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The Impact of Megaprojects on Branding Ethiopia as an Appealing Tourist Destination

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of megaprojects on a destination branding and then proceeds to examine cognitive, affective and unique image and their significance as perceived by tourists. A multi stage sample of 400 external publics was surveyed. Factor analysis together with SEM is used and tested whether and how much the influencing factors predicted a significant amount of the variance in travel. The result shows Megaprojects have largest significant effect on cognitive, affective and unique image development. And there is a strong relationship between mega infrastructural facilities development and perceived destination image.

***Keywords*:** megaprojects; destination branding; cognitive; affective; unique image.

JEL Classification: D83; Z32; Z33.

Introduction

Destination images abroad and at home are widely regarded as a destination's intangible soft-power resource (Hosany *et al.* 2006; Nye and Joseph 2004). While, externally becoming essential elements of a state's strategic asset, they, internally, contribute to political capital for both democratic systems and authoritarian regimes (Chen 2010). The concept of destination or place branding has recently come into play, evident, several governments' initiatives in both developed and developing ones to increase destinations performance by developing a sense of quality in their visitors' experiences using communication tools (O'Neill and Margaret, 1994). Branding destination images helps to gain a favorable image of residents, visitors, investors, factories or entrepreneurs through building their cognitive, affective and unique image (Khondkar *et al.* 2012). This can be done by using mega projects.

Megaprojects that cost a billion dollar of investments can facilitate the destination's image branding as it attracts lot of public attention because of substantial impacts on communities, environment, and budget (Aaltonen and Jaakko, 2010; Orueta and Fainstein, 2008). Such projects are not only pleasurable in themselves but attractive to investors and visitors throughout the globe. Meanwhile, whether or not mega projects help to brand a destination and/or nation image, it remains an interesting and important issue, both academically and policy-wise. Applying mega projects on tourism dimension i.e. cognitive, affective, and unique image, and approaching the issue from a destination branding perspective by investigating a substantial set of hypotheses were the purpose of this research.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Destination branding

Destination branding is the set of marketing communication that used to show a destination's unique identity by differentiating a place from its competitor's activities (Tasci and Metin Kozak, 2006). It supports the creation of brand elements; consistently conveys the expectation of tourists and consumers that uniquely associated with the destination and reinforces the emotional connection between the visitors and the destination image (Qu et al. 2011).

Destination brands have functions of identification and differentiation of nation's unique assets. In the branding literature, the meaning of "identification" involves the explication of the source of the product to consumers. While a product in general terms represents a physical offering, which can be easily modified, a place as a product is a large entity which encloses various material and non-material elements to represent it. In addition, a destination brand used to differentiate itself from its competitors based on its special meaning and attachment given by consumers and differentiates themselves according to the images that communicate using marketing or none marketing communication tools to tourists or consumers and how these are perceived by the potential customer (Qu et al. 2011).

1.2. Identity and image in destination branding

It is widely acknowledged that tourism destinations must be included in the consumers' evoked set that affects place image and that identity that ultimately affects decisions (Lopes 2011). Previous studies argue that image and identity are critical ingredients for a successful destination brand (Florek *et al*. 2006; Nandan 2005; Roy 2008; Qu *et al*. 2011). The confusion exists as to the difference between the two concepts. One of the significant points of differentiation is that they are generated based on two different perspectives; the sender's and the receiver's (Florek 2006; Roy 2008). In short, identity is created by the sender whereas the image is perceived by the receiver.

Brand identity in marketing reflects the contribution of all brand elements to awareness and image. It provides a direction, purpose, and meaning for the brand and is central to a brand's strategic vision and the driver of brand associations (Blomkvist *et al.* 2012; Keller *et al.* 2011). On the other hand, a brand image can be defined as consumer perceptions of a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer's memory (Aaker 2012; Pappu 2005). To brand a destination, the sender, in this case, the destination marketer projects a destination brand identity through all the features and activities that differentiate the destination from other competing destinations (Qu *et al*. 2011). Meanwhile, the receiver in our case tourists perceives the image of the place, which is formed and stored in their minds (Tasci and Gartner 2007).

The relationship between identity and image in destination branding is interrelated (Hosnay et al. 2008; Ghodeswar 2008). Brand image plays a significant role in building brand identity, whereas the brand image is also a reflection of brand identity. Consumers build a destination image in their minds based on the brand identity projected by the destination marketers (Che and Phou 2013). Then, destination marketers establish and improve brand identity based on their knowledge about consumer's brand image on the particular destination (Esch *et al*. 2006). Consequently, destination image is critical to creating a positive and familiar brand identity. The positive brand image is feasible through emphasizing strong, favorable, and unique brand associations. That is, consumers, perceive positive brand image when brand associations are implemented to suggest the benefits of purchasing from the specific brand (Cheng-Hsui 2001). This creates favorable feelings toward the brand and differentiates it from alternatives with its unique image.

1.3. Branding and brand associations

Brand associations influence consumer evaluations toward the brand and brand choice which includes intentions to visit or purchase product from the destination. Brand associations, in brand literature, are classified into three major categories: attributes, benefits, and attitudes (Reza and Samiei 2012). Attributes are those descriptive features that characterize a brand; it is what a consumer thinks the brand is or has to offer and what is involved with its purchase or consumption (Ekinci et al. 2013). The benefits that may occur are the personal value consumers associate with the brand attributes in the form of functional, symbolic, experiential attachments which ultimately affect destination image (Chi and Qu 2008).

The image of a place is also an important unique asset that affects perceived image of the destination before arrival (Komppula 2014). Besides, research shows that the image itself is the beginning point of tourist's expectation, which is eventually a determinant of tourist behaviors either to visit or not. Destination image exerts two important roles for both destination owner and tourists (Baloglu and McCleary 1999). The first role involves informing the supply systems of what to promote, how to promote, who to promote to and, for the actual product

that is purchased, how to design that product. The second role involves informing the tourist as to what to purchase, to what extent that purchase is consistent with needs and self-image, and how to behave and consumers.

In the tourism literature, it is widely acknowledged that the overall image of a destination is influenced by cognitive and affective evaluations (Qu et al. 2011; Gallarza et al. 2002; Kim and Richardson). Cognitive evaluation refers to beliefs and knowledge about an object whereas affective evaluation refers to feelings about the object. Unfortunately, the majority of image studies treated destination image as a cognitive evaluation. Only few studies employed both cognitive and affective components in understanding the overall image of a destination. It is important to consider both cognitive and affective components of the destination image to build a comprehensive destination branding model.

Image Formation Process as the most comprehensive model toward a destination branding and researches pointed out the compatibility of Image Formation Process and types of brand association. The authors argue that Gartner's cognitive and affective image components are conceptually parallel to Keller's attribute and benefit brand associations. Further other researcher supports the notion that brand associations in destination branding should include cognitive and affective image components that are also considered in this study too (Pike 2009).

Although studies show that cognitive and affective image components are hierarchically correlated to form a destination image and it is still possible that each cognitive and affective brand image component would have unique contributions to the overall image formation (Qu et al. 2011). And the formation of such association is affected by different factors namely advertising, public relation, mega-events, mega projects and other traditional communication channels that have potential on creating brand awareness (Mowforth and Munt 2015).

Destination marketing activities seek to raise awareness and positively impact the image of the destination. Meanwhile, brand awareness relates to the strength of brand presence in the consumer's mind (Hutter et al. 2013; Kapferer and Pierre 2016). To Aaker (1996) brand awareness depends on the level of involvement with the brand, ranging from simple brand recognition to top-of-mind awareness over alternative brands that may result in product curiosity (Aaker 1996). However, tourists who are unaware of a given destination will probably never consider it as an option (assaker et al. 2011). Empirical researches show brand awareness contributes to brand (Ruão et al. 2016).

Studies show the contribution of destination branding to the performance of the place. In the study made by Konecnik's (2006) and Konecnik and Gartner's (2007), awareness was an important dimension in producing a significant effect on destination brand experience that highly affected by communication tools. Meanwhile, researchers believe, like that of mega-events, megaprojects have an impact on consumer and tourists on creates an awareness of the destination that may have a positive or negative image of the place.

Literature has shown that each association to the place is created either by traditional or modern communication tools would have a different level of impact on the cognitive, affective and overall image formation because brand associations are not considered equally weighted in terms of performance to consumers (Qu et al. 2011). Consequently, this study proposes that mega projects that defined as large-scale, complex ventures that typically cost a billion dollars or more, take many years to develop and build, involving multiple public and private stakeholders, are transformational, and impact millions of people attracting a lot of public attention because of substantial impacts on communities, environment, and budgets, an independent will have positive effects on cognitive and affective components as separate brand associations nation. Hypothesis 1 and 2 are established as: The current study examines the effect of mega-projects on cognitive and affective image components of brand associations that influence destination image.

H1: Megaprojects positively affects cognitive image visitors on a given a destination.

H2: Megaprojects positively affects the Affective image of the visitor's overall image of a destination.

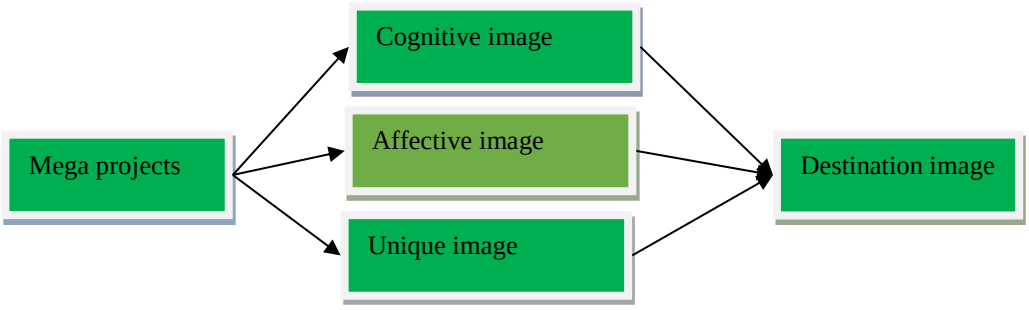
In addition to the cognitive and affective image, a unique image is highlighted as a construct that envisages the overall image of a destination. According to Echtner and Ritchie (1993), the overall image of a destination should be viewed and measured based on three dimensions of attributes: holistic, functional-psychological, and unique-common characteristics that are highly affected by communication tools (Hutter et al. 2013). Uniqueness is particularly important due to its influence on differentiation among similar destinations in the target consumers' minds and this can be communicated using traditional and modern marketing communication tools and other techniques like mega projects and mega events. One of the purposes of branding is to differentiate its product from those of competitors. Similarly, destination branding should emphasize a destination's unique image to be differentiated from competing destinations by consumers. In fact, destination branding is partly defined as a way to communicate the expectations of a satisfactory travel experience that is uniquely associated with the particular destination.

Uniqueness provides a compelling reason why travelers should select a particular destination over alternatives. The positive brand image is partly achieved through the uniqueness of brand associations to the brand in memory (Qu et al. 2011). Thus, the researchers believe that mega projects that called as “privileged particles of the development process" (Flyvbjerg 2014); "Trait making," that designed to ambitiously change the structure of society considered as a preferred delivery model for goods and services across a range of businesses and sectors, affects unique image of the country which is critical to establish the overall image in the tourist’s minds. Therefore, it is deduced that:

H3: Megaprojects positively affect the unique image of the visitor's overall image of a destination.

Hence based on the literature the following model is developed.

Figure 1 - A conceptual model for the impact on megaproject on destination image



Source: Own calibration 2018

2. Methodology

The data were collected in Addis Ababa over a time span of eight weeks between March and May 2018, choosing randomly one day per week for a total of eight data collection days. The sample consisted of international tourists who visited Ethiopia. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to a convenience sample in places heavily populated by visitors: National Museum of Ethiopia, the African Union, and untied nation conference area and tourism information kiosks. These places were considered appropriate for data collection for two main reasons. First, they are well-known parts of the city and hence attract a cross-section of foreign publics, which is representative of the visitors’ population as a whole. Second, a pilot study showed that the average time required to complete the questionnaire is eight minutes, and therefore visitors who are waiting in line to enter a site have sufficient time to complete it.

From 450 questionnaires distributed, 419 questionnaires collected; however, 19 were poorly filled. Thus, a total of 400 questionnaires were coded for data analysis. Respondents came from seven continents. A majority of the respondents (57.1%) were younger than 35 years old, and 64.4% were female. Approximately 79.8% of the respondents had a postsecondary degree (i.e. college, university or equivalent degree). Almost half of the respondents were coming to Ethiopia for the first time (47.8%), while the remainder were returning (second visit or more), and 68 % were in Ethiopia for the conference, while the 32% for business, leisure, and another purpose.

2.1. Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of five major sections. The first section was developed to assess each respondent’s cognitive image of Ethiopia as a travel destination. To generate a complete list of the respondent’s perceptions associated with cognitive images, Etchner and Ritchie’s (1993) items were adapted. 24 items relating to the cognitive image were selected and respondents were asked to rate Ethiopia as a travel destination on each attribute based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging between 1 strongly disagree (SD) and 5 strongly agree (SA). In the second section, measurement items developed by Hanyu (1993), and Walmsley and Jekins (1993), on affective image of a destination were used (Hanyu 1993; Walmsley and Jenkins 1993). A 7-point semantic differential scale was used for affective dimension that includes arousing–sleepy, pleasant–unpleasant, exciting–gloomy and relaxing–distressing at the major items. The third section analyzed the unique image of a destination. This was measured based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging between 1 strongly disagree (SD) and 5 strongly agree (SA).

The fourth section asked respondents' behavioral intention to revisit Ethiopia and to recommend the country as a favorable destination to others (5-point Likert-type scale, 1 very low; 5 very high).The fifth section asked respondents' knowledge and impact of mega-projects on their intention to revisit Ethiopia and to recommend the country as a favorable destination to others (5-point Liker type scale, 1 very low; 5 very high). The final section was devoted to collecting demographic information about the respondents; also including the number of times they had visited Ethiopia, the length of their stay and the people with whom they were visiting the country.

2.2. Data analyses

Factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used to examine the impact of mega projects on the underlying dimensions of the cognitive, affective, unique image components of Ethiopia. Several fit indexes such as CMIN/DF CFI, GFI, and RMSEA were employed to assess the degree to which the measurement model fit the observed data [49; 50]. The cut of criteria employed in this study was 5 to 1 for the ration of chi-square to the degree of freedom (CMIN/DF) [51], values greater than .90 for comparative fit index (CFI) and good of fit index (GFI) and a value less than 0.008 for root mean square (RMSEA) (Byrne 2001). In the end, the analyses were conducted using the statistical packages IBM SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 21.

3. Analysis and discussion

3.1. Factor analysis for destination image dimension

Factor analysis was conducted for a priori dimensionality of the cognitive, affective and unique image. The analysis was performed on the 37 cognitive, affective and unique image items to reduce data and identify the underlying dimensions. A CF with orthogonal rotation method (Varimax) and latent root criterion (eigenvalues >1) was used. As recommended by Hair et al. (2014), factor loadings greater than 0.50 were considered necessary for practical significance (Dyer et al. 2007).

Table 1 - Summarized Factor analysis output for tourism dimension

	Engine value	% of variance	Factor loading	Commonalities	Coronach alpha
Cognitive image					
I like to visit Ethiopia if money was not a problem.			.798	.861	
Ethiopia is rich in natural beauty.			.785	.869	
The country is safe to visit.	17.124	85.622	.806	.775	.960
It is easy to find accommodations in the country.			.742	.875	
I consider myself loyal to traveling to this country.			.775	.899	
This country would be my first choice for traveling.			.720	.884	
	Engine value	% of variance	Factor loading	Commonalities	Coronach alpha
I trust this country as a travel destination			.835	.897	
Affective image					
My travel to this country is relaxing.			.835	.897	
My travel to this country is arousing.	.937	4.685	.532	.949	.966
My travel to this country is exciting.			.663	.954	
My travel to this country is pleasant.			.669	.945	
Unique image					
Ethiopia is rich in historic buildings and monuments.			.793	.793	
This country has vibrant city life and urban attractions.			.796	.796	
The country has a clean and unspoiled environment.			.652	.652	
The country has a unique local attraction place.			.642	.642	
The country is rich in outdoor entertainment activities.	.429	2.145	.752	.752	.986
In overall Ethiopia has the necessary asset tourists need.			.652	.819	
I believe those mega projects can attract tourists more			.665	.795	
I believe those mega projects mentioned above can improve Ethiopian image globally			.633	.805	
I think Megaprojects help the nation to have a good image in the eye of tourists.			.601	.912	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.					

Source: Own survey 2018

Factors with high cross-loadings (>0.40) or low communalities (<0.30) were candidates for elimination (Farrell and Rudd 2009). After inspecting the item content for domain representation, sixteen items were deleted. Applying the same empirical and substantive considerations in item trimming, one additional item was deleted. A final three-factor model was estimated with the remaining 20 items. The factor solution accounted for approximately 93 % of the total variance. Table 1 illustrates the 20-item factor structure. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity were computed to assess the appropriateness of factor analyses to the data. The KMO value was 0.938; Bartlett's test was significant at the 0.00 level (p (0.000)

As noted by Hair et al. (2014), both results demonstrate the factorability of the matrices being considered. Cronbach's alpha used to test reliability in the study. Cronbach's alphas were calculated for each of the three dimensions. The Cronbach's alpha of the three scales was range between 0.960 to .986. Dimensions were labeled based on highly loaded items and the common characteristics of items they included. The factors' labels are the 'cognitive, affective and unique image (see Table 1).

3.2. Model-measurement for cognitive, affective and unique image dimension of destination branding vs. Mega projects

The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) that represents the overall degree of fit, but this index was 0.996 that is well above the threshold value. However, GFI influenced by sample size much [50]. Meanwhile, the root mean residual (RMR) indicated the average residuals between observed and estimated input matrices. The RMR of 0.019 deemed acceptable at .08. As a complement to the basic measures, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation was examined and found to be good (RMSEA = 0.021): a value of about 0.08 or less would indicate a reasonable approximate overall fit. While the absolute measures might fall within reasonable levels, the incremental fit indices examined to ensure the acceptability of the model from other perspectives.

Table 2 - The overall impact of mega-projects on tourism dimension of nation branding

Measurements	Measurement models output
Chi square	3.215
Degree of freedom	7(1.174)
Significance	.314
Root mean residual (RMR)	0.019
The good fit index (GFI)	0.996
Comparative fit index (CFI)	1.000
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	0.999
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.021
Normed fit index (NFI)	.999
Hoelter N (0.05)	691
Measurements	Measurement models output
Hoelter N (0.01)	891

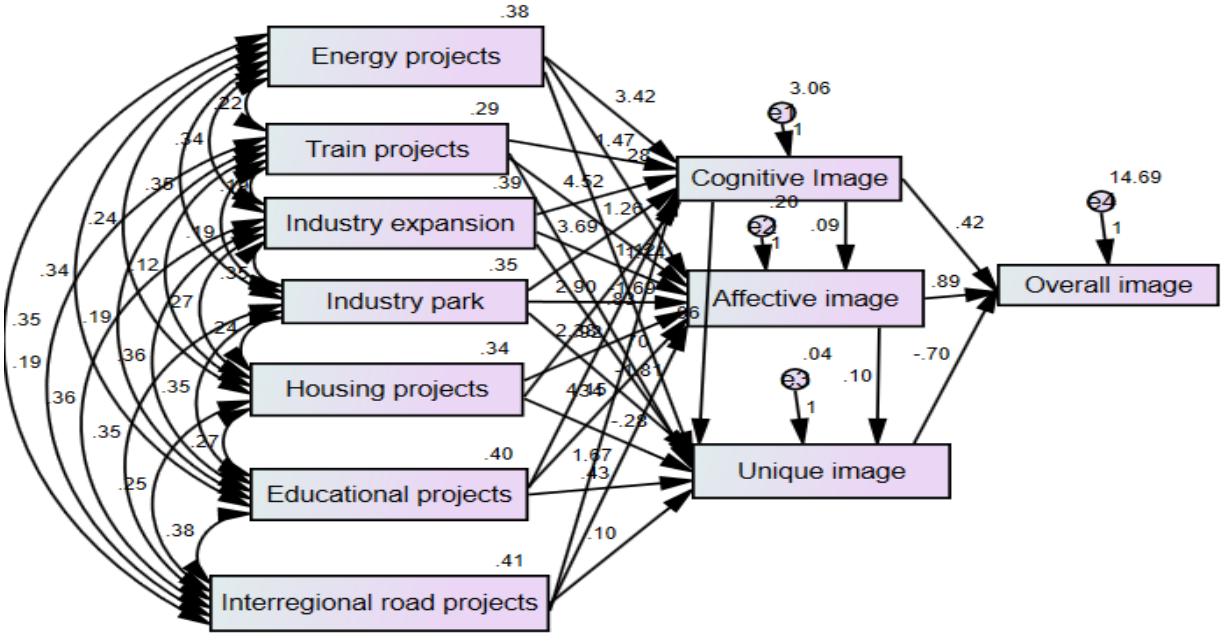
Source: Own survey 2018

The incremental fit indices are further divided into types 1, 2 and 3. According to Hu and Bentler (1995), the type-2 and type-3 indices perform much better than either the absolute fit indices or type-1 incremental indices because they are less susceptible to sample size. Some commonly used incremental fit measures are the CFI (type III), the TLI (type II), and the NFI (type I), were 1.000, 0.999, and 0.999 respectively and all incremental fit index measures well exceeded the recommended level of 0.90 (Bollen 1989).

The results suggested that the initial measurement model did fit the data well. Overall, model goodness-of-fit suggested an acceptable model of the hypothesized constructs, particularly considers the attenuation in the fit measures for large models and large sample sizes.

If the good model fits with suggested diverse indexes, that means that there is a consensus across types of measures as to the acceptability of the proposed model and there is confidence in the model. If the different fit indexes provide different conclusions about the viability of a model, then caution is warranted. Furthermore, Byrne (2001) recommended that an assessment of model adequacy should rely on theoretical and practical considerations on top of statistical analyses (Yerdelen-Damar et al. 2012).

Figure 2 - The impact of mega-projects on tourism dimension of nation branding



Source: Own survey 2018

Table 3 - Structural analysis output summarized Default model

			Estimate	D.E	S.E	Total E	AVE	p-v
Cognitive image	<--	Power	3.416	.118	.164	2.381	.324	***
Cognitive image	<--	Train	1.471	.207	.062	4.149		***
Cognitive image	<--	Industry expansion	4.518	.132	.221	2.900		***
Cognitive image	<--	Industrial parks	3.689	.172	.171	3.689		***
Cognitive image	<--	Housing projects	2.900	.221	.118	4.518		***
Cognitive image	<--	Educational	2.382	.062	.207	1.471		***
Cognitive image	<--	Inter regional road	4.149	.164	.132	3.416		***
affective image	<--	Train projects	1.256	.031	.245	.133	.801	***
affective image	<--	Industry expansion	1.118	.472	.255	2.031		***
affective image	<--	Industrial parks	1.686	.248	.364	1.174		***
affective image	<--	Housing	.919	.294	.194	1.361		***
affective image	<--	Power	.283	.346	.063	1.516		***
affective image	<--	Education	.343	.270	079	1.386		***
			Estimate	D.E	S.E	Total E	AVE	p-v
affective image	<--	Inter regional road	1.665	.130	.387	.584		***
Unique image	<--	Industry expansion	1.812	.042	.645	.564	.755	***
Unique image	<--	Housing	.279	.263	.097	.562		***
Unique image	<--	Educational	.430	.170	.163	.020		***
Unique image	<--	Inter regional road	.100	.119	.038	1.722		***
Unique image	<--	Industry expansion	.696	.201	.261	1.129		***
Unique image	<--	Train projects	.831	.078	.266	1.062		***
Unique image	<--	Power/energy	1.138	.078	.419	1.409		***
Overall image	<--	affective image	.890	.151	.317	.819		***
Overall image	<--	Unique image	.696	.317	.151	.696		***
Overall image	<--	Cognitive image	.423	.702	.702	.452		***

Where: D.E., =direct effect, S.E. =standard error, =Total E. = total effect.
Source: Own survey 2018

3.2.1. Measurement Model Fit

With the overall model accepted, each of the constructs evaluated separately and assessed the convergent validity of the constructs by examine the statistical significance of the indicator loadings and calculating the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). Tourism dimension, namely, cognitive, affective and the unique image t- value associated with each of the loadings were significant at the 0.01 level. The results indicated that all variables significantly related to their specified constructs that verify the posited relationships among indicators and constructs. On the meantime, the estimates of the reliability and variance-extracted measures for each dependent, i.e. cognitive, affective, unique image vs. independent, i.e. energy, train, industry expansion, industrial park, educational and inter-regional road projects existed in the country as construct assessed to saw if the specified indicators were sufficient in their representation of the constructs.

The results of standard loadings, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) were fitted with the model. The composite reliabilities ranged from 0.86 to 0.92, exceeds the suggested level of 0.70. Whereas, the AVE that measures the amount of variance for the specified indicators captured by a construct ranged from 0.54 to 0.73 that shows all values exceeded the minimum cut-off of 0.50. Hence, the seven constructs explained a good amount of variance in their respective indicators together and supported the convergent validity of the scale. The estimation shows cognitive dimension significantly explained by energy, train, industry expansion, industrial parks, educational and inter-regional road projects existed in the country with a direct estimated value of 3.416, 1.471, 4.518, 3.689, 2.382, 4.149 and 1.256, respectively. Meanwhile, the affective dimension had also directly affected by energy, train, industry expansion, industrial parks, educational and inter-regional road projects existed in the country with direct effects values ranged from 1.689, .919, .283, 343, 1.665, 1.812 and .279, correspondingly, Finally, the unique image direct estimate value ranged varies from 1.812 for industry expansion projects and 1.138 of energy/power projects. Hence, the result shows the seven-mega projects that categorized by the researcher significantly affect the cognitive, affective and unique image and the model fitted with all thresholds developed in relation to the SEM model.

3.3. SEM model for sump effect of mega project on cognitive, affective and unique image dimension of destination branding

The researcher started by examines the overall model fit with several goodness-of-fit measures (Table 1) Absolute fit measures include Chi-square test, the goodness-of-fit (GFI) index, and the root means residual (RMR). The measurements provide information on how closely the models fitted compare to a perfect fit; however, they ignore variability between data sets in how poorly any model could possibly fit. The Chi-square test had a value of .003 with one degree of freedom was statistically significant at .959 and the proposed model was correct, thus the model is accepted. The goodness-of-fit indexes with a value of 1.000 also ensured the acceptance of the model; however, one can argue that this three-model measurement is sensitive to the size of the sample size. Thus, to support the finding more, alternative fit indices that are less sensitive to sample sizes employed to evaluate the model fit. The result shows, the root mean residual had 0.000 that is similar output with Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.000). Therefore, both measurements that are not sensitive to sample size were fitted with a recommended threshold value of 0.08 and the model existed with an acceptable level of overall fit model range.

Table 4 - Model Fit Summary The overall impact of mega-projects on tourism dimension

Measurements	Measurement models output
Chi square	003
Degree of freedom	1
Significance	.959
Root mean residual (RMR)	0.000
The good fit index (GFI)	1.000
Comparative fit index (CFI)	1.000
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	1.000
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.000
Normed fit index (NFI)	1.000
Hoelter N (0.05)	572
Hoelter N (0.01)	988

Incremental fit measures assess the incremental fit of the model compared to a null model that usually specifies no relation among the constructs and variables. The Comparative Fit Index (type III), the Tucker-Lewis

Index (type II), and the Normed Fit Index (type I) had values of 1.000, 1.000, and 1.000 respectively and support a good fit of the proposed model compared with other baseline models Measurement Model Fit.

The measurement of each outcome variable, namely cognitive, affective and unique image and mega projects (energy, train, industry expansion, industrial parks, educational and inter-regional road projects) existed in country sum up as predictors' variable for unidimensionality and reliability. The indicator loadings examined, and all were significant at the 0.05 level. Hence, this confirms the posited relationships among indicators and constructs fitted well. In addition, the construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) measures for each construct calculated (Table 2).

Figura 3 - The impact of mega-projects on nation branding

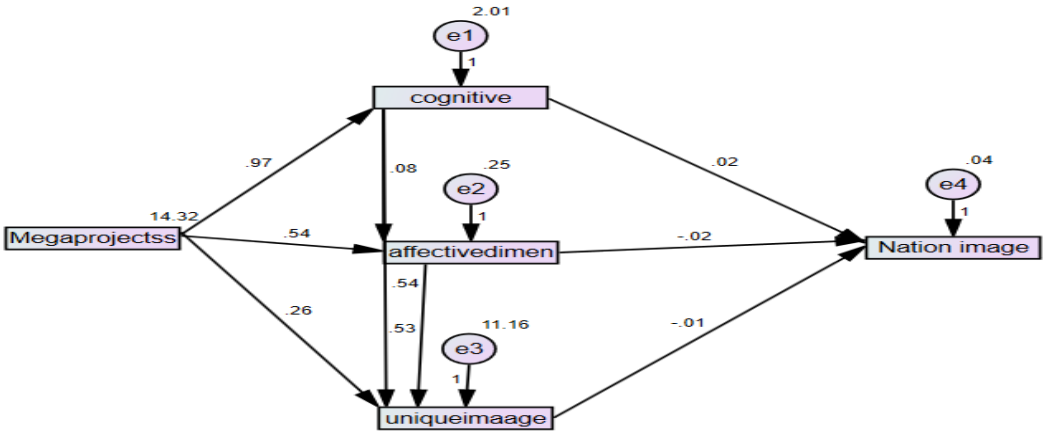


Table 5 - Overall model summarizing Estimates on mega projects and destination dimension image

			Estimate	D.E	S.E	Total E	p-value	HP.
Cognitive image	<--	Mega projects	.933	.974	.019	.974	***	Supported
Affective image	<--	Mega projects	.851	.545	.018	.626	***	Supported
Unique image	<--	Mega projects	.135	.259	.220	1.114	***	Supported
Overall image	<--	Cognitive	.180	.021	.007	.015	.004	Supported
Overall image	<--	Affective	.236	.020	.012	.024	.005	Supported
Overall image	<--	Unique image	.390	.007	.003	.007	.004	Supported

Sources: own survey 2018

The CR depicted the degree to which the manifest/observed variables represent the common latent construct. The CR values ranged from 0.74 to 0.93, indicates the internal consistency among the sets of construct indicators. AVE reflected the overall amount of variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct. The AVE values ranged from was .91, suggesting that the indicators are representative of the latent constructs. Also, the convergent validity of the measurement established while the model estimates the effect of each construct on one another (table 3). Consequently, 93% of the cognitive dimension of tourism explained by mega projects existed in the country. Whereas, 85% of the affective dimension also explained by the mega project. Finally, the unique image also explained by the model albeit the percentile is small compared to the above two dimensions. Based on the results, mega-projects have a direct effect on cognitive dimension of destination image; hence, hypothesis one is accepted; also, the result portieres mega project has also a direct effect on affective dimension of the destination image; therefore, hypothesis 2 is also accepted. Finally, the effect of mega projects on the unique image is weak.

4. Managerial implications and conclusion

In this study, based on a theoretical framework developed from the existing literature, we analyzed the impact of megaprojects on a destination's image. We find that Ethiopia has both a cognitive and affective, unique image by its tourists and this dimensions that presented in the form of hypothesis under the literature section were affected by mega projects existed in the country; in addition, the findings support that destination image is a multi-dimensional construct influenced by the cognitive and affective, unique image that collectively affects tourist and other foreign publics behaviors.

The results showed that mega projects exert a role between the image components and the destination image. Furthermore, analyzing the dimensions of the cognitive, affective and unique image in the perceptions of visitors, it emerges that they perceive Ethiopia in a more positive light. Generally speaking, we can conclude that the images associated with Ethiopia tend to improve with the expansion and development of mega projects. Furthermore, megaprojects can be a valid predictor of cognitive, affective and unique images and tourist behavioral intentions. Therefore, the creation of a strong and distinctive destination image that depends on mega projects should not only be the goal of branding practices in order to trigger interest in the travelers, but it should also be considered as a potential driver of behavioral intentions visitors.

The results have a number of managerial implications. First, given that the images tend to get more positive responses as mega projects increases and completed on time by visitors, government should create impacting communication and advertising campaigns highlighting the numerous, varied and even 'hidden' mega projects, historical beauties and traditions of Ethiopia in order to push visitors worldwide to further discover the country. Second, the government needs to engage more on infrastructural projects equally both at a regional and federal level by finding key core competency of each region and cities that potentially built destination image of the area. For a country like Ethiopia, tourism offices both at the federal and regional level and city developers might, for example, create stands, both digital screens and physical help desks with attendees, at airports, bus and train stations to explain to tourists how to get around the cities and the country in general with public transportation. Finally, in the competitive tourism market, destinations must establish a positive brand image, derived from both cognitive, affective image and unique image associations, in order to increase and attract visitors to the destination.

This study has several limitations which are important to acknowledge. First, the data were collected via a convenience sampling method and therefore may not reflect the entire population of Ethiopia 's visitors; furthermore, travelers' characteristics and image of Ethiopia as a travel destination may vary by season, and this study presents mainly a one season perspective (i.e. during the off-peak months of March and May). Second, the findings of this research are specific only to one tourism destination. For this reason, the results cannot be generalized uniformly to other destinations. We invite additional research which replicates the study with both a larger sample size (constituted via the random sampling method technique) and at other locations. Third, the number of questions (items) measuring certain constructs is constrained by the practical need to develop a parsimonious questionnaire; therefore, the findings are limited to the selected items/constructs. Future research could employ more items to measure the constructs. Finally, scholars could use the proposed procedure to test and develop a valid, reliable and more generalizable destination image scale also in a longitudinal way.

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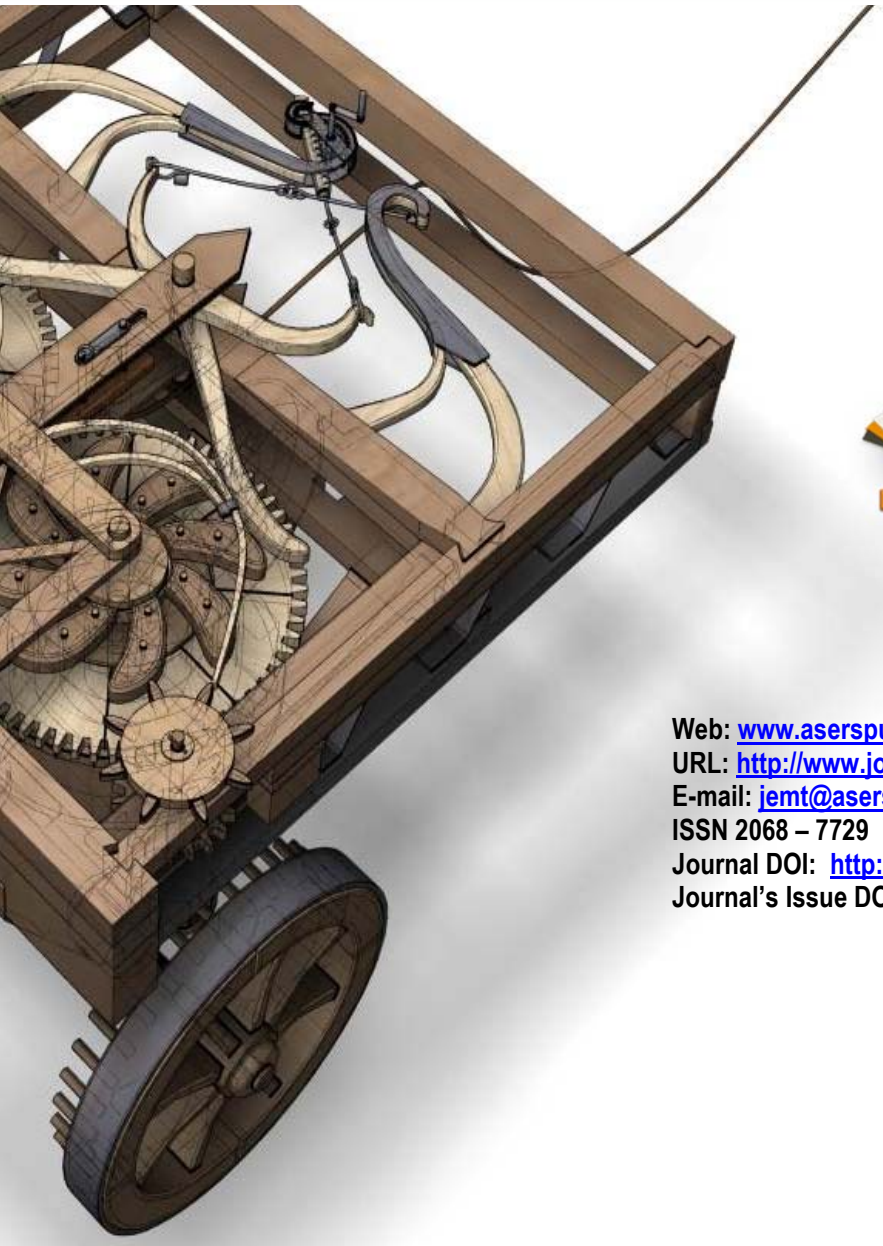

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