place branding is only worthwhile if the values of the brand are "…rooted in the aspirations of the people". Citizens and residents play a pivotal role in defining how others see the place. This will eliminate the belief from people to see a brand as a DMO baby in which they do not have a significant part to play in its implementation. (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenger, 2013). believe that participation and consultation with people in the branding process make the brand more effective and sustainable.

Furthermore, the host community allows users to connect, thereby building the brand by facilitating and deepening connections between the brand admirers (Fournier, Solomon & Englis, 2008). A brand with a meaningful portfolio indicating operations of a community will be stronger than a brand without established community connections (Fournier, Solomon & Englis, 2008). Host communities resided by citizens create a concept of citizenship. This brings a notion of belonging and the rights within a destination (Bianchi & Stephenson, 2014). This creates strong relations with people's identity with the place they reside (Misener & Mason, 2006). As such, the host community can play the role of being responsible for making the brand effectively implemented.

Apart from identified roles the host community play in branding, it should also be noted that not only do they play pivotal role in information but as internal customers (Choo, 2011) since they can also enjoy their local destination (Canavan, 2013). (Soria & Cot,2013). (Jeuring,2017). asserts that residents' engagement in tourist activities in their region of residence enhances regional identification and tourism may become an inclusive part of citizenship behaviour which enhances the brand. Local people who have more brand-based identification with the destination are likely to participate more in tourist activities. Involvement of the host community, therefore, create an atmosphere of responsibility towards the destination thus improving the image and hospitability. Thus, the inclusion of the host community creates destination identity, dependence, attachment and bonding.

Based on the above-mentioned values, a model can be designed with brand image, awareness, knowledge, responsibility and participation, and loyalty created by the influence of the host community. The below proposed summative framework which shows how people influence destination branding and will be explained in the section which follows **(Figure 1).**

Based on the literature reviewed above, it is clear that people are indispensable when branding tourism destinations and the destination branding model can be premeditated showing how people influence the branding of a destination since people influence image, brand knowledge, brand loyalty and brand awareness.

Brand image: (Freire, 2007) notes that before moving to a place, individuals form themselves an image of a destination by stereotyping the typical local people. Satisfied residents with positive perceptions of their city reinforce and may communicate favourable associations of that place. Unhappy and dissatisfied residents can harm the brand image of a destination held by visitors and potentially other residents through negative word-of-mouth (Insch & Florek, 2008). This is clear evidence that the host community play a vital role in destination branding.

Brand knowledge: Branding should start with residents to attract visitors as people are the ones who help deliver the experience and have knowledge of the local norms. As a result, the host community are the ones who has brand knowledge and are likely to influence destination branding. People know their culture and values hence are the one who can educate others more precisely. While they practice it, they make it more known to others.
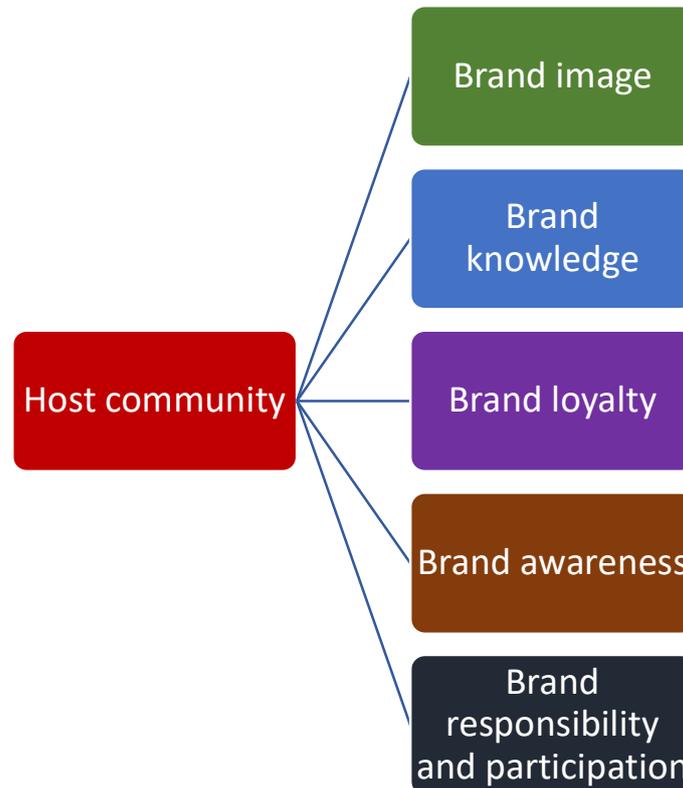

Figure 1: Framework summarising the role of the host community in the branding process.

Sources: *Researcher's own construction from literature.*

Brand loyalty: Brand loyalty is a measure of the attachment that a customer has to a brand (Aaker 1991, cited in EURIB 2009b). (Hurombo et al., 2014) argue that local people have an impact on the overall destination image affecting brand loyalty and word of mouth promotion. The scholars do agree that friendly people result in a more relaxed environment that allows greater ratification thus encouraging positive word of mouth promoting increased brand loyalty. This signifies the importance of people in a destination as a stakeholder.

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness is defined as a brand's ability to be remembered and recognized that comes from the mental process used by the customer in identifying it (Keller, 2003). It is reflected by the customer's ability to identify the brand under a different condition (Hurombo et al., 2014). While Aaker,1991 defines it as the potential of the customer in recognizing or remembering that the brand is present for a certain type of offering. People play an important role

in shaping the perception of a place to those who view it thereby promoting destination awareness.

Brand responsibility and participation: Host community have the responsibility of participating in the brand implementation. People not only create positive brands but disseminate the positive brand to a broad spectrum. This hence shows why people are vital in branding a destination.

CONCLUSION

Branding is a useful tool for destination marketing. Given the vital role of branding in the tourism industry, it is prudent for a destination marketing organisation to create effective brands to position themselves in the market. However, for destinations to create effective brands in the branding process they should have a holistic approach including all stakeholders. The host community is one of the most important stakeholders in the branding process. The host community augment the branding process in an area to enhance the brand image, brand knowledge, brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand responsibility and participation. It is therefore a key consideration to comprehend all the numerous roles of the host community to ensure that an effective brand is created in particular in the tourism industry where the product is intangible. It must primarily consider to include the host community in the branding process for the host community possess a lot of benefits in the branding process.

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