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Article in *International Journal of Tourism Policy* · January 2021

DOI: 10.1504/IJTP.2021.114455

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Political crises and tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa: destination recovery post-coup d'état

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Abstract: Most African countries are associated with unending political disputes. Instead of amicably ending them, smart power-play approaches continue to degenerate the African nations. The paper therefore seeks to establish the nexus between political crises, coups d'état and tourism in the Sub-Saharan African region and determine destination survival strategies for tourism businesses in environments with a political crisis. Document analysis was adopted to obtain data, this was thematically analysed. The key finding is that military coups are detrimental to tourism. They retard tourism growth by eroding the strides and gains painstakingly made over time through the building of international goodwill. Anholt's hexagon on nation branding is used to suggest strategies that politically disturbed nations can adopt to rejuvenate their tourist destinations.

Keywords: political crises; coups d'état; tourism development; nation branding hexagon; peace tourism; tourism crisis; threats; distressed destinations; Zimbabwe; Sub Saharan Africa.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Musavengane, R. and Zhou, Z. (2021) 'Political crises and tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa: destination recovery post-coup d'état', *Int. J. Tourism Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp.52–72.

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1 Introduction

Incessant political crises continue to derail tourism growth in destinations that could have acquired a high market share in the sector (KanlayanasuKho, 2014). Since the 2001 September 11 terrorist attack in New York, a considerable amount of tourism-related literature has been published on the crisis, disaster and risk management (Scott et al., 2008; Ritchie, 2009). Nevertheless, despite the continued political crisis in the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) region, there has been little interest in analysing the ramifications spawned by coup d'états on tourism in the SSA region. Globally, Africa has been characterised by the highest occurrences of coups (36.5%), followed by the Americas (31.9%) (Powell and Thyne, 2011). Realising the implications of getting into power through coup approaches, some opposing leaders have developed tactics to overthrow governments constitutionally, but with the use of force (Giles, 2019), because this is typically a situation which leads to little or no violence, yet still causes tension within the political economy. Regardless of the seeming stability of the SSA region, political contestations of varying degrees are common, causing instability in the region, which leads to tourist insecurity.

Tourism is perceived as being pro-peace and regarded as a panacea to socio-economic challenges in most developing countries (Musavengane, 2020). This is witnessed by the existence of varied forms of tourism that seem to promote stability and continuity, notably through the pursuance of responsible tourism, sustainable tourism and peace through tourism (Wintersteiner and Wohlmuther, 2014; Musavengane et al., 2020). Most of their constituting elements have peace-building effects and constitute a primary component of sustainable development (Blewit, 2014). This is exemplified in the reports of international organisations such as the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTCC) (2016), who in its report on peace and tourism highlights the linkages between tourism and peace. Furthermore, the partnership between transnational organisations such as the Institute of Economics and Peace (IEP) and WTTC serve as evidence the importance of enabling peace through tourism. Cities being hubs of economic, political and social

activities have the potential to degenerate into chaotic zones if good governance is lacking (Siakwah et al., 2020). To this end, tourism strengthens and cements relations between people of different races, creed, colour, whilst enhancing cultural exchange, social ties, and cohesion (Bama and Tichaawa, 2015). All of which contribute towards peace and tranquillity at national, regional, and continental levels.

Although there is wide appreciation in the extant tourism discourse in relation to the role of politics in tourism development (Hall, 1994), there is still a paucity of researches focusing on the linkage between coups d'état and tourism in African contexts. Whilst the African continent is endowed with tourism resources, it is glaring deficit in the entrenched democratic practices and good governance systems which can be leveraged upon to realise the continent's full potential in the area of tourism. This is the one grey area that is persistently raised by the various regional, continental and global governance institutions who are imploring governments in the region to reform. It is against this backdrop that the current study examines the intersection of politics and military coups in Sub-Saharan Africa with a view of informing policy reform.

Political crises and military coups influence tourism in Africa, in that Africa's tourism industry is mainly sustained by visitors from outside the continent, that is, visitors from western markets and north America. When there is a coup in the region, these are the countries that normally condemn the undemocratic usurpation of political power. In a way, this condemnation shapes the global perception about Africa, and eventually affects Africa's tourism levels, and expenditure negatively, as well as the foreign currency generated through tourism and international relations. In summary, political crises and coups decrease tourists' confidence about the region (Musavengane et al., 2020; Zhou, 2013). In light of Africa's well known political instability and incessant coups, it is not a coincidence that the region is always on the radar of global institutions, such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC); who are searching for a lasting panacea to silence the barrel of guns and implement democratic governance systems in Africa. However, these goals seem to become more elusive with each passing day.

This paper aims to establish the nexus between coups d'état and tourism in the SSA region and determine destination survival strategies for tourism businesses in environments with a political crisis. The paper unfolds with a review of the nexus between political crises, coups, and tourism. Then the methodology follows after which there is a discussion of the findings and conclusions.

2 Political crises, coups d'état and the tourism nexus

2.1 Political crisis

Crisis simply means a turn-around point for better or worse (Fink, 1986). It can be described as an unprecedented moment in a place that is often characterised by negative episodes, if leading situations are not handled properly. According to Charfeddine and Al Refai (2019), political crises exacerbate already existing geopolitical risks and are manifested through civil conflicts, military tension, and the upsetting of established political ties. Political crises have the potential to disrupt tourism development in both developed and developing nations. Politics tend to cut across geographical boundaries,

and tourism which is a people-centred sector that heavily relies on people travelling tends to be affected by political crises occurring in tourist regions or destinations. The tourism sector is complex in that politics, the local or regional economy and the socio-cultural factors of tourism are intertwined and have direct impact on it (Bergner and Lohmann, 2014).

2.2 Overview of the state of tourism, political crises and military coup research

Decades ago, Matthews (1975, p.195) noted that “the literature of tourism is grossly lacking political research”. Years later, Hall (1994, p.1), in the same vein, opined that “the politics of tourism is still the poor cousin of both tourism research and political science and political studies”. This call for researchers to engage in the discussion about the nexus between politics and tourism (Hall, 1994), led to the emergence of research about this theme. Some of the topics that have been studied include the effects of war on tourism (Teye, 1986); martial law and tourism, political instability and its impact on tourism (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996); political events and terrorism (Araña and León, 2008), and economic and political crises. Other risk areas that have attracted the interest of tourism researchers are strikes, riots, crime, and unplanned urbanisation (Musavengane et al., 2020).

Apart from the availability of tourist attractions, political stability is the main criterion considered by tourists when visiting a destination (Richter and Waugh, 1986; Musavengane et al., 2020). Political turmoil, despite having a low level of media scrutiny, can have a far-reaching impact on the growth of tourism due to negative images portrayed by the media. Similarly, the possibility of nation states developing a robust tourism sector without a politically stable environment is remote (Teye, 1988). As Scott (1988, p. 58) highlighted, a political crisis “...may last for days, months or even years, destroying the fragile concept of image for a developing tourism industry”. This applies especially to the political phenomena which generate large scale media attention. Images of the atrocities against civilians tend to leave indelible memories on tourism stakeholders, thereby permanently impairing destination image.

2.3 Coups and tourism: causes of coups d'état

A coup d'état's occurrence is precipitated by a continued economic crisis or under-development (Chacha and Powell, 2017). Similarly, Londregan and Poole (1990) note that poverty is one of the strong motivators for coup plotters. Economic disparity due to mismanagement of a nation's resources is cited by many coup plotters as the main cause of a national poverty and is used to justify the seizing of power. Other coups may come about as a result of rent-seeking behaviour to benefit the coup leader or general interests of the coup leader's armed forces (Asuelime, 2018). In general, it appears that coups are less likely to occur in countries with high foreign direct investments (FDI) and seemingly higher international trade as all participants and possible coup enablers seek to protect their investments (Chacha and Powell, 2017), thus, a violent free regime change is preferred. Furthermore, due to the need to uphold democracy African nations seem to have embarked on the so-called ‘soft’ or ‘good’ coup as alluded by Bailie (2018):

“... only three examples of “good coups”, one of these from Africa – the coup in Mali in 1991. More recently, in November 2017, Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe relinquished his 37-year hold on power. Zimbabweans who

suffered under his authoritarian rule and who understood the events in the days preceding his resignation as constituting a coup will likely have welcomed the development, describing it as a “good coup”...

Just as with Niger in 2009, in Zimbabwe, in the coup that ousted former president, Robert Mugabe, Zimbabweans participated in demonstrations supporting the exit of Robert Mugabe from the political scene. The regional and the international community (Britain, the European Union (EU), and the US), tacitly supported and approved the military intervention that ousted Robert Mugabe in November 2017. Engrossed in the euphoria, the progressive global community was convinced that the military coup was a new beginning for the economically and politically troubled southern Africa country. A coup d'état entails a scenario whereby a civilian government's executive powers and authority are seized by force by a clique of disgruntled military men or securocrates. Cook (1990, p.14) posits that a coup d'état is a situation whereby a government has been removed by force, forming political instability, for example in Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, The Middle East, The Gambia, Peru and Tibet. Table 1 profiles recent coups in Africa, hence the need for more studies on coups in Africa.

Military coups often impair the image of tourist destinations. Nevertheless, Pitts (1996) noted that during times of political adversity there is another component of tourists who are risk-takers and who visit politically unstable countries. These are referred to as ‘conflict tourists’. Irrespective of how well-endowed a tourist destination is with tourist attractions, when it experiences war or political unrest, it is common to see the tourism industry suffers. Hall and O'Sullivan (1996); Teye (1986, 1988) contend that nation states or regions characterised by chronic political turmoil coupled with socio-economic challenges hardly develop a sustained and strong tourism sector. Naturally, this warrants recovery marketing in the post-coup period to help rebuild tourist confidence.

Nations with a functional civilian government are principal actors in shaping tourism development trajectories in a region by creating a conducive operating environment (Elliot, 1997). It follows that the active involvement of national governments in tourism affairs tends to yield positive results, and when governments take a back footed approach their tourism industry is characterised by lackluster performances. Political instability occurs when there is disruption of the political order, followed by social strife. Williams (2008) argued that political instability is akin to a scenario where a legitimate government and social order have been challenged and threatened by a section of the military, outside of the normal operations of the political system.

Edgell et al. (2008) posited that the absence of a sense of tourist safety and security in tourist destinations negatively impacts business and leisure travel, for example, the Bali terrorist bombings of 2005, led to a dramatic fall in tourism revenue. In contrast, a politically stable environment provides the bedrock for the tourism sector to prosper (Rawls, 1999). Destinations perceived as politically unstable tend to repel tourists.

Political violence deters tourist activities and further excludes other people from participating in tourism. Tourism is not only severely curtailed by political conflict but can also be undermined by the violation of civil liberties. This can impact negatively tourist numbers, this can be seen in the lower number of tourists who visit countries characterised by brutal and autocratic political systems as opposed to the high number of tourists in countries with democratic regimes. Prolonged and widespread unrest in tourist destinations can cause the issuance of travel advisories in primary source markets and consequently dissuade potential tourists from patronising such destinations.

Table 1 Coup d'état in Africa 2010–2020

<i>Event and Country</i>	<i>Coup Type</i>	<i>Sitting President</i>
2010 Nigerien coup d'état	Coup	President Mamadou Tandja
2010 Guinea-Bissau unrest	Attempt	Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior
2010 Madagascar coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Andry Rajoelina
2011 Democratic Republic of the Congo coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Joseph Kabila Kabange
2011 Niger coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Mahamadou Issoufou
2011 Guinea-Bissau coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Malam Bacai Sanha
2012 Malian coup d'état	Coup	President Amadou Toumani Touré
2012 Ivorian coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Alassane Ouattara
2012 Sudanese coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Omar al-Bashir
2013 Eritrean Army mutiny	Attempt	President Isaias Afwerki
2013 Benin coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Boni Yayi
April 2013 Libyan coup d'état attempt	Attempt	Prime Minister Ali Zeidan
2013 Comoros coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Ikililou Dhoinine
2013 Chadian coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Idriss Déby
October 2013 Libyan coup d'état attempt	Attempt	Prime Minister Ali Zeidan
2013 Democratic Republic of the Congo coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Joseph Kabila Kabange
February 2014 Libyan coup d'état attempt	Attempt	Prime Minister Ali Zeidan
May 2014 Libyan coup d'état attempt	Attempt	Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thani
2014 Lesotho political crisis	Attempt	Prime Minister Tom Thabane
2014 Gambian coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Yahya Jammeh
2015 Burundian coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Pierre Nkurunziza
2015 Burkinabé coup d'état	Attempt	President Michel Kafando
2016 Burkinabé coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré
2016–2018 Libyan coup d'état attempt	Ongoing	Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj (claimed)
2016–2017 Gambian constitutional crisis	Attempt	President Yahya Jammeh
2017 Zimbabwean coup d'état	Coup	President Robert Mugabe
2017 Equatoguinean coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
2019 Gabonese coup d'état attempt	Attempt	President Ali Bongo Ondimba
2019 Sudanese coup d'état	Coup	President Omar al-Bashir
2019 Ethiopian coup d'état attempt	Attempt	Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

Source: Various News Houses

To this end, Sinclair (1998) posits that tourism is a key pillar that contributes immensely to developing countries' economies. However, countries associated with perennial political conflicts and violence remain vulnerable due to the fact that they are generally framed as outposts of tyrannical regimes. Richter and Waugh (1986, p.231) stated that "Tourism is frequently an early casualty of internecine warfare, revolution or even prolonged labour disputes".

In their final analysis, Sönmez (1998) posit that military coups which pose a danger to tourists can make or break a tourist destination's tourism system. The recent spike in politically volatile scenarios has the potential to destabilise the global tourism industry. Coups or military conflicts impact on tourist safety due to the risk issues which are at the core of the tourism sector. Political crises, therefore, disrupt tourism.

2.4 Crisis management framework and destination branding

Faulkner (2001) suggests that it is common for tourist destinations hit by crisis events to not implement a crisis recovery strategy. Every destination worthy their salt would want to quickly recover from an adverse crisis. To this end, when a crisis management framework is suggested on the continent, it has been mostly applied to natural phenomena, and not tested on political events. Crises framework management follows the pre-event, the detection of the crisis, the emergency, the containment, and the recovery of the site (Scott and Laws, 2005; Henderson, 2007; Ritchie, 2009). It is worth highlighting that political crises by their very nature suspend constitutional order, hence it is very difficult for tourist destination authorities to implement a crisis management framework in a chaotic environment precipitated by a military coup. Therefore, any form of intervention during a military coup induced crisis, is a form of political mediation which tries to salvage the situation from degenerating into full blown anarchy. Therefore, what this means is that after a military coup, the direction of the tourist industry is directed by political players as opposed to technocrats.

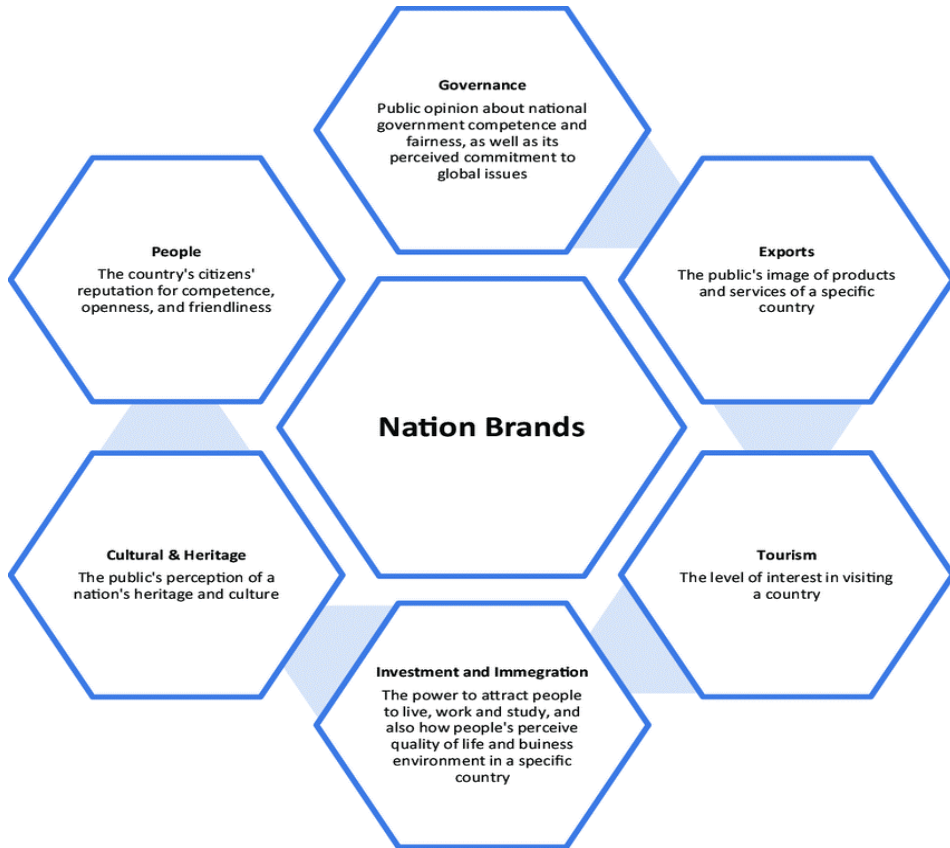
2.5 Anholt's nation branding hexagon

In view of the above, rebranding tourist destinations in post-coup episodes is critical and imperative to rejuvenating these destinations. The construct of nation state branding entails "the systematic process of aligning the actions, behaviours, investments, innovations and communications of a country around a clear strategy for achieving a strengthened competitive identity" (Anholt, 2008, p.22). In the same vein, Hassan and Mahrous (2019) noted that nation state branding is a foundational seed bed for a sustainable differential competitive advantage that defies stereotypes on nations and regions. Thus a nation brand identity aims to build positive perceptions about a destination to its target audience or stakeholder groups. Globally, nations are embracing nation branding techniques to compete effectively with other destinations (Dinnie, 2015). As opined by Anholt (2008) nation branding does not only emphasise the tenets of planning but also of governance as well as the economic development aspects of a nation. Hence nation branding is critical in countries marred with coup-related issues. Woyo and Slabbert (2020) stressed the need for distressed destinations to rebrand and adopt 'new' marketing approaches to remain viable.

It is critically important to adopt Anholt's Nation Brand Hexagon (see Figure 1) as a pathway to rejuvenate destinations in the post-coup period. "The Anholt Nation Brands

Index measures the power and appeal of a nation's brand image and tells us how people around the world see the character of that brand" (Anholt, 2007, p2). The six key dimensions of the nation brand, namely exports, people, governance, tourism, culture and heritage, and immigration and investment, together form the Nation Brand Hexagon (NBH), which is catalytic to tourism development.

Figure 1 Anholt's nation brand hexagon (see online version for colours)



Source: Adapted from Anholt (2006, p.186)

3 Methodology

The paper adopted a document analysis approach. It was conducted between June 2019 and April 2020 wherein varied coup related literature was rigorously reviewed from a wide range of sources. A systematic analysis of literature on the nexus between politics and tourism was undertaken. Three criteria were employed to include reviewed studies in the meta-synthesis exercise: Firstly, research which examined political variables supporting the growth or the decline of tourism in Africa was explored. Secondly, research which focused on coups and tourism in the SSA region was selected. Thirdly, the reports on political instability in the region and its relationship to tourism were

reviewed. Various search engines such as SCOPUS were employed to identify useful literature on the internet. Keywords such as ‘politics and tourism’, ‘tourism and coups d’état’, ‘political instabilities and tourism’, ‘power-play and tourism’ (following the Boolean search operator embedded with ‘AND’ separating keywords to get useful literature), were employed. Subsequently, these were keyed into the search engine resulting in a total of 114 peer-reviewed literature outputs generated. Rigorous scanning followed, guided by a deliberate resolution to select and include in the study only literature which revolves around coups d’état and tourism. The dimensions used for data analysis were drawn up and guided by literature found in previous studies. The elements which had the highest frequency of citations in the reviewed studies were ranked accordingly and selected as the most significant pieces of literature. In addition to this, their applicability to Sub-Saharan Africa’s political landscape was another criterion used. As a way of conforming to other prior studies on tourism and crises, it was the qualified view of the authors to adopt the variables deemed as key in influencing tourism development, provided the variables were applicable to Africa’s peculiarities.

The rigorous analysis of literature ended with the selection of 8 papers from peer-reviewed journals whose focus is on coups d’état and tourism affairs in the Sub-Saharan Africa region (see Table 2).

Table 2 Profile of the studies included in meta-analysis

<i>Paper no.</i>	<i>Author (s)</i>	<i>Countries</i>	<i>Specific politics and tourism aspect</i>
1	Teye (1988)	Ghana	Coup detat and African tourism
2	Ferreira (2004)	Guinea-Bissau	Conflict and democracy
3	Asuelime (2018)	South Africa, Zimbabwe	Coup
4	Ghalia et al. (2019)	International	Institutional quality, political risk and tourism
5	Poirier (1997)	North-South	Political risk and tourism
6	Hapairai et al. (2018)	Jordan	Effectiveness of ad-induced emotion in reducing tourist risk perceptions towards politically unstable destinations
7	Alozieuwa (2013)	Mali	Coup in Mali
8	Mkono (2012)	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe tourism woes

Source: Authors

After the literature selection process, the researchers went on to identify coups d’état factors affecting tourism. Over 30 factors were gleaned from the chosen literature. This was followed by the collation and classification of factors into five thematic cardinal dimensions:

- safety and security
- destination image
- destination access

- civil wars and social unrest
- economic instability and political unrest (See Table 3).

The dimensions were supported with primary evidence based on Zimbabwe, a country in the region which recently experienced a coup.

A detailed discussion of the key themes listed in Table 3.

Table 3 Factors influencing/leading to the growth or decline of tourism in the literature

<i>Variables</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Safety and security</i>								
Absence of maintenance of order by a civilian authority	X		X	X			X	
Muzzling of press		X						
Suppression of civil liberties				X	X			
<i>Destination image</i>								
Issuance of travel advisories	X							
Deformed destination image	X			X				
Kidnapping of tourists	X							
<i>Destination access</i>								
Closure of ports of entry	X							
Restricted movements					X			
<i>Social unrest and civil wars</i>								
Protests and strikes		X		X		X		
Demonstrations and rioting				X				
Harassments of tourists	X							
<i>Economic instability and political unrest</i>								
Curfews	X							
Political and economic unrest/hyperinflation		X	X	X	X	X		X
War and Terrorism				X	X	X	X	

4 Results and analysis

Results are presented thematically to enable systematic analysis. The themes emerged from the data collected.

4.1 Safety and security

Some of the factors used in the selected studies assessing the impact of coups on tourism development in SSA include tourist safety and security. Teye (1988), Ferreira (2004) and Alozieuwa (2013) found that the safety and security of visitors significantly affects tourist inflows. In this context, safety and security entail the absence of any threat of physical harm to people on a holiday vacation away from home. In a recent study, Ghalia

et al. (2019) found that tourist destinations characterised by what they referred to as domestic violence heightened and compromised the safety and security of would-be visitors to such destinations. Furthermore, Poirier (1997) established that terrorism and revolutions (interwoven within a coup) tend to scare away tourists. This leads to the conclusion that tourist inflows are inversely related to the level of destination safety and security in the mind of tourists. In support of this, Hapairai et al. (2018) observed that terrorism invokes a sense of physical risk on the part of tourists, and in line with the theory of tourist travel motivation, such tourist destinations are avoided. For example, there was a decrease in tourist inflows to Zimbabwe and Zambia during the war of liberation, when tourists felt that their security and safety was at risk by visiting war-torn destinations. To further add to this, Teye (1988) highlighted that the harassment of travellers, tourists and journalists, and the frequency of successful and aborted coups further complicates the tourist destination's level of safety and security. Ferreira (2004) weighed in citing the violation of human rights coupled with the harassment of journalists which often come along with military governments as another complication. This is another variable that impairs the safety and security profile of a tourist destination. Alozieuwa (2013) also concurred, stressing that military governments fuel international terrorism which is an enemy of tourism. Safety and security issues pose a physical risk to visitors (Hapairai et al., 2018). Together, these results, suggest that tourist safety and security at a destination are pre-requisites for positive tourism development, and that without this, destinations would suffer from under visitation. The success of a tourist destination in attracting tourism business is closely tied to its safety and security risk profile in the mind of prospective visitors. Tourist destinations with high safety and security risks are shunned by visitors whilst destinations with low levels of safety and security risks tend to do well.

4.2 Destination image

Four out of eight studies reviewed revealed that the destination image is critical in shaping the tourism sector's development trajectory. The image of a tourist destination relates to how the tourism market views and perceives it. Image entails the belief, attitude and impression an individual or groups of people hold to an object (these could be true or false, real or imagined). Castro et al. (2007) present image as a dynamic, interactive and systematic thought process in which individuals form opinions and feelings and visualise intentions towards a destination. It is a by-product of the various attributes that are inclusive of a political system or the setup of tourist region/destination. Teye (1988) and Ferreira (2004) found that the poor image of a destination abroad, and the negative publicity coupled with the issuance of travel advisories and the muzzling of the press often result in a negative tourist market perception. Hapairai et al. (2018) and Ghalia et al. (2019) included risk perceptions and negative international image as detrimental to the success of the tourism industry. This supported Teye's (1988) earlier observation that tour operators and travel agents remove tourist destinations with an adverse image from their itineraries which can be a serious blow to the entire tourism sector. Tourist destinations should try to avoid being blacklisted by tour operators and travel agents since it is very difficult to rebuild goodwill once it has been lost. It takes determined efforts by nation-states through national tourism organisations to build an appealing image to the outside world; however a military coup can destroy this image overnight. Destinations commit substantial resources, such as financial, technical and human capital

investments to international goodwill; however, an unconstitutional seizure of political power can quickly ruin such investments overnight. A tourist destination image is the total sum of the negative and favourable perceptions about the destination. The state of facilities, the accessibility of the destination and political peace are some of the key determinants that build the image of the tourist destination. Taken together these factors provide important insights to what is incumbent for tourist destinations to try and influence in order to produce a favourable image to the outside world. Most importantly, military coups are not the right way of assuming political power since they send wrong signal to the tourism market resulting in these tourist regions being viewed negatively. Tourist destinations which subscribe to democratic governance tenets and a non-violent way of government transition tend to perform very well on the destination competitiveness index. A tattered image presented to the international audience undermines tourism development efforts. For example, during the soft Zimbabwean coup, the military seized control of the state broadcasting television channel and its main radio stations, which tainted the image of the country. The perceived high destination risk status which ensued became an encumbrance and will take an inordinate amount of time to be completely shaken off in the aftermath of the military coup. It is therefore indicative to nation-states that a destination image is built over time and requires resources for future investment, but at the same time the SSA should realise that this image can be easily destroyed overnight through reckless military coups. It is prudent for SSA countries to consider broad national economic interest ahead of political capital and interests.

4.3 Destination access

Variables related to coups d'état and their impact on tourism have also been identified as significant when assessing any prospect of tourism recovery in the post-coup period, and one such variable is destination access. According to Bhatia (2006) supported by Cooper et al. (2008) destination accessibility determines the long term success of the tourism sector, without which the tourist destination is of no economic significance as it cannot unlock the economic value of its tourism resources. Similarly, Teye (1988) noted that the crude politics of coups d'état often result in the outright sealing of entry and exit points, impacting on the flow of international tourists, through the closure of key access points such as airports and borders, and through the imposition of curfews. Resultantly, tourism suffers in such toxic environments. Tourism by its nature revolves around travelling and takes place at the point of production, implying that without travel there is no tourism. The unilateral imposition of restrictions on the transportation system including airlines, and 24-h roadblocks along major highways works against tourism. This seriously curtails free movement and compromises unfettered access to tourist attraction centres within the destination area. For example, during the November 2017, during the soft coup in Zimbabwe, the military elite commandeered and manned roadblocks on most major highways and also at borders, and went on to occupy not only key but strategic entry points into the country, such as the Robert Gabriel Mugabe International airport (RGMIA), and placed fortified tanks along the highways. This does not bode well with tourists as it resembles a war zone that curtails the free movement of the public. Ferreira (2004) observed that during coups, military personnel tend to quickly seize control of the press, and limit access to information, thereby cutting off the tourist destination from the outside world. Similar studies like Poirier (1997) revealed that during a military coup

there is strict passport and visa control, as well as foreign currency restrictions; whose net effect further curtails access to the destination which is detrimental to tourism development. Tied to destination access, military regimes impose bans on airline carriers from serving the destination, suspend visas and even revoke some legitimate protocols, as a way of shutting down the inflow of people and journalists from outside the country. Collectively, this provides insight into how military regimes isolate tourist destinations or regions, by cutting them off from the rest of the world, and making it extremely difficult for the destination to be accessed. Given the peculiar nature of the tourism industry, in that the product can only be consumed on site, it therefore means that without access there is virtually no tourism to talk about. Access is the lifeblood of a tourist destination. The unavailability of flights hinders the free movement of tourists, particularly from traditional western markets upon which SSA tourism is dependent upon (long haul tourism). Military regimes cut connectivity with source markets, and once the destination becomes inaccessible it loses its competitive edge. Access is a key element of a tourist destination's attributes, hence once it is disturbed there is no tourism.

4.4 Social unrest and civil wars

According to Ferreira (2004) tourist destinations characterised by social dissatisfaction, constant protests and strikes will find it very difficult to develop a prosperous and robust tourism industry. Social unrest in some democracies is interpreted as government failure to adhere to acceptable governance tenets, and tourists tend to boycott and avoid such destinations. Visiting such destinations may be misconstrued as endorsing autocratic regimes which subject their citizenry to suffering. Furthermore, Ghalia et al. (2019) observed that armed civil conflicts, violent social protests, and unrest, often coupled with violation of civil liberties put off tourists. These work against the spirit of tourism that thrives in a peaceful environment free from such political theatrics. Further to that, Ghalia et al. (2019) stressed that the presence of conflict is a recipe for the collapse of tourism, in light of its sensitivity to such crisis phenomena. This is consistent with another observation made by Zhou (2014) that tourism is a peace industry that thrives in a relatively peaceful political and economically stable environment.

In addition, Poirier (1997) established that the level of tolerance of the military regime and the repression that they display in dealing with social unrest and the groundswell of civil discontent, and internal strife sends signals to the international community and the state of the country. By their very nature, military regimes are heavy-handed and brutal when dealing with civil unrest and tend to ruthlessly crush any dissent. These are critical ingredients which quicken the demise of the tourism sector, especially when such images are broadcast across the globe. The extra-judicial shooting of unarmed civilians in the streets of Harare in the post-election civil unrest in 2018 by soldiers is typical of military regimes, and it received condemnation from the international community.

To this end, Hapairai et al. (2018) associated civil unrest with torture, and the high prospect of tourists being caught in the crossfire which often results in travel cancellation or postponement. In light of this, civil unrest they can therefore be equally regarded as a harbinger of the demise of the tourism sector. Lawlessness, the indiscriminate and brutal killing of people, summary executions, and the suspension of the rule of law are hallmarks of civil wars and coup d'états, all of which work against tourism development. These also end up impairing the tourist destination's image in international tourism

markets due to the news coverage of the mass killings of unarmed civilians. Teye (1988) concluded that civil wars are the main reason why tourism developmental projects largely remain stalled in many Sub Saharan African nation states despite the region being well endowed with spectacular tourism resources.

4.5 Economic instability and political unrest

The analysis of literature selected and included in the meta-synthesis, is economic instability and political unrest. Most of the reviewed literature suggested a favourable symbiotic linkage between political and economic stability, and tourism growth. Teye (1988), Ferreira (2004) and Ghalia et al. (2019) concurred that coups d'états pose a serious threat and risk by creating a seedbed for political turmoil or instability. If no swift intervention is made, such situations can quickly deteriorate into internal instabilities that can upset the entire SSA region's socio-economic system, thus associating a high political risk tag to the destination. In support of this, Asuelime (2018) underscored that military intervention, whether through a peaceful or bloodless coup will be strongly condemned by all progressive nations and have dire economic consequences to the country especially in the area of tourism. Mkono (2012) also found that Zimbabwe paid a huge price when tourist inflows hit rock bottom levels on account of the combined economic and political crisis in the early 2000s. These sentiments seem to vindicate Poirier's (1997) observation that military coups bring about the much detested political risk tag when it comes to travelling and foreign direct investment. Tourism is sensitive, hence destinations characterised by economic instability and political unrest are not good candidates of foreign direct investment. Together these studies point to the conclusion that military regimes indeed affect and influence travel propensity in a negative way, because during coups travel is restricted for essential services only.

Teye (1988) further observed that military regimes that assume political office through coups have the potential to destabilise nations and regions much to the detriment of the tourism industry. It also cripples the whole economic system through arbitrary price increases and inflation largely caused by artificial shortages. In other words, military regimes hurt all sectors of the economy with tourism being the greatest loser.

Military regime instituted coups are a breeding ground for political crises (Hapairai et al., 2018), which may spark war and even acts of terrorism, and if these are prolonged they can destroy the tourism sector. In the absence of normalcy through the restoration of civilian authority, democracy and constitutionalism, tourism becomes the victim, and then those destinations wholly depended upon tourism suffer through a limited inflow of foreign currency and the consequent job cuts.

5 Discussion and implications: post-coup destination rejuvenation

The most significant finding of the preceding meta-synthesis was that military coups are the worst enemy of tourism. They retard tourism growth by eroding the strides made over time in building international goodwill. Military regimes appear to be toxic to tourism development as they undermine and cripple the foundation upon which tourism is built. Tourism is built around four cardinal pillars in the way of destination access, image, attractions, and amenities (Cooper et al., 2008). If any one of these pillars is disabled then, the other remaining elements will not hold. This study revealed that political coups

disable destination access and foul destination image thereby suffocating the entire tourism value chain.

The current study argues for the formation of strong regional institutions and the strengthening of current ones to spearhead the reform of Africa's political terrain. It is also suggested that a review is made on the African continent's governance mechanisms, where institutions such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) which seem to work in silos, work towards a more collaborative approach. The same applies to the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which must impose stiffer penalties on those who disrupt constitutional order. It is about time that a global political governance system is crafted that creates very strong institutions at regional, continental and international levels with the necessary power and clout to enforce democratic tenets.

From the various literature reviewed in the current study, it is incumbent upon the SSA region to invest in crisis management strategies and to strengthen the region's crisis responsive strategies in order to salvage the tourism sector from the intermittent military coups synonymous with the region. Because the region cannot be fully insulated from evolving political crises, it is important to have a crisis responsive mechanism in place. It is possible that with a crisis responsive strategy in place, tourist destinations would be in a better proactive position instead of being reactive.

In this study, military coups have been reported to be the sworn enemies of tourism. This finding has important implications for preventing the occurrence of such crises. It is critical that there is a sustained marketing strategy at the regional level that builds the image of the region, given the increasing frequency of military regimes in Africa.

Also, this study laid bare the brutal reality that tourism cannot be easily decoupled from a crises brought about by military coups. Tourism is the easy victim, therefore governments need to invest in very strong institutions which can enforce constitutionalism and thwart military elements from toppling constitutionally elected governments. At the national and regional levels, such institutions must be capacitated and speak with one voice. Given that currently Sub Saharan Africa has very weak institutional frameworks and democratic systems, this can create fertile ground for military coups. It is also important to note that governments in Africa should equitably distribute and advocate for fair access to national resources to their citizens; since it has been observed that at times coup instigators are citizens who feel marginalised. This is an area that needs to be addressed with the urgency it deserves at national level.

From the perspective of re-building destinations in the post-coup environment and applying Anolht's hexagon at the NBH point of export, tourism planners should ask tourists at their country of origin (or people willing to visit the country) about their inclination to either actively seek out or actively avoid buying a nation state's tourism product. At this point of the NBH, an enquiry about the kinds of products that tourists would expect in the country should be undertaken. The second point in the NBH is governance. Siakwah et al. (2020, p.357) describe governance as "interaction among multi institutions and social actors based on trust, inclusion, and exercise of the power to ensure the sustainable use of resources for the common good without disadvantaging other groups within the network". Thus, at the NBH's governance point, tourism planners should strengthen their governance systems, as coups are normally associated with the bad governance of nations. Questions should be posed to respondents with a view of establishing the extent of their trust of the respective government in upholding global peace and security. At this point of the NBH, an exploration of the perceptions of people

about the behaviour of governments towards poverty reduction at an international level is essential, given that poverty tends to be one of the enablers of a coup. The third point of NBH is culture and heritage. Cultural and heritage tourism is important for tourism development in Africa. Thus, at this point of the NBH, tourism planners need to design questions with a view of establishing the perceptions of visitors towards the nation state's cultural heritage, and the extent to which people appreciate contemporary culture in the nation, including sporting excellence. Culture can unify a nation and maintain peace, meaning that resurgence of a coup is unlikely in a united country.

The fourth point of the NBH is people. Tourism is a people-centred sector and needs people to deliver quality services (Jennings et al., 2009). Thus, in this point, destination management organisations (DMOs) need to establish whether people in the country would welcome visitors with liberality and goodwill. A nation state's level of openness and reputation coupled with its friendliness will have a positive effect on tourism. Tourists tend to shun destinations characterised by elements or issues that instill a sense of fear, for example, violence and segregation. Furthermore, in pursuit of comprehending how the human resource base capital of a nation state is perceived, DMOs can pose the following pertinent questions. First, respondents are asked to establish the value of their people for certain jobs. Second, a balancing question to establish whether they would accept people from other countries should be asked. In the case of countries that would have gone through a coup, a country deemed to be the cause of the coup may be included in the questionnaire. For destinations to be deemed to be safe, people should be able to accept any person from the country and want to avoid xenophobic violence. An example of the question that can be posed to the respondent is 'would you want to befriend a person from the following country?'

The fifth point of the NBH is tourism. Arguably, tourism is closely tied to the brand of a nation state; hence it is the most promoted aspect. Africa is known for its wildlife endowment as its main tourism product especially in Southern and Eastern Africa. The collective perceptions of people towards a nation state normally hinge on the nation's tourism assets. At this point of the hexagon, the nation state's tourism destination potential is probed and tested. In particular, countries that would have experienced coup d'états may be labelled as war zones and not suitable for tourism (Teye, 1986). The final point of the hexagon is immigration and investment. This pertains to a nation state's capability to entice human and economic capital. In most cases, institutional investors deem countries with a coup history as high-risk investment zones, which causes destinations to fail to develop tourism products and further weakens their attractiveness (Musavengane and Kloppers, 2020). In addition to this, skilled personnel may not be willing to relocate to such countries, which further creates a skills gap in the nation.

In overall, people (tourists and migrants) are more attracted to peaceful destinations that have strong, clear and consistent messages. Countries with competent governments, friendly people and economic opportunities are deemed as viable destinations for tourists, immigrants and investors. Investor confidence is deflated in coup environments, and African nations should try and solve their differences amicably and in more democratic ways which uphold good governance principles, chiefly, trust and accountability (Musavengane and Siakwah, 2019).

In term of theoretical contribution, the paper has shown that whilst the politics and governance system of nation states at face value seem to be far removed from the domain of tourism, these have a direct and significant impact on how the tourism industry performs. Whilst conventional tourism literature emphasises the centrality of the tourist

destination's 4As components (Attraction, Accommodation, Amenity, and Accessibility), the current study has deepened one's understanding of the criticality of a tourist destination's political and governance system in making or breaking the tourism industry just as with traditional 4As elements. Another significant contribution of the study is that political leaders or those who aspire to hold political office should understand and appreciate that their actions have far reaching repercussions beyond politics. The adverse consequences of the usurpation of political power stokes the fragility of the tourism industry. In addition to this, when tourists see a tourism destination, they see it as a total package, intertwined with a nation's political and governance system. Democratic political systems which respect civilian authority and constitutional order are equally critical elements which support tourism industry growth.

The paper has contribution to the literature, in that most previous studies did not put political systems and governance tenets at the centre of tourism development. Furthermore, this paper attempted to make a practical application of Anolht's hexagon, something that is novel in the context of Africa's tourism development research landscape. Instead of scratching the surface by only highlighting the extent of the interplay between tourism, and politics and military coups in Sub-Saharan Africa, the study has gone a step further to applying the NBH model and unpacking it so that it is properly applied to yield favourable results, not only for sub-Saharan Africa but also for other tourist destinations hurt by military coups. In this context the current study updated the works of Teye (1986) and Zhou (2013), deepening the understanding of the dynamics that characterise the branding of crisis torn tourism destinations.

6 Conclusion

The present study was designed to establish the nexus between political crises, coups d'état and tourism in the SSA region, and determine destination survival strategies for tourism businesses in environments with a political crisis. The study has shown that politically destabilised countries tend to repel tourists. The Anholt's Six Nation Brand Hexagon (NBH) elements: exports, people, governance, tourism, culture and heritage, and immigration and investment, are deemed critical to rejuvenating politically charged destinations. The evidence from this study suggests that it is incumbent for Sub Saharan African nations to deepen and entrench democratic tenets in their governance systems, and promote the equitable sharing of national resources given that in most cases military coups are necessitated by certain sections of society being excluded from benefiting from national resources. This suggestion is made upon the realisation that most political or military coups have their genesis in issues located in the governance system, and the inequitable sharing of national resources. Governance is a contentious issue in most Sub Saharan African states. Together, these results suggest that one plausible way of addressing political challenges in the SSA is to develop and implement a consolidated regional governance peer review system that emphasises equitable access to national resources by the citizenry, thereby narrowing the poverty chasm between those who have and those who lack the basics. It is envisaged that this review system would go a long way to preventing political coups from erupting in the region. This research extends the knowledge of the impact of a coup on tourism in the SSA region.

It is therefore concluded that based on the study's findings, and especially in tourist destinations in Africa where military coups are prevalent, that there is a need for

destination authorities to revisit their tourism development policies and embed political systems, good governance as they are increasingly shaping the future development trajectory of the tourism industry. Tourism favours good governance, therefore tourist destinations which adhere to democratic governance tenets will have their shores flooded with tourism related foreign direct investment. Tourists who come from western countries and North America are increasingly shunning destinations which are characterised by undemocratic governance systems. It is about time that authorities take this on board when crafting and reviewing tourism policy documents.

The analysis of Anolht's hexagon is in consonance with most of the issues highlighted in the literature. For example, people, governance systems, and image collectively build a nation state or tourist destination. In tourism circles, a tourist destination is understood as a total package or concept. Whilst the 4As elements of a destination are critical, they are embodied in the destination's culture, people, and governance system, whilst the image is the sum total of all the variables. It is critical to stress that Anolht's hexagon speaks of key issues which resonate not only with Africa's tourism development, but also with tourist destinations which are being hindered by military coups. To this end, it can be concluded that the preceding analysis has shown that the hexagon is an invaluable tool which can be leveraged upon for the benefit of tourist regions.

The study suggests that tourist destinations harmed by military coups need to invest in democratic political and governance systems, as well as build strong institutions whose capacity can be leveraged to deal with coups that are disruptive to the tourism sector. The reality is that politics cannot be decoupled from tourism.

It is unfortunate that this study did not include the voices of people affected by coups or political challenges in SSA countries. Nevertheless, the study opens a discussion about the broad topic of politics and tourism. It is therefore recommended that further research be undertaken through primary research approaches. It will be interesting to see more cross-national studies involving interviews with stakeholders on the effects of a coup or political challenges on the tourism industry.

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