust and adapt as both it and its environment change. Organizations are part of a social system which consists of individuals or groups of individuals (publics), such as employees, suppliers, distributors and so on. The role of PR is to develop and maintain relationships with these groups in order for the organization to meet its goals. When considering internal relationships, Grunig and Hunt describe the work of organizational theorists who have found that there are five similar subsystems in most organizations.

In any study of organization, two assumptions about them are basically addressed (Weick, 2001). First, organizations are open social systems. Everything an organization does is done through its members who process and communicate information from both internal and external sources. In this regard, according to Lattimore et al. (2004), system theory is useful in public relations because it gives us a way to think about relationships. It looks at organizations as made up of inter related parts, adapting and adjusting to changes in political, economic, and social environments in which they operate.

System perspective emphasizes the interdependence of organizations with their environments, both internal and external to the organization. In line with the essence of system perspective, organizations depend on resources from the environments, such as raw materials, a source of employees and clients or customers for the services or products they produce. The environment needs the organization for its product and services. According to system theory, public relation is a sub system in organizations adopted as a social system. Hence, role of public relation is affected by the definition of an organization in a social system, in other words perception of the organization relating to its role in the society (Miles, 1978:24). Thus, in my study system theory is used to see the public relations department in relation to the organizational structure.

There are different subsystems in this theory. Production subsystems produce the products or services of the organization. Maintenance subsystems work across the organization, acting effectively as its glue, encouraging employees to work together. Human resources is a good example of such a subsystem. Other functions focus on the marketing and distribution of products and are called disposal subsystems. Adaptive subsystems help the organization to adjust

when the environment in which it operates changes; research and development and strategic planning departments are good examples. Management subsystems direct and control the other subsystems and manage conflicting demands between them. They also negotiate between the demands of the environment (for example requirement for low prices) and the survival needs of the organization (profit). Hence, typically the board of an organisation and/or a senior management grouping fulfills this role. From a systems view, public relations professionals are seen as having a ‘boundary spanning’ role. They straddle the edges of an organization liaising both between its internal subsystems and between it and the external environment which contains its various publics.

As Grunig and Hunt (1984: 9) put it, ‘they have one foot in the organization and one foot outside’. In this strategic role, public relations are usually seen to be part of the management subsystem. Public relations professionals support other internal subsystems by helping them communicate within the organization itself and by helping them in communicating with external audiences.

2.4. The Role Theory

A role has been defined as “shared, normative expectations that prescribe and explain behaviors” (Biddle, 1986, p. 70), or as “the set of expected behaviors engaged in while performing the job tasks” (Tubre & Collins, 2000, p. 156). Scholars have suggested that role expectations are not limited to job descriptions, but may include “preferences with respect to specific acts and personal characteristics or styles; they may deal with what the person should do, what kind of person he should be, what he should think or believe, and how he should relate to others”. Kahn et al. (1964) described the concept of roles broadly by describing a person’s role set or those who communicate role expectations as including immediate supervisors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, close friends, and family members. In public relations, a role set may include supervisors, coworkers, colleagues, and professional associations.

Role theory in public relations began with a study by Broom and Smith (1979), who conducted an experiment involving both undergraduate and graduate students to study the client

relationship experience based on various role enactments. From their research emerged a typology comprised of four dominant roles. At the more advanced level were the roles of expert prescriber, communication facilitator, and problem-solving process facilitator (Broom & Smith, 1979). At the entry level, it is the communication technician, who is responsible for “preparing and producing communication materials” (Broom, 1982, p. 18).

Today public relation practitioners face a two-way task as to create relationships with both internal and external target groups as well as to create new strategies according to developments in an unsteady social, cultural, environmental, and organizational structure. In this regard, Neil and Lee (2016) argue in order to fulfill these tasks, it is so important that there should be correct definitions for the role of public relation in the organization and also role of the organization in the society. Besides, roles are considered in different ways.

Roles may be defined as a collection of everyday activities of the people. In light of this, Dozier and Broom (1995) in their study classified role of public relation activities as technical and managerial. Technician roles are based on the artistic dimension of public relation and include activities such as writing, editing, preparation of communication messages, media interviews, and etc. Management roles, whereas, focuses on the revealing of problems and solutions. In sum, public relations practitioners need new strategies to respond organizational, social and environmental demands at the same time and in this process they use both of practical and theoretical models and methods from different fields such as communication, sociology, organizational behavior and others. Role theory can contribute to understand the public relations practitioners’ multi functional roles.

In sum, public relations practitioners need new strategies to respond organizational, social and environmental demands at the same time and in this process they use both of practical and theoretical models and methods from different fields such as communication, sociology, organizational behavior and others. Role theory can contribute to understand the public relations practitioners’ multi-functional roles.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This part of the study presents the research methods employed in it. Hence, those common elements such as the research design, subject, sampling and sampling techniques, data gathering Instruments, procedure of data collection, and method of data analysis are treated in separate sections.

3.1. Methods of the Study

This research was employed both qualitative as well as quantitative method because the researcher wants examining the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. In relation to this, Creswell (2012) stated that the most important factor that determines/establishes the research method is the nature of the problem at hand, which is done to accomplish the intended objectives. Due to the subject of the study is characterized as multi-dimensional responses; integrated approach is look upon as an appropriate methodology. Accordingly, to generate necessary information and come up with more rich and comprehensive data, both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Mixed approach) was employed. The former approach might focus on examining the real experiences of the respondents including their own expression and articulation with more subjective views, whereas the latter mostly concentrate on the critical interpretation of quantifiable empirical data. That is, the quantitative method uses appropriate software to analyze the data, whereas the qualitative data was illustrated identical opinions through the course of thematic approach. Hence, considering for generating a clear

picture about the subject of the study, the raw data interpretation and analysis laid on descriptive and analytical statistical methods.

Moreover, the study used descriptive case study design for this study because it used to have sample representative of large population. It used to describe and interpret what an issue is or describes the state of affairs as it exists and concern with conditions or relationships that exists, practices that prevail, point of view, or attitudes that are held and process that are going on. It involves acquiring information about individuals' or groups' characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking questions and tabulating their answers. Hence, its ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2012). In doing so, the researcher examined the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. Thus, the study made conclusions and some recommendations based on the data that collected through in-depth interview and questionnaire.

3.2. Population, Sampling and Sampling Techniques

This study dealt with the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. The Amhara National Regional State Cultural and Tourism Bureau is found in the capital city of the region which has ten zonal bureaus. Hence, the bureau was selected through purposeful sampling techniques. Out of these bureaus, two of them selected through simple random sampling techniques. That is, Bahir Dar and Gonder city was the study area. There are ten public relations officers and two public relations managers in the selected two zonal bureaus. Accordingly, all of them selected through purposeful sampling techniques because they are expected to have better information and knowledge about the actual practice of public relation in their bureaus. Besides, there are about 40 standard hotels in the selected two zone administration, and there were about 158 registered travel agents and tour operators in two zone cultural and tourism bureaus. Accordingly, all hotels owners or managers and tour operators and travel agents were part of the study. They were select through comprehensive sampling because their numbers is manageable to collect data in terms of questionnaire.

3.3. Data Gathering Instruments

The study used primary sources of data for the analysis. These are in-depth interview and questionnaire. The data collected through in-depth interview and questionnaire from public relations managers and officers, and hotel owners/managers, travel agency and tour operators respectively. They are presented as follows:

3.3.1. In-depth Interview

Data for the study collected by using in-depth interview as substantial means to get relevant information as well as supplementary information that gathered through questionnaire. The purpose of this instrument examined the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions, the roles of public relations practitioners do in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, the appropriate tools used by PRs for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region, and the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Hence, the researcher held interview with the selected participants (i.e. public relation officers and public relation managers) and take note or record.

3.3.2. Questionnaire

Questionnaire was one of data gathering instruments. It used to examine the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions, the roles of public relations practitioners do bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, and the appropriate tools used by PRs for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. The questionnaire had 5 point Likert scales (i.e. from strongly agree to strongly disagree).

3.4. Data Gathering Procedure

Before the data collection activities take place, some important steps were undertaken to increase the reliability and validity of the instruments mentioned earlier. The main procedures are stated below.

First, the instruments selected in line with examine the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism Bureau. All instruments were dispatched to my advisor and other experts in the area to have their opinions. Then, they revised and modified according to the experts' opinions. The questionnaire items were translated into Amharic and checked by language experts whether the items contain an equivalent meaning of the target language, and thereby the respondents can understand them. Consequently, a pilot was employed. Based on the pilot run, defective items and irrelevant points were avoided. In addition, ambiguous items and difficult words were modified and simplified to suit the purpose of the study. In order to check the internal consistency of the items of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha test was employed and it was found 0.74 which indicated that it is possible to carry out the instrument to collect information or data for the main study. Next the questionnaires were revised and prepared for distribution. Before distribution took place, the researcher gave a brief orientation to the participants on how to fill the questionnaire. Thereafter, the questionnaire was distributed and collected. In the meantime, an interview was held with the selected participants.

3.5. Data Analysis

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. The statistical data collected from questionnaire and analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean scores were described in the ways that how often each item appears and what it indicates. Then, the whole items analysis was made.

In doing so, the quantitative data collected through questionnaire and analyzed by using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. First, the items categorized, and then comparing the mean scores of each category with their expected mean, and one sample t-test used. Besides, the qualitative data that collected through in-depth interview and analyzed in terms of narration or word description respectively.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussions of the study. The chapter presentation is guided by the objectives and research questions set out for the study. The chapter is presented under the following sections, the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourists' destinations sites in the Amhara region in the case of ANRS cultural and tourism bureau. Most importantly, this study set out to ascertain the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions, the roles of public relations practitioners do bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, and the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Hence, the findings of study are presented respectively as follows.

Accordingly, to accomplish this task, data collected through questionnaire as well as interview. As it was mentioned in the methodological section, the questionnaire was held with 158 respondents. Out of these respondents, 17 questionnaires were discarded. That is, there were 141 respondents for the research. Their responses were analyzed with statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 22.0. In order to have comprehensive image and scrutinize the respondents' report about the study, the questionnaire data employed. In light of descriptive statistics, in order to have the total sum of each Likert –type items, and one sample t-test were employed. Besides, the interview items were categorized based on their themes and analyzed in

terms of word description. Consequently, this section presents the findings pertinent to the study's leading research questions, and its major purposes.

4.2. Presentation of Findings

4.2.1. What are the major public relations activities practiced in the ANRSCT bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions?

To begin with, the study was focused on the practices and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourists' destinations sites in the Amhara region in the case of ANRS cultural and tourism bureau. That is, it was one of the major objectives of the study to find out the level of major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Because it is believed that using public relation practices has its own impact on marketing and promoting of tourist destination sites in the region. Accordingly, the data collected through questionnaire as well as the interview, and analyzed in terms of mean comparison and word description respectively. With respect to this, the participants' responses were analyzed by using mean scores. In line with this, Table -1 presents the respective findings.

Table 1 shows the responses given by the participants about the major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites while they carry out their duties. According to the result of their responses, it can be assumed that the practices at different levels. In line with this, the observed mean score and standard deviation was compared with expected mean score. Accordingly, the observed mean score and the expected mean score were found to be 3.299 with 0.545 standard deviation and 3 respectively. It seems that observed mean score is greater than the expected mean score. This shows that there is significant

difference between the two mean score. This may indicates that there was practice of public relation tourism bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites.

Moreover, one sample t-test was employed in order to check or see if there was significant difference or not among the two mean scores. Accordingly, the result of one sample t-test asserted that there was no significant difference between the two mean score as we can observe in Table 2. That is, it indicates that there was practice of public relation in tourism bureau especially on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. Hence, it is possible to say that there was significant level of public relations’ practices that focused on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation result of major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRs practices	141	3.2989	.54586	.11912

Table 2. One sample t-testresult of major public relations activities practiced in the bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
PR practices	2.509	140	.021	.29889	.0504	.5474

Furthermore, data was also collected through interview and the results are presented here. The Bahir Dar city's tourism bureau manager noted that public holidays are recorded and transmit or broadcast through radio and TV programs, prepared print products and upload on YouTube. The public relations officers help us by preparing brochures and providing information for tourists about destination sites. In relation to this, Bahir Dar city's tourism bureau public relation officer indicated that the office tried to prepare brochures that help tourists to get information about the region's destination sites. Besides, the city communication officer indicated that they tried to prepare news about the region's tourism.

One of the Gondar city hotel manager pointed out that the city's tourism bureau tried to promote the tourist destination sites through different media outlets like social media though their effort was not enough. On the other hand, the selected hotel manager in Bahir Dar city asserted that there was face to face discussion with the bureau and tried to work together, and it did not promote the tourist destination sites as it was expected. In light of this, one of the tour guides who have been working in hotel and tour guide at Gondar said that tourism bureau did not promote tourist destination sites like Kenya and Tanzania through international media as BBC and CNN.

Gondar city cultural and tourism bureau officer said that they are doing more on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites especially by using radio, television, websites, social media, printing like brochures. Hence, they can receive more tourists both from foreign and domestic. For example within nine months it got more than 40 hours broadcast through TV both abroad and in the country. There was also promotion to 350 tour operators through website, and documentary film was produced and promoted through BBC and CNN. Gondar city cultural and tourism bureau public relation officer also said that they have air time in Fana FM that helps the bureau to promote tourist destination sites.

4.2.2. What roles do the public relations practitioners mainly play in the bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region?

The second objective of the study was mainly focused on the role of public relations practitioners play in the bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Hence, the data was collected through questionnaire and analyzed in terms of observed and expected means comparison and one sample t-test in order to check whether there was significant difference between the two mean scores or not. Hence, the result of the study was presented in the following tables.

According to Table 3, the result of the observed mean score and expected mean score were found in different levels or degrees. That is, the expected mean and the observed mean score were found to be 3 and 3.277 respectively. This refers that the observed mean score (3.277) was found higher than the expected mean score (3). This may indicate that the roles of public relation practitioners were found to be higher than the expected level. This may leads to say that of the public relation practitioners' roles can be consider as executive as well as technician of the organization.

In addition, one sample t-test was used in order to observe whether the two mean scores have got significant difference or not. Hence, the result of one sample t-test ($t=1.2$, $df=140$, $p<0.05$) revealed that was significant difference between the two mean scores. The role public relations practitioners' was not significantly employed in their bureau especially for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. Therefore, one can deduced that there were executive and technician roles of public relations in their bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites though their effort was not found to be significant as we can observe Table 4.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation result of public relations practitioners' roles that mainly play in their bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PR roles	141	3.2778	.56713	.23153

Table 4. One sample t-test result of public relations practitioners' roles that mainly play in their bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region

	Test Value = 3					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
PR roles	1.200	140	.284	.27777	-.3174	.8729

Moreover, an interview was hold with different interviews and the results are present here. Bahir Dar cultural and tourism bureau officer indicated that the public relation officer is appointed by the political commitment rather than professional. This may affect the implementation of public relation towards marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. Similarly, Gonder city's cultural and tourism bureau manager also agreed that the public relation officer of the office is assigned based on political assignment. This indicates that they are not professional or they do not have professional training on journalism and communication or public relation in particular. In addition both managers added that the public relation officers do not have managerial role in the bureau. Hence, it is possible to say that they do have technician role that mainly carry out day to day public relations activities that the managers order him without the PR officer involvement in planning.

In relation to Bahir Dar city's cultural and tourism public relation officer, he reported that he was assigned by his political commitment rather than his profession. Besides, he had not got a chance to involve at managerial level. So he had only technician role in the bureau. He carried out duties that pass from the bureau manager without planning together. Besides, Behar Dar city cultural and tourism bureau public relation officer also added that he did not have managerial role in his office. He usually takes order from the manager and carried out. So he did not plan any public relation tasks. Thus, we can understand that the public relation officers were assigned without their profession and they did not have managerial role in the bureau, so they are working as technician.

4.2.3. What are the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions?

The last objective of this research was to assess the challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Accordingly, the data was collected through questionnaire as well as interview and analyzed in terms of expected and observed mean comparison, and one sample t-test. Besides, the data also gathered through interview and analyzed in terms of word description. Hence, the result of the study was stated in the following tables.

As we can observe Table 4, the result of observed mean score was different from the expected mean score. The result of observed mean score (3.336) was greater than the expected mean score (3). This indicates that there were challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. These can be lack of understanding among the staff (i.e. both top managements and staffs), lack of equipments and resources, and others. Hence, we can assume that the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges that affect marketing and promoting of tourist destination sites in the region.

Moreover, Table 6 presented the result of one sample t-test of the above two mean scores (i.e. expected and observed mean scores) if they do have significant difference or not between them. Hence, the result of one sample t-test ($t=1.992$, $df=140$, $p<0.05$) pointed out that there was significant difference between the two mean scores test value. This implies that there were challenges in public relations practice for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Therefore, the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges in order to carry out their duties on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region though they tried to do their duties with these challenges.

Table 5. Mean and Standard deviation results of challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Challenges	141	3.3369	.33817	.16908

Table 6. One sample t-test results of challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Challenges	1.992	140	.140	.33688	-.2012	.8750

In addition, the Bahir Dar city's tourism bureau manager said that they could not use the region's rich tourism resources. Some of the reasons were: there was lack of well organized information about the region's tourist sites; lack of infrastructure; lack of coordination with the

region's communication office to organized tourist destination sites and promote them for tourists; lack of professionals especially lack of strategic marketing professionals who can run the task based on plan; lack of attention from government; lack of public awareness on protecting heritages; lack of museums; and lack of budget. The Bahir Dar city communication officer also said that there was lack of promoting the region's rich tourist destination sites though there is some effort in promoting the sector through social media. This can be seen that the tourist have better information than us. The reasons are lack of professionals, lack of coordination among stakeholders, and others.

One of the tour operator reported that they tried to provide transport service for the tourists as far as they can though they do not good support from the region's tourism and communication bureaus, and they did not see any public relation work on tourism though there were news report on mass media. In light of this, one of the Gonder city hotel manager believed that the tourism bureau did not do anything regarding preserving the well known tourist destination sites in the region because they are found at high risk level. The bureau also has limited human resources, and the hotels, tour operators and others did not work together and promote tourist destination sites. On the other hand, the selected hotel manager in Bahir Dar city mentioned that the bureau did not make an effort to develop infrastructures for tourist destination sites.

One of the tour guide in Gonder stated that the bureau do not have enough professional workers that can promote tourist destination sites in the region. The office also has lack of coordination among stakeholders. The other hotel manager also said that unrest or security in the area and lack of professional workers was challenges for tourism in the area. Besides, the Gonder city cultural and tourism bureau officer stated that their office has limitation in develop tourist destination sites, and there was also security problem in the area that affect the tourism. There was also lack of coordination among different sectors. Gonder city cultural and tourism bureau public relation officer also indicated that there was lack of budget and professional employees are problems for tourism.

4.3. Discussions

Based on the results obtained, this section presents the discussion on what the findings implied, practical indicators, the possible conclusions and recommendations drawn. It also attempted to answer the leading research questions, and showed the study's relevance to prior research and theory. The discussion interwoven with the extent literature went on under the leading research questions raised earlier as thematic priorities.

4.3.1. The major public relations activities practiced in the ANRSCT bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions

Literature in the area of public relation role and tourism studies confirms that the public relations practitioners' roles. For example, Stancioiu (2000) stated that public relations may support the tourism public sector, building a positive image and a favorable attitude towards the tourism product, respectively the tourism destination envisaged. Besides, Kotler, Rein, Haider (2001) said that public relations in tourism are a key element of the marketing mix, which resorts to "general influence tools" such as the relations with the media materialized in press tours, conferences on tourism, fairs and expositions, promotional activities, special events. The purpose of marketing and communication in the opinion of, is to inform, persuade, encourage, or more specifically, to influence the potential customer or trade intermediaries (travel agents, tour operators, reservation services, hotel and charter broker) through communications, to think and act in a certain manner. Communication may be undertaken in a variety of ways, including advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling and publicity, and public relation (Bhaita, 2006). In doing so, with the underlining the assumption of public relation practices has its impact on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites, the researcher tried to address this issue in the study.

The result of the current study revealed that observed mean score of public relation practice is greater than the expected mean score. This may indicate that there was practice of public relation tourism bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. Besides, the result of one sample t-test asserted that there was no significant difference between the two mean scores. That is, it indicates that there was practice of public relation in tourism bureau especially on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. Hence, it is possible to say that there was significant level of public relations' practices that focused on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Moreover, majority of the interviewees mentioned that there was some effort in marketing and promoting tourist destination sites through different communication tools such as TV program, radio, prints, YouTube and others though the effort that was made in Gonder city by far than Bahir Dar city because Gonder city's promote tourist destination sites through BBC and CNN. This finding is consistent to recent study which made by Ajake (2014) indicated that tourism marketing communication tools such as television, radio, internet, handbills, billboards, flyers, family and friends' recommendation, travel agency desk information etc. were considered. These marketing strategies and marketing communication tools requires intermittent evaluation to determine their level of influence on tourists' decision to choose a specific destination for visit.

4.3.2. The roles do the public relations practitioners mainly play in the bureau for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region

Dozier and Broom (1995) in their study classified role of public relation activities as technical and managerial. Technician roles are based on the artistic dimension of public relation and include activities such as writing, editing, preparation of communication messages, media interviews, and etc. Management roles, whereas, focuses on the revealing of problems and solutions. In sum, public relations practitioners need new strategies to respond organizational, social and environmental demands at the same time and in this process they use both of practical and theoretical models and methods from different fields such as communication, sociology, organizational behavior and others. Besides, Kahn et al. (1964) described the concept of roles

broadly by describing a person's role set or those who communicate role expectations as including immediate supervisors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, close friends, and family members. In public relations, a role set may include supervisors, coworkers, colleagues, and professional associations.

Based on the finding of the questionnaire, it seems that the roles of public relation practitioners were found to be higher than the expected level. This may lead to say that of the public relation practitioners' roles can be considered as executive as well as technician of the organization. The result of one sample t-test revealed that there was a significant difference between the two mean scores. The role of public relations practitioners was not significantly employed in their bureau especially for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. Therefore, one can deduce that there were executive and technician roles of public relations in their bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites though their effort was not found to be significant. However, most of the interviews indicated that the public relation officers were assigned without their profession and they did not have a managerial role in the bureau, so they are working as technicians. Similarly, Broom & Smith (1979) revealed that the more advanced level of public relation officers' practices were the roles of expert prescriber, communication facilitator, and problem-solving process facilitator. On the other hand, Broom (1982) suggested that in an organization all levels are the communication technicians, who are responsible for preparing and producing communication materials.

4.3.3. The challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the regions

The importance of tourism marketing as emphasized by Hannam (2004) was in recognition of the emerging challenges posed by the growing number of tourists' destinations which have placed at the disposal of a tourist a variety of attractions in abundant quantity from a large number of competing nations.

The result of the questionnaire showed that the observed mean score of challenges of public relation in marketing and promoting tourist destination sites was greater than the expected mean score. This indicates that there were challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. These can be lack of understanding among the staff (i.e. both top managements and staffs), lack of equipments and resources, and others. Hence, we can assume that the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges that affect marketing and promoting of tourist destination sites in the region. Besides, the result of one sample t-test pointed out that there was significant difference between the two mean scores test value. This implies that there were challenges in public relations practice for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the region. Therefore, the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges in order to carry out their duties on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region though they tried to do their duties with these challenges. Moreover, majority of the interviewees reported that there was lack of well organized information about the region's tourist sites; lack of infrastructure; lack of coordination with the region's communication office to organized tourist destination sites and promote them for tourists; lack of professionals especially lack of strategic marketing professionals who can run the task based on plan; lack of attention from government; lack of public awareness on protecting heritages; lack of museums; and lack of budget. In relation to this, Wilcox et al. (2009) pointed out that public relations are more than a necessity in the tourism sector. To meet the constant challenges, the public relations in the tourism sector should evolve towards turning into a management function, which should lead to responsible approach. The literature argues that the public relations represent the fifth "P" of a marketing strategy: product, price, position and promotion

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

It has been established that the tourism sector presents numerous development opportunities to countries (UNWTO, 2012). Accordingly, the government of Ethiopia has been developed strategic plan for tourism development in the country. It has also been noted that the media like public relation is a power tool that can make or break the tourism industry and therefore its involvement in the tourism industry is essential.

This study set out to ascertain the practice and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism bureau. Accordingly, the study found out that there was practice of public relation in tourism bureau especially on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. Besides, majority of the interviewees mentioned that there was some effort in marketing and promoting tourist destination sites through different communication tools such as TV program, radio, prints, You Tube and others though the effort that was made in Gonder city by far than Bahir Dar city because Gonder city's promote tourist destination sites through BBC and CNN.

The study also revealed that the role public relations practitioners' was not significantly employed in their bureau especially for marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in Amhara region. That is, there were executive and technician roles of public relations in their bureau on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites though their effort was not found to be significant. However, most of the interviews indicated that the public relation officers were assigned without their profession and they did not have managerial role in the bureau, so they are working as technician.

Moreover, the study asserted that there were challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites. These can be lack of understanding among the staff (i.e. both top managements and staffs), lack of equipments and resources, and others. Hence, we can assume that the public relation practitioners' had faced challenges that affect marketing and promoting of tourist destination sites in the region. Besides, majority of the interviewees reported that there was lack of well organized information about the region's tourist sites; lack of infrastructure; lack of coordination with the region's communication office to organized tourist destination sites and promote them for tourists; lack of professionals especially lack of strategic marketing professionals who can run the task based on plan; lack of attention from government; lack of public awareness on protecting heritages; lack of museums; and lack of budget.

5.3. Recommendations

The most important goals of the study are to examine the practice and challenges of public relations on marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the case of ANRS Cultural and Tourism bureau. Hence, the following recommendations are forwarded based on the findings of the study. That is, the findings of the study suggest a number of recommendations.

- Since public relations contribute to our understanding of the world, it contributes to construction of social reality as far as tourism is concerned. Therefore, Ethiopian public relation in general Amhara region cultural and tourism public relations in particular should proactively focus on tourism and its related issues of great concern in the region and in the country at large. Consequently, the Ethiopian Cultural and Tourism minister, the regional tourism and cultural bureau, civil society organizations that have an interest in tourism should ensure that the public relations do not only cover tourism activities but give it more prominence as well.
- There should be an increase effort by Ethiopian cultural and tourism minister to deploy content in light of promoting and marketing tourist destination sites to uphold and

encourage tourism amongst Ethiopians and foreigners. This can be done by positioning places and events within the country as destinations of choice through different media outlets. These efforts will serve as source of tourism knowledge and inspire tourists to patronize tourism experiences they have read or watch about.

- The regional cultural and tourism bureau should provide short and long term training for public relation officers that can help the carry out their duties effectively. Besides, the bureau should give much attention for the role of public relations especially giving managerial and technician roles which help the public relation officers to involve from planning to implement the tasks.
- The regional cultural and tourism bureau should work hard in order to minimize the challenges of public relation practices. Accordingly, it should work together with public relation officers to alleviate the challenges that faced the bureau.
- Other researchers that have interest to carry out their studies in such area should take into consideration variables that did not consider in this paper and other data gathering instruments to fill the gaps of the study and come up a comprehensive finding.

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Appendixes

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Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to examine practices and challenges of public relations marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the case of ANRS cultural and tourism bureau. Therefore, in dealing with the following items of the questionnaire, you kindly requested to provide genuine information about it. Your responses contribute a lot to the success of the study. I would like to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose. You should not write your name and any identification on the questionnaire.

I want to thank in advance for your cooperation.

Part I: The statements below refer to the activities currently performed by the public relations department or division in your organization. Use the following scale to indicate the extent of your disagreement or agreement with the statements:

1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral (Neither disagree nor agree) 4=Agree 5=Strongly agree

I. The CURRENT activity of the public relations department in our organization is ...

No	Description	SDA	DA	Nu	Ag	SAg
1	...to explain to top management the impact of their behaviour (obtained through research) on key external publics (e.g. media, investors, communities).					
2	...to keep a media clipping service (clip articles that appeared in the media about the organisation).					
3	...to act as an 'early warning system' to top management before issues in society erupt into a crisis for my organisation.					
4	...to take responsibility for the success or the failure of Public relations plans.					
5	...to organise special events (e.g. open houses/ exhibitions/ gala evenings).					
6	...to act as an advocate for key internal publics by explaining their views to top management.					
7	to develop public relations strategy that supports corporate strategy.					
8	to produce audiovisual materials for presentations.					
9	...to initiate dialogue with pressure groups in society that					

	are limiting the organisation's autonomy(e.g. legislators/ environmentalists/ consumer advocates).					
10	...to manage the implementation of public relations plans.					
11	...to explain views/ opinions that exist in society to top management.					
12	...to write articles for the organization's publications.					
13	...to bring to top management's attention organizational behavior that erodes public trust.					
14	...to take responsibility for the success or the failure of Public relations strategy.					
15	...to bring to top management's attention societal expectations for socially responsible behavior.					
16	...to edit public relations materials (e.g. speeches/ annual report).					
17	...to explain to top management the impact of the organization's behavior on society.					
18	...to monitor the performance of public relations practitioners sub-divisions.					
19	...to express the company's stance on social responsibility to society in order to gain public trust.					
20	...to generate publicity (e.g. write media releases).					
21	...to act as an advocate for key external publics by explaining their views to top management.					

II. The role of Public Relations in Practices

A. Public relation in our organization is/has

No	Description	SDA	DA	Nu	Ag	SAg
1	...well organized in trained public relations related human power.					
2	...well recognized and influential					
3	...highly knowledgeable and perform complex activities					
4	...its own budget allocation					
5	... Independently functions every activity it is concerned with					
6	...viewed as propaganda and manipulation of peoples', mind					

III. The Possible Challenges of Public Relations

B. Public relation in our organization

No	Description	SDA	DA	Nu	Ag	SAg
1	...is well understood by both the top managers and staff members					
2	...is clearly identifiable from other disciplines (such as marketing and communication).					
3	...is well equipped and resourceful					
4	...is to handle public complaints (if any) properly					

Department of Journalism

Interview

This interview is designed to examine practices and challenges of public relations marketing and promoting tourist destination sites in the case of ANRS cultural and tourism bureau. Therefore, in dealing with the following items of the interview, you kindly requested to provide genuine information about it. Your responses contribute a lot to the success of the study. I would like to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose. You should not tell your name and any identification for the interview.

I want to thank in advance for your cooperation.

Interview with official person of tourist office

1. What do you think about the present situation of the tourism industry in Amhara region?
2. What kind of media tools you employ to promote tourism destination sites in the region?
3. Do you think the tourism industry of the region can be developed through strategic tourism marketing?
4. What kind of marketing strategies are needed to promote tourism in the region?
5. What factors affect the development of the tourism marketing of the region tourist destination sites? Or what do you think are the major challenges of promoting and marketing Amhara region major tourism destinations?

Interview with the stakeholders

1. How could PR practitioners help in tourism marketing or tourism development of the Amhara region?
2. What is your opinion about the local tourism and cultural bureau PR officers' practice on tourism development?
3. What kind of media tools tourism and cultural bureau employ to promote tourism destination sites in the region?
4. How PRs practitioners could help tourism marketing of the region tourism destination sites?
5. What do you think are the major challenges of promoting and marketing Amhara region major tourism destinations?

Interview themes for the PR or Tourism marketing expert

1. What do you think about tourism of a marketing of the region? How can it be developed and why is it easy or difficult to be developed?
2. What kind of media tools you employ to promote tourism destination sites in the region?
3. How can strategic tourism marketing help the region get more tourists?
4. Do you think tourism marketing only could help the regions' tourism industry or are there factors that also need to be considered?
5. What do you think are the major challenges of promoting and marketing Amhara region major tourism destinations?