Djibouti tourism development using wellness

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Internship company: Djibouti tourism group
Company supervisors: Frank Toeset and Mo Farah
Abstract

This research paper deals with tourism development via wellness and customer satisfaction. As the wellness industry is growing and the demand is rising, countries are adapting their tourism strategies to meet those demands. This particular research is focusing on Djibouti, the third world country in the north east of Africa, where the tourism is not very well developed. The study was based on the Lake Assal, which is the saline lake, compared to the Dead Sea due to its chemical content. Djibouti tourism group, the startup company of tourism development, is planning to build a wellness resort on the banks of lake Assal and in this way help Djibouti to attract more tourists to the country. The research itself was executed through combination of three investigation techniques: questionnaire, interviews and desk research. In detail, 138 mixed method questionnaires were filled in by the expats and tourists of Djibouti in order to figure out the image of this country and preferences towards different wellness treatments. Qualitative interviews were undertaken with the beauticians and managers of a variety of hospitality and wellness institutions in Djibouti. The purpose of these interviews were to gain valuable information on the spa clientele in this country, most popular treatments and products used by the beauty industry. Desk research was used to enrich the research with the practice of the undertaken researches by different scientists in order to figure out the factors to develop wellness destination and to understand the aspects of customer satisfaction. The findings were analyzed using mixed-model approach combining quantitative and qualitative data. The research findings indicate that Djibouti has a mainly positive image amongst expats and tourists, where the centrality is drawn towards the climate, beauty of the country, friendly locals and its natural attractions. The decision making process to visit lake Assal wellness resort amongst tourists and expats of Djibouti was analyzed as well and the results reveal that ‘pull’ factors play the major role. In addition, five factors of wellness destination development were applied to Djibouti’s case and the outcome suggests that transport infrastructure has to be improved to be able to successfully develop the destination in the light of wellness. Customer satisfaction results reveal that the main points to focus in the wellness center have to be relaxation and product combination with lake Assal ingredients. All of the results were compared with the theory from the theoretical framework and the outcome was used to draw a conclusion and recommendation for Djibouti tourism group. The research concludes that DTG can use the image of Djibouti determined by the outcome of this research, by focusing on the positive aspects of it to provide the fair image of Djibouti through the marketing of the wellness center and compensate the negative facets out. Furthermore the pull factor was concluded to be the main factor for developing an appealing setting for the future customers. Furthermore the transport infrastructure has to be paid attention to in order to eliminate obstacles in wellness destination development phase. Additionally, the expectations of the first guests received can be better met, resulting in a positive word of mouth and possible retention in this way bringing in the wellness holiday makers who are willing to spend their money in this country. As a result the specific recommendations were written for the Djibouti tourism group of which two were the main: target marketing of the business travelers and militants of Djibouti and product diversification paying attention to seasonality and target group.
**Definitions and abbreviations**

**Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health tourism</td>
<td>people traveling from their place of residence for health purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>a value of optimized life, taking on a unique centrality within the lifestyle concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness</td>
<td>a combination of body, mind, spirit and self-responsibility, which determine the human state health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness tourism</td>
<td>is a sub-category of health tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Spas are places devoted to overall well-being through a variety of professional services that encourage the renewal of mind, body and spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness center</td>
<td>is often re-named as ‘lifestyle resorts’, ‘longevity centers’, health retreat centers’ or ‘Holistic wellness centers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa consumers/ customers</td>
<td>Consumers who are looking for a nurturing and healing place where they can enjoy community time, and have shared experiences with their friends, relatives and spouses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>DTG</td>
<td>Djibouti tourism group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONTD</td>
<td>The national tourism office of Djibouti (in French: Office national du tourisme de Djibouti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human resource</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

Abstract.................................................................................................................................................. 3

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................ 8

1.1 Research question.......................................................................................................................... 9

1.2 Reading guide.................................................................................................................................. 9

2. Company profile ................................................................................................................................ 10

2.1 Djibouti tourism group .................................................................................................................. 10

   Mission.................................................................................................................................................. 10

   Offered services ................................................................................................................................. 10

2.2 National tourism office of Djibouti ............................................................................................... 10

   Mission.................................................................................................................................................. 11

   Offered services ................................................................................................................................. 11

2.3 Sheraton Djibouti hotel .................................................................................................................. 11

   Mission.................................................................................................................................................. 11

   Offered services ................................................................................................................................. 11

3. Theoretical framework ...................................................................................................................... 12

3.1 Destination image .......................................................................................................................... 12

3.3 Traveling motivation ....................................................................................................................... 13

   Spa goers’ motivation and satisfaction .............................................................................................. 13

3.4 Destination development .............................................................................................................. 14

   Destination development via customer needs .................................................................................. 14

   Development of regions using wellness ............................................................................................ 15

4. Research methods ............................................................................................................................. 16

4.1 Research design ............................................................................................................................. 16

4.2 Research instruments .................................................................................................................... 16

   Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire ............................................................................................... 16

   Qualitative interviews with managers ............................................................................................... 17

   Qualitative interviews with beauticians ............................................................................................ 17

   Desk research..................................................................................................................................... 17

4.3 Sample size ..................................................................................................................................... 17

   Mixed method questionnaires ........................................................................................................... 17

   Qualitative interviews with managers and beauticians .................................................................... 18

4.4 Operationalization .......................................................................................................................... 18
2.3 Qualitative interviews with beauticians

2.2 Qualitative interviews with managers

2.1 Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire

1.3 Sheraton Djibouti hotel

1.2 National tourism office of Djibouti

1.1 Djibouti tourism group

I. What is the image of Djibouti? ................................................................. 31

II. What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness center and what are the reasons? ................................................................. 31

III. How could lake Assal resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs? ................................................................. 31

7.2 Answer research question ........................................................................ 32

7.3 Recommendations ................................................................................... 32

References .................................................................................................... 34

Appendices .................................................................................................... 38

1. Organizational charts and contact information of the internship companies .............. 38

1.1 Djibouti tourism group ................................................................. 38

1.2 National tourism office of Djibouti ......................................................... 39

1.3 Sheraton Djibouti hotel ......................................................................... 39

2. Empty research tools ................................................................................. 40

2.1 Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire ...................................................... 40

2.2 Qualitative interviews with managers ..................................................... 54

2.3 Qualitative interviews with beauticians .................................................. 54
**Introduction**

Djibouti is the capital city of the republic of Djibouti, located on the Horn of Eastern Africa on the Gulf of Tadjoura. According to official documentation Djibouti has a population of over 800 000 inhabitants, of which 60% is living in the capital city. The country is situated near the world’s busiest shipping lanes and is known as the refuelling and transhipment centre. Because of its geographically convenient position and the economic benefits for Djibouti, it is a home to French, Italian, Spanish, USA, and Japan military bases with their militants and their families.

Djibouti is one of the hottest inhabited places in the world where the temperature remains higher than 25 degrees all year round, reaching the maximum of 45 degrees in summer season. Weather seems to be the perfect attraction for the holiday makers, however the reality shows that tourism in Djibouti is not very well developed. Although the growth of incoming tourists was noticed in the period of 2000 - 2011, reaching 181.34%, it was mainly addressed to the decreasing tourism in Israeli and Egypt areas and the crises of global economy sectors. Nevertheless Djibouti is a very unique location with a deep ethnic background and plenty of natural attractions. One of the most popular entertainments are swimming with the whale sharks, visiting the dead forest or admiring the lowest point in whole African continent which is called lake Assal.

The potential of this lake has been noticed when the plans to build a geothermal power plant on the top of the inflow of the lake came to light. This will help to keep Lake Assal as a sustainable resource of salt, minerals and provide Djibouti with sustainable and affordable energy, generating 50MW of the electricity, which at the moment is bought from Ethiopia and is considerably expensive. In this way Lake Assal will become a sustainable source of green energy for Djiboutians and incoming tourists before 2018. Furthermore it means that the lake itself will become inexhaustible source of minerals and healthy salts, which is an advantage in comparison with the dead sea, which was noticed to be shrinking significantly through the past couple of years. In fact Lake Assal is considered to be the ‘new dead sea’ because of the similar mineral composition: NaCl, KCl, MgCl₂, CaCl₂, CaSO₄ where MgBr₂, with NaCl are dominant, while MgCl₂ is the leading ingredient in Dead Sea.

Djibouti has been receiving a lot of interest from foreign investors concerning its status in tourism. One of these companies is ‘Djibouti tourism group’, which is a property and concept development organization, focused on developing tourism in this country. It was founded by Mo Farah and Frank Toeset, who believe that the lake itself is a unique and sustainable opportunity for business. Djibouti tourism group is at the organizational stage, where the necessary connections have to be established in order to get the financial support and legal aid to develop their projects further on. One of the many proposals of Djibouti tourism group is the plan of a wellness resort at the banks of the saline water Lake Assal (120km to the west of Djibouti city). The first sketches of the possible wellness resort have been drawn and primary connections with possible co-partners established. In order for this plan to work, the preliminary promotion plan has been considered, including the production of the wellness focused products with the lake Assal ingredients. The idea is to brand the area of lake Assal as a wellness destination through selling the products at the local hospitality and wellness industries.

As global spa summit (2012) suggests, collaboration is one of the most important ingredients when developing a wellness destination. Involvement of the parties such as National tourism department of Djibouti, all sorts of governmental institutions, tour operators and stakeholders of the hospitality field, can lead to successful creation of the wellness destination. National tourism office of Djibouti is one of the many important parties when creating such a project as it is government based institution which is in charge of all of the ongoing tourism and its development.
in Djibouti. Its work includes a broad variety of actions directed towards tourism ensuring that it is legally, financially and sustainably beneficial to all of the parties, including the tourism industry as well as the local communities, therefore developing a wellness centre on the banks of Lake Assal could provide a positive impact on the community and surrounding areas of Djibouti where the poverty level is high. From this, the following main question and from it derived sub-questions, have been formulated:

**1.1 Research question**

Main question: *How can Djibouti tourism group contribute to tourism in Djibouti, by using the sources of lake Assal to develop wellness?*

Sub-questions:

1. *What is the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination?*
2. *What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness centre and what are the reasons?*
3. *How could lake Assal wellness resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs?*

**1.2 Reading guide**

This report has been structured in the following order to help the reader navigate. The following chapter 2 ‘Company profile’ describes the company environment and expands on the challenge definition (research question). In chapter 3 ‘Theoretical framework’ provides the scientifically proved theory, which describes the vision writer has on the research question and determines research focus and its goals. Chapter 4, ‘Methodology’ explains chosen research design as well as the approach of data analysis, followed by chapter 5 ‘Results’ where the reader can find the findings generated throughout this research. In chapter 6 ‘Discussion’, one can explore the results, which are compared and re-evaluated. Chapter 7 ‘Conclusions and recommendations’ the thesis is brought further and from it derived recommendations presented.
2. Company profile

This internship adopts a unique approach as it is executed at three different parties of tourism industry of Djibouti: Djibouti tourism group, National office of tourism of Djibouti and Sheraton hotel Djibouti. This approach was chosen in order to evaluate the touristic situation and its opportunities of growth from different angles. All of these companies have the same purpose: to develop tourism in Djibouti and have a close collaboration amongst each other. The theoretical part of this dissertation was executed in Djibouti tourism group, where the primary information and guidance about Djibouti and lake Assal was received. Practical part was split between two organizations: National tourism office of Djibouti and Sheraton Djibouti hotel. At the later one, the researcher gained valuable information about service requirements, guest preferences as well as the expanded list of expats and tourists contacts. National tourism office of Djibouti added a different perspective to a whole research, it showed tourism in Djibouti from the legal side, revealed what has been already done enhance the tourism development process and disclosed the plans for the future.

2.1 Djibouti tourism group

Djibouti tourism group (DTG) is a start-up company based in the capital city of Djibouti. It is a property and concept Development Company specialised in tourism. Its main goal is to develop tourism in Djibouti. The director of the company is Mo Farah and his colleague Frank Toeset, who is the main architect in the company. These two entrepreneurs found the company in 2013. This company is at its very infancy so all of their activities are still in planning stage.

The organizational chart and the contact details of Djibouti tourism group can be found in the Appendix 1.1

Mission

Djibouti tourism group mission is to establish a long-term contribution and be representatives to sustainable development of tourism in Djibouti, within the framework of the vision 2035 strategy, which is a long-term development strategy drafted by the government of Djibouti.

Offered services

As Djibouti tourism group is a young organization its services do not exist yet, however it has a vision and goals of what they should look like. First of all DTG will focus on improving quality, quantity and accessibility of tourist information both, online and offline. In order to meet this goal DTG and ONTD will work together. Extra front offices will be set up at the hotels. Moreover the company is eager to develop some of the potential tourist attractions in Djibouti city. Key ingredients to this program will be signing of required documents, getting and spreading the information, bettering the accessibility of touristic sights and training the tour guides.

Inventories the company is going to supply in the year of 2015:

- Destination analysis of Djibouti city
- Local hotel facilities that need investment
- The need of training assessment of national tourism office of Djibouti.

In order to be successful in developing tourism in Djibouti DTG is continuously establishing connections with new partners: governmental and non-governmental institutions.

2.2 National tourism office of Djibouti

National tourism office of Djibouti or in other words ONTD (Office national du tourisme de Djibouti) is a governmental institution which takes care of all of the matters related with tourism in Djibouti. Its primary purpose is to increase the touristic potential of the country by investing in projects, workshops etc., which would lead into a higher number of tourists. All of this is believed to help in development of the different touristic regions, in this way influencing the raise of the wealth in Djibouti. ONTD currently employs 27 employees, 9 of which is the board of
International tourism office of Djibouti, 1 director, 1 accountant and two assistants, service administration of 11 people, marketing department of 8 employees and environmental service department which consists of 1 employee. The organizational chart and the contact details of the National tourism office of Djibouti can be found in the Appendix 1.2

Mission
To develop tourism in Djibouti (Office National du Tourisme, 2012)

Offered services
International tourism office of Djibouti has a number of different functions concerning tourism. In regard to incentives, regulations, surveys of tourist interest, it is responsible for advising, assisting and monitoring the professionals in the tourism sector, establishing, changing or reporting the breaches of regulations, supporting the initiatives in tourism development, issuing, suspending or withdrawing of the authorization of license of touristic organizations, choosing the themes and programs of advertising campaigns, also taking care of the exterior and interior of Djibouti city, being involved in the master planning of the space of the surroundings, support and execute the research in the tourist sector and ensure the protection of the environment.

In regard to the planning, financing and economics of tourism development, ONTD is responsible of preparing and presenting the multi-year plans of development to all of its departments and the authorities related. ONTD prepares the forms of public intervention, technical and financial assistance during the implementation of these plans, consults the private investment projects interested in application of grant, loan or tax exemption. It contributes to the research of commercial tourist activities and technical progress by bringing in statistical documentation. (Office National du Tourisme, 2012)

2.3 Sheraton Djibouti hotel
Sheraton Djibouti hotel is one of the world wide known Starwood hotel chain resorts which as well belongs to the constellation hospitality group. It is one of the two 5 star hotels in the capital of Djibouti in the North east Africa. The hotel is situated on the coast of the Red sea, providing its customer with astonishing view. It is only 1 kilometer from the city center, 3 kilometers from the international harbor and 6.5 kilometers from Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport. Sheraton Djibouti hotel is known to combine modern comfort with east African hospitality including local cuisine into its menu and hosting numerous of local weddings.

The organizational chart and the contact details of the Sheraton Djibouti hotel can be found in the Appendix 1.3

Mission
To consistently exceed our guests’ expectations in terms of the products and services we provide to our business and leisure travelers. (http://www.sheratondjibouti.com/)

Offered services
Djibouti Sheraton hotel offers 175 rooms of which 86 are classic rooms, 68 executive rooms, 16 club rooms, 4 junior suites and 1 diplomatic suite. Most of the guests are diplomats, militants and business travelers. In order to serve its clientele well Djibouti Sheraton hotel offers meeting room facilities including 3 rooms: ballroom of 224 m2, La Meree room of 81 m2 and La Mer Rouge of 50 m2. This hotel is equipped with some leisure features such as the outdoor swimming pool and the beach area with the view of the Red sea, fully equipped fitness center. Some recreational activities such as Balinese massage and the Island beach club with water sports are going to be available for the guests in the very near future. (http://www.sheratondjibouti.com/)
3. Theoretical framework

The purpose of this theoretical framework is to assist the reader in understanding the theoretical part of this report. It connects the theory with the main research question: How can Djibouti tourism group contribute to tourism in Djibouti, by using the sources of lake Assal for wellness development?

3.1 Destination image

One of the most important factors in tourist’s decision making process is the image of the destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). There are numerous of definitions to describe the destination image however it is generally interpreted as a compilation of beliefs and impressions based on information processing from various sources over time that results in a mental representation of the attributes and benefits sought of a destination (Crompton, 1979; Gartner, 1996). Earlier literature mainly focused on exploring travelers perception of a destination, e.g., Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Goodrich, 1978; Schroeder, 1996; Sternquist Witter, 1985; Tasci & Gartner, 2007), however current literature has tried to investigate how authorities form the image of the destination for their own interests, e.g., Choi, Lehto, & Morrison, 2007; Fürsich & Robins, 2004; Hashim, Murphy, & Hashim, 2007; Patil, 2011 (Liu, 2014). According to Smith (2007) places with specific functions or meanings in a city can help in marketing the destination one or another way establishing efficient marketing channels. Therefore, tourists are influenced by travel intermediaries, which help them to assess and form the image of the destination through promotion of the place (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997).

Image of the destination has a great impact on tourist’s loyalty and satisfaction. In addition to that the marketing strategies have been building trust and loyalty programs for the tourist in regard to the destination (Deegan, 2005). Chen & Gursy (2001) distinguishes a couple of ways how to enhance the loyalty of the customer, where the transportation from and to the airport, comfortable housing and the benefits to the elderly and children play the main role. However Baloglu & McCleary (1999) state that cultural aspects such as climate, price and friendliness of the locals are crucial in customers decision making process and triggers the motivation to return to the destination. Schofield (1991) and Ross & E. Iso-Ahola (2000) noticed that satisfaction is a great measure to evaluate products and services of the destination. Therefore, there are several factors which can rise the advantage or disadvantage into ones perception of the destination, these can be divided as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive factors</th>
<th>Negative factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides safety and security</td>
<td>Lack of safety and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides the infrastructure facilities of transport, tourist restaurants</td>
<td>The scarcity of services in tourist facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and other services</td>
<td>The high cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cultural heritage of the country of destination</td>
<td>Lack of hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides property and fun</td>
<td>Unsanitary conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive nature and environment</td>
<td>Begging and cheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate climate and weather</td>
<td>Corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The diversity of methods of hospitality among value</td>
<td>Internal wars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The behavior of local people towards tourists</td>
<td>Poor infrastructure facilities for tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of the local population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of natural resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jordan is Middle Eastern country with numerous of historical and cultural places, which attract tourists and increase its competitiveness (Alqurneh et al., 2014). It is also a great example of projecting a positive image of the destination. The government of Jordan ensures the public safety and security (Figure 3). Furthermore it meets all of the positive factors affecting the image of the tourist destination and loyalty, which makes it a tourist attraction area (Schneider & Sonmez, 1999).
3.3 Traveling motivation
Mueller and Kaufmann (as cited in Tezak et al., 2011) sets a clear distinction between wellness and cures. On the demand side it is assumed that wellness is pursued solely by healthy people, whose prime aim is prevention, however the line should be drawn between wellness/service packages and illness prevention. In addition wellness guests can demand for services which could be seen similar to those used by ‘normal cure guests’, but the key element is in the motive of preserving their own health (Figure 1)(Tezak et al., 2011). According to Mueller and Kaufmann (2001), hotels with wellness facilities should have a comprehensive health infrastructure and good guest care, where different criteria of the SPA industry are incorporated, including nutrition, exercise, relaxation and beauty. However all of these criteria should be disciplined to different extents and in various combinations.

Chen, Prebensen & Huan (2008) discovered that wellness travelers have a broader scope and motivation of traveling. They do not only focus on relaxation, body and spirit pampering, but also on activities in nature, socializing and participation in recreation activities. The researcher concludes that the motivations of wellness traveler are multidimensional in nature (Chenn et al., 2008).

Mueller and Kaufmann (2001) executed a research on hotel guests in Switzerland, where the main purpose was to explore the main reasons for staying at a particular destination, their expectations/ satisfaction and the attitude about health. The results show that guests were seeking for high quality amenities, preferably with non-smoking areas, information about wellness, relaxation, cultural facilities and healthy advice to bring back home with them. Women’s purpose of traveling included health, while men were more likely to appreciate wellness conveniences rather than plan them in advance. Men placed some wellness activities, such as nutrition, relaxation and culture as less important, while women thought the opposite (2001).

Past research shows that one of the ways to determine the motivation of wellness travelers is by using push and pull factors, where push factors represent an internal motivation, while pull factor address attributes of the destination (Chul Oh, Uysal & Weaver, 1995). These two factors are usually used to examine the relationship between motivation and the choice of the destination (Crompton, 1979).

Push factors are socio-psychological motivators that ‘push’ the individual to travel. Examples of push factors involve the intellectual stimulation, motivation for socializing, rest and relaxation, escape, physical activity and self-esteem development. Once this need to travel is established, pull factors rise the interest in different destinations. Pull factors are defined as “those that attract the individual to specific destinations once the decision to travel has been made (OH, Uysal & Weaver, 1995). Pull factors usually consist of the travelers’ perception of the destination, its attributes and tourism related activities, such as: attractions available, natural resources, culture (Hallab, 2008). Push and pull factors are thought to be as two different entities, however they should be seen as essentially related (Klenosky as cited in Boulay et al., 2013).

Boulay et al. (2013) executed a research to differentiate the U.S. and non U.S. customers and their motivations to travel. The destination and its attractions (pull factor) was not important to either the U.S. or non U.S. participants. The most important reason was why they travelled and what internal benefits they received during their trip. When comparing the results it turned out that the push factor was higher in both U.S. and non U.S. travelers. When comparing the destination attributes, the U.S. travelers were more interested in outdoor activities than non U.S. tourists. Furthermore differences in travel motivations arise as U.S. travelers feel that they are less well compared to the non U.S. travelers, however this rises the will in U.S. travelers to make themselves better during their journey and they need more relaxation and feeling of escape than the non U.S. travelers.

Spa goers’ motivation and satisfaction
More and more people feel responsible for their health and feel conscious about it. This can be addressed to the information network which is operating globally. Tourism industry is using this information and aims to meet health-related needs, in order to provide service towards the health issue (Chen et al., 2008). Tsai et al. (2012) found out that relaxation is the main motivation of the male spa visitors. Hall (1992) explained that physical flexibility, better digestion and circulation, weight loss, mental and physical relaxation, stress management etc. are spa goers
motivations. However Monteson and Singer (2004) found out that majority of spa visitors, visited wellness centers for the emotional reasons rather than the physical ones. Mak et al. (2009) executed a research on the motivation factors of Hong Kong spa-goers and recognized 21 motivating matters, which were grouped in four fundamental factors: relaxation and relief, escape, self-reward and indulgence, and health and beauty. Different results were received by Koh et al. (2010) when analyzing U.S. spa-goers motivations to visit wellness facilities. The findings disclose four major motivations: social, relaxation, health, and rejuvenation. Another research was executed by Kim et al. (2010) which analyzed customers behavioral intention to visit spa and findings indicate three underlying factors: perceived behavioral control, past experience, and spiritual wellness. However the main Laureiro et al. (2013) state that relaxation is the main emotion which is searched in spas by the customers.

Mate (2013) point out that one of the recent spa trends involve branded spa products. It has been noticed that the spa products used on a customers’ body affects customers perception towards meeting his/her needs (Kucukusta & Guillet, 2014). Park and Reisinger (2009) noticed that branded spa products have always been preferred by the Asian customers. Furthermore using branded spa products is usually preferred by spas who position themselves as luxury spas (Kucukusta & Guillet, 2014).

3.4 Destination development

Destination development via customer needs


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences</th>
<th>Specific factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant natural environment</td>
<td>Wealth and conservation of natural resources that make the destination scenically beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociocultural diversity</td>
<td>Range of recreation and leisure activities including bathing, surfing, walking, hang-gliding etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth and diversity of beauty, health, wellness and spiritual operations and services</td>
<td>Demographic change that initiated an interest in health, wellness and spiritual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved transport infrastructure</td>
<td>Abundance of health and wellness operations. Development of health, wellness and spiritual retreat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 Factors of wellness destination development (Wray et al., 2010)

A projection of future customer needs is important when developing new products. In order to do so a strong market-oriented process, including extensive customer knowledge and customer involvement in product development has to be executed (Joshi & Sharma, 2004). According to Barczak and Kahn (2012), Active collaboration with customers during new product development phase is considered to be the best practice. Consequently, customer satisfaction is considered to be one of the main standard criterions when measuring performance or excellence in the organization and is considered to be one of the main factors in achieving organizational goals (Munusamy, Chelliah & Mun, 2011). With that being said Culiberg (2010) states that satisfaction is a response to consumption, when service quality comprehends the customers judgement towards the provided service. Furthermore the service quality is considered to be satisfactory when it meets customers’ expectations, therefore if the service exceeds the expectations, customer will be enchanted and vice versa.

Price attribute was found to be one of the most important factors when choosing a specific treatment in spa (Kucukusta et al., 2013). Therefore Olson (1977), suggests that when the customer is uncertain about the quality of the provided service, he/she uses the price to determine or presume its quality. Terry (2007) indicate that price can
be based on the category of a spa (high-end spa, day spa, medical spa, hotel spa), when focusing on the target markets characteristics, pricing techniques and revenue management practice.

**Development of regions using wellness**

It has been noticed by Pallegrino (1999) that markets and commodities are scrupulously improper ways when talking about the medicine and health care delivery. However Timmerman & Almeling (2009) suggests that commodification, privatization and globalization of health care are the major factors influencing the recent development of the medical and wellness tourism. As a result, health providers have changed their practices to target the tourists visiting the country. Travel agencies, hotels and traditional vacation destinations, such as the Canary Islands, are also taking the growing market of wellness into account and are trying to diversify their tourism offer. Furthermore coastal tourism destinations are trying to promote themselves as wellness destinations as well, because of the negative health aspects the coastal tourism can bring: drowning, melanoma or pollution (Collins & Kearns, 2007).

Gran Canaria is a great example of wellness development process. Since 1960 this island has become a mass coastal tourism destination (Canarian Government department of tourism as cited in Munoz & Munoz, 2012). Canari island government brought successive strategic plans to renovate the major tourist locations and diversify the tourism offer in 2001. The main objective was to increase the number of tourists coming to the island for wellness, active tourism, golf or business purposes. In addition to this the ‘Gran Canaria Spa&Wellness’ association was established in 2003, which has had the objective of marketing the islands wellness offer in collaboration with the Tourist Board of Gran Canaria. The commodification of the landscape and natural recourses of the island was part of the developing wellness tourism product. As a result, most of the high-end hotel spas are now offering massages with view to the sea, sport activities on the beach and wellness treatments with the local natural resources. In this case, the bond between spa centers and its natural surroundings is clearly the result of the landscape commodification.

Another example of wellness development is Iceland, which as other Nordic countries has a widely spread bathing tradition, which is somewhat different from other countries as the bathing spots are mainly found in hot-springs, that are to be found in abundance all over the country. (Huijbens, 2011).

Jonsson & Huijbens (2005) states that ‘a bathing culture has thus developed to become a modern dual manifestation of wellness, as a venue of regular physical exercise (body) and epicurean delights (social/soul). The presence of these geothermal natural resources is one of the main unique selling points of Iceland, which is the key aspect of the wilderness and nature of this country (Frost, 2004). The design group, called ‘Waterfriends’ has created a vision for Iceland as a wellness destination, where the economic rebirth is expected. In this case the geothermal resources used for wellness and spa centers are expected to be combined with the state-of-the-art medical facilities and services available in the country and create new opportunities for medical tourism in Iceland (Huijbens, 2011). One of the possible difficulties in the development of this project is the intense relationship between tourism entrepreneurs and the medical establishment, should one of the parties be unwilling or unable to invest in to the future research of the water properties or marketing strategies. Bourdieu (1989) states that wellness cannot be settled independently, but should be a part of the process, where simply stating, that one can feel better, is not a great way of marketing and promotion. In addition to this, more material is needed to be known by the customer, such as how and why the individual can feel better and the explanation of the bond between wellness and the destination should be explained as well.

However in order to start the wellness development project, one has to evaluate the destination image and the decision making process of wellness travelers (Bourdieu, 1989).
4. Research methods

This chapter describes the main research design including its approach, data collection methods and analysis.

4.1 Research design

This research adopts deductive approach as it was testing theories described in chapter three (theoretical framework), which had already been developed by other researchers. Moreover the focus on exploring new phenomena was applied to the case of the Lake Assal spa resort, to figure out the possible ways to attract customers to Djibouti using the salty lake resources. As a result of this the sub-questions were answered in a sequel order and then purposefully used to answer the main question. All of the sub and main questions can be found down below:

Main research question: How can Djibouti tourism group contribute to tourism in Djibouti, by using the sources of lake Assal to develop wellness?

Sub-questions:

1. What is the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination?
2. What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness center and what are the reasons?
3. How could lake Assal wellness resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs?

To fully answer these questions the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analyzing techniques have been used. This research supported the exploratory approach according to Robson (2002), it is a valuable way of finding out 'what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light. Consequently, in depth interviews, questionnaires and desk research were used. The exploratory investigation design was combined with descriptive studies, as this type of research portrays an accurate profile of persons, events or situations (Robson 2002), in this case the portrait of the people interested in staying at lake Assal spa resort.

The results conducted from a quantitative questionnaire were organized in a quantitative manner, however, questions 4, 8, 9, 13, 18 and 19 were firstly worked out qualitatively, using MAXQDA program (See Appendix 2.6). Therefore the part of the research adopted, so called mixed method as qualitative and quantitative data techniques were used for the research study.

This investigation took five months (01.07.2014-01.11.2014) making it a cross-sectional research, where the samples were taken at a certain period of time and were not repeated later.

In order to map out the results in a more full and 'rich' sense, the triangulation method was applied by combining multiple theories, methods and empirical materials.

4.2 Research instruments

Data collection methods or in other words research methods are explained below per approach:

Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire

To partially answer sub-questions 1, 2 and 3 the mixed method printed survey was conducted amongst the expats and tourists of Djibouti. The questionnaire adopts qualitative and quantitative approach mixed together, in order to receive numeric (quantitative), and non-numeric (qualitative) data. The respondents were simply asked to fill in the questionnaire at the time being. Most of the respondents were met at the Sheraton hotel, Catholic Church, different bars and cafes of Djibouti which had been receiving a great amount of international guests. The French base and its habitants were difficult to reach due to the high security standards when entering the base or the French base entertainment center. Questionnaire itself include 22 questions, of which questions 4, 8, 9, 13, 19 were open. Questions 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20 were scale questions where one was asked to indicate how much he/she would or would not like the idea presented in the question. Respondents were able to choose from the answers given as follows: Yes, very much; somewhat yes; neutral; somewhat no; no not at all.
The rest of the questions were multiple choice with an ‘Other’ option, in order for respondents to be able to state different opinions than the ones offered in the questionnaire. Moreover these questionnaires were divided into three parts: 1) basic information about the tourist and his/her views on Djibouti 2) The knowledge and participation in wellness procedures in Djibouti 3) Interest in a lake Assal wellness resort. The benefit of handing out the questionnaires in person was that the response rate was 100%. Furthermore no contact details were needed, in this case the hesitation factor was excluded and more sincere answers achieved. (See Appendix 2.1)

Qualitative interviews with managers
The purpose of these interviews was to gather the information needed to identify the competitors and find out more about their provided services in order to know what services are the most popular amongst the international guests. The interviews were executed with the manager of the Kempinski hotel SPA department, the manager of NAAS institute of beauty, front office manager of Acacia hotel. The interviews were semi-structured, where all of the asked questions were open ended and required explanation. (See Appendix 2.2)

Qualitative interviews with beauticians
This questionnaire was conducted in purpose to partially answer the 3rd sub-question. The researcher decided to use this method in order to gain valuable information from professionals, which was later used to develop a well worthy advice for the lake Assal spa resort. Three beauticians from Kempinski hotel Spa, one beautician from Acasias hotel and one beautician/manager from NAAS institute of the Beauty were interviewed. The questions were open ended and the interview itself was semi-structured to leave some space for interpretation. (See Appendix 2.3)

Desk research
Secondary resources are used in this research in order to fill the gaps and gather information from the broader perspective. For the qualitative desk research two sources were used: ONTD documentation, secondary research using a mix of scientific and non-scientific articles. Each method is explained in detail below:

- ONTD documentation: report ‘Tourism information and development of Djibouti’ (2012), was used in order to get the evaluation and comparison between the results received in 2012 with the results gathered through this research project.
- Secondary documentation include scientific and non-scientific articles. The search words: lake Assal, lake Assal chemical compound, dead Sea, Dead Sea chemical compound, Afar salt, Saline waters, etc. were used in order to partially answer the third sub question of this research.

4.3 Sample size
To figure out the accuracy and reliability of the results the minimum sample size of the population was calculated. Below you can find the calculations for the questionnaire and explanation for qualitative interviews.

Mixed method questionnaires
In this report the sample size for the questionnaires to tourists and expats is calculated, taking the 90% certainty (n) into account. According to 2011 report of incoming tourists made by the national tourism office of Djibouti, the amount of tourists reached 56 550, which was taken as the population unit for this research. Margin of error (m) was chosen to be 7%, expected percentage (p) is 5% and the response rate was chosen to be 90% as most of the questionnaires were filled in with my supervision. 10% is left in order for the blanks and falsely answered questions. The minimum sample size with 90% accuracy turned out to be 138 respondents (See Appendix 2.4)
Qualitative interviews with managers and beauticians
There is only one wellness center in Djibouti: Kempinski SPA. After a brief research the student found more beauty facilities spread throughout the capital of Djibouti, however not all of them agreed upon the interview. As a result of this 3 beauticians and one manager were interviewed from Kempinski Spa department, one manager/beautician from Nass institute of beauty and one beautician and front office manager were interviewed in Acasia hotel. After a couple of interviews with the beauticians, the similarities were noticed amongst their answers. Beauticians of Kempinski spa, Nass institute of beauty and Acasia hotel agreed that most of the clients they receive are French and most of them are the militants or their family members, the most popular products are imported from France and India.

4.4 Operationalization
After the research methods were chosen, they were operationalized in order to translate the abstract constructs into measurable terms. The table with displayed constructs, dimensions and indicators can be found in the Appendix 2.5

Analysis
All of the collected data was analyzed using different approaches, depending on its nature: quantitative or qualitative. Below you can find the analyzing techniques used for this research, explained in detail per approach.

Mixed method questionnaire
Collected data was firstly entered in google drive program in order to digitalize it and make it easily accessible. Information was analyzed by applying different approaches. In detail, data collected from questionnaires, helped to determine tourists and expats reaction and opinion about the possibility to stay at the lake Assal wellness resort and to find out the satisfactory elements perceived by the guests for such wellness center. Second step was to analyze the findings. Collected information was analyzed by using a mixed method approach (quantitatively and qualitatively). In detail quantitative data was imported to excel program in order to make a matrix out of all of the data. Consequently the data was analyzed per question using pivot table and later on depicted in graphs. Questions 4, 8, 9, 13, 18 and 19 were firstly processed with qualitative data analysis system (MAXQDA). Firstly the answers were entered to the program, later on they were labeled, then the answers which seemed to express the same meaning, were joined together and then axial coding system was applied, which means that the categories out of the clustered synonyms were created. The selective coding part was skipped and instead the results were imported to Excel program in order to turn the figures into percentages and picture it in graphs and charts (See Appendix 2.6).

Qualitative interviews
Every interview was transcribed into a written account using actual words of the respondents. As the research was conducted qualitatively, the sample size remained relatively small. Then the categorization has been used to utilize the terms and results which came out of the research in order to structure the data in the way that the research question would be answered and the objectives reached. All of this was executed using qualitative analysis system (MAXQDA) program which was used in order to connect the developed concepts with the parts and pieces of written text. In detail, firstly the transcribed text was imported to the MAXQDA program, then the unnecessary sentences crossed out, leaving only the useful data. Consequently the most useful parts were labeled, then the labels which seem to have the same meaning (synonyms) were clustered together and axial coding was used to put those labels under categories. The last step was to find central concepts by selectively coding the created labels. This data collection and analyzing technique was not chosen accidently, the questions were constructed in order to answer the fourth sub question, which added up to the explanation of the main research question (See Appendix 2.7).
Desk research

- ONTD documentation was received at the national tourism office of Djibouti, therefore the validity of these credentials might be forged by the ONTD itself as there is no evidence of filled in questionnaires or interview transcripts. Bearing in mind that ONTD is a governmental organization which has to meet high satisfactory standards created by the government of Djibouti, the possibility of the unoriginal results is pretty realistic.

- Secondary research was analyzed qualitatively, however some of the numeric information was cited from the scientific articles.

4.6 Limitations of the research

During the execution process of this research, the researcher faced some limitations. First of all, this research had been conducted in a third world country, where the English language is not widely adopted by the inhabitants as well as local authorities. Furthermore the majority of the expats spoke French language and a minority were able to answer questions in English, what made this research unintentionally more focused on English speaking expats. Furthermore, some of the questionnaires were filled in by the researcher, while the respondents were answering them verbally, however the rest were given out in a printed form and the researcher was not able to control the survey in such way that all of the questions were answered 100%.

Second difficulty the researcher had to face was insufficient beauticians’ knowledge on lake Assal, its health benefits and saline water treatments. Consequently the desk research was added to answer the sub-question four. Moreover some of the interviews were executed with an uncertified translator, so the accuracy of the answers cannot be ensured 100%.

4.7 Ethics

In the internship contract all of the parties; Djibouti tourism group, the National tourism office of Djibouti and Sheraton Djibouti hotel, signed to keep companies’ information and the research confidential. Every respondent of the quantitative/qualitative questionnaire took part in this research completely voluntarily. The purpose and objectives of this research was explained in advance. Furthermore, the interviews with beauticians and managers were agreed upon in advance, the purpose and questions were presented and explained beforehand, to avoid possible miscommunications and mistrust.

The questions did not contain any personal or non-relevant information, thus all of the answers collected had been treated confidentially and did not have any consequence on the respondent. Moreover all of the obtained data had been kept and processed confidentially, only by the members of the Spa Lake Assal project, National tourism office of Djibouti, the intern (Laura Skiezigilaite) and the supervisor at HZ University of applied science (Peter Kruizinga).
5. Results

This paragraph represents the results gathered throughout the research, using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, followed by the addition of desk research to fulfill the gaps and answer the questions, which could not be answered with the information gathered out of the surveys and interviews. All of the data received from questionnaires is categorical, some of the questions generated descriptive dichotomous data (Q1, 7, 10, 11), some descriptive nominal data (Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 18, 19, 21, 22) and a couple of questions gathered ranked ordinal data (Questions 14, 15, 16, 17, 20). This chapter does not include interpretation or recommendation, it presents the raw, however qualitatively or quantitatively organized results and facts with no alteration from the researcher.

138 respondents are composed of 49% of tourists and 51% of expats (See Appendix 3.1). However throughout the research it became clear that a majority of respondents were in Djibouti on business purposes. As a result of that the researcher did not make a strict division between these two parties when analyzing the results.

Most of the respondents came from Germany (20%), followed by France (12%), Spain (9%) and Canada (7%) (See Appendix 3.2). 37% of the respondents visited Djibouti for the first time, 22% lived there temporarily, 18% visited Djibouti a couple of times a year and 15% admitted visiting Djibouti from time to time (See Appendix 3.3). 113 people, which make up to 82% stated coming to this country on business (See Appendix 3.6). The most popular length of the stay turned out to be 1-3 months (20% of the respondents), keeping in mind that Djibouti is a strategically attractive location to military bases, where serving period is exactly 3 months (See Appendix 3.5).

5.1 What is the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination?

According to Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) the research about tourism information and development in Djibouti was executed, where incoming tourists were asked how satisfied they were with touristic products and benefits available to them and reasons behind it. The majority of the respondents: nearly 90%, expressed high satisfaction, where the main reasons were determined as follow:

- Extensive promotional and informational materials available at ONTD
- Sights that make Djibouti a unique an attractive destination
- Diversity of sailing activities
- Endearing and friendly locals
- Preserved folklore
- Internet services
- Easy usage of credit cards and currency exchange services
- Visa upon arrival

About 10% expressed dissatisfaction with the services directed towards tourism in Djibouti, some of the reasons are listed below:

- Djibouti airport: waiting time for the bags is too long, unusable toilets, carrier harassment
- Dilapidated taxis and driver disability to speak English
- Cleanliness of the city is not very high
- A major street begging

During the research phase of the ‘Djibouti tourism development through wellness’ in 2014, respondents of the survey were asked to describe Djibouti in 3 words. The outcomes reveal that 27% of the respondents describe Djiboutis weather, 15% think it is a beautiful country, followed by 13% who point out its natural attractions, 7% who point out the pollution problem, including the smelly, dusty and dirty streets. 7% claimed that Djibouti is best described by the locals and their friendliness. 6% point out its small size. Interestingly only 1% mentioned safety and military, knowing Djiboutis neighboring countries. (See Appendix 3.4).
There have been some similarities noticed between these two investigations mentioned above. 13% of the respondents stated that ‘touristic attractions’ describe Djibouti the best, therefore it can be compared with the research executed in 2012 where the respondents expressed their satisfaction in ‘Sights that make Djibouti an attractive destination’ and ‘Diversity of Sailing activities’. Both researches also display the similar view towards locals, in Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) the ‘Endearing and friendly locals’ were mentions as one of the satisfactory elements of Djibouti, while in 2014 7% of tourists and expats described Djibouti by mentioning words ‘local people’ and ‘friendly’. Furthermore these two researches show common results in the area of cleanliness, where Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) states that 10% of the respondents were unsatisfied with the not very high standards of the city cleanliness. Same in the tourist and expat questionnaire outcome 5% of respondents point out Djiboutis pollution problem, mentioning the words: dirty, dusty and smelly. Another negative feature pointed out by the travellers in Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) was ‘a major street begging’, while expats and tourists described Djibouti as ‘poor’.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sights that make Djibouti a unique an attractive destination</td>
<td>‘touristic attractions’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity of sailing activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endearing and friendly locals</td>
<td>‘local people’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleanliness of the city is not very high</td>
<td>‘Dirty’</td>
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<tr>
<td>A major street begging</td>
<td>‘poor’</td>
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*Figure 3 Comparison between Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) research and Djibouti tourism development through wellness (2014) researches*

5.2 What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness center and what are the reasons?

To determine if there is any interest in to visiting the lake Assall resort which is planned to be built on the banks of lake Assal, the respondents were asked about their current visits to spas in Djibouti: 76% claimed that they have never visited a wellness center in Djibouti, however the majority (77%) out of the 33 respondents who admitted to visiting some wellness activities in Djibouti turned out to use Kempinski wellness centers services *(See Appendices 3.7; 3.8)*. When asked about the treatments respondents usually choose massage (43%), steam bath (22%), face and head procedures (9%) *(See Appendix 3.9)*.

72.5% of the respondents have heard of the lake Assal however only 38% have visited it while in Djibouti *(See Appendices 3.10; 3.11)*. To determine the willingness to visit the salty lake, the question: ‘Would you be interested in visiting a resort built on the banks of lake Assal? Was asked. 69% of the respondents were willing to visit this lake, 17% kept neutral opinion and 14% expressed no interest into such resort *(See Appendix 3.12)*. The next question was asked as the extension to the previous question and the explanation of why the respondents would or would not like to visit the wellness center on the banks of lake Assal was asked. All of the results were firstly split into the positive and negative, followed by a more thorough classification of the mostly used responses.
As displayed in the table above, most of the respondents mentioned the positive aspects of the possible wellness center. 28% focused on health benefits, while 17% stated that beauty of the surroundings is one of the factors when deciding to visit the center. A sufficient amount of interviewees (15%) stated that Djibouti is in a great need of more entertainment and relaxation. 31% were generally not interested in the wellness center idea, followed by 19% who thought it is not a very sustainable idea as the nature needs to be preserved not destroyed, other 19 % stated that it is too hot at the lake Assal for any kind of activity.

5.3 How could lake Assal wellness resort attract new tourists to Djibouti by focusing on customer satisfaction?

As cited in Katz et al. (2012) ‘Dead Sea water balneotherapy and phototherapy have been used to treat dermatologic and rheumatologic involvement in psoriasis’. 1448 patients with psoriasis were treated with Dead Sea water balneotherapy and phototherapy, 88% experienced noticeable improvements and 58% was completely cleared from psoriatic disease. Dead Sea water balneotherapy, Dead Sea springs; water balneotherapy-sulfur and Dead Sea mud is used for treating inflammatory and non-inflammatory rheumatologically diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, fibromyalgia, ankylosing spondylitis, osteoarthritis.

Brisou, Courtois and Denis (1974) executed a research on the microbial population of lake Assal. This research involved the chemical compounds found in the lake Assal and their comparison with the Dead Sea. As it can be seen from the figure 11, NaCl, CaSO4, MgBr2 concentration is higher in lake Assal than the Dead Sea, while KCl, MgCl2 is higher in Dead Sea and CaCl2 has approximately equal amount in both waters.

As pictured in the figure X the total density of the salts in lake Assal is 0.032 gm lower than in the Dead Sea. Saltnews is a website which presents the information about different kinds of salts and its preparation methods in the kitchen.
One of SaltNews articles named ‘Djibouti’s mystery – salt from lake Assal’ presents four types of different sizes of lake Assal salts: large and round Djibouti Boule, marble-sized salts, pearl sized and shaped salts and fine dew type of salt. Afar Salt (lake Assal salt) has been compared with Hymalayan salt, Celtic Sea salt, Bali salt and was described as one of the purest, high class, tasteful salts. (manna, n.d.). According to San Francisco bath salt company afar salt has General skincare benefits, soothes muscle aches and pains and helps to detoxify the skin.

As the information about the lake Assal and its resources is limited, the destination marketing techniques were researched in order to suggest the marketing approach of such a unique place as lake Assal, Djibouti.


**Significant natural environment of Djibouti**

According to Hogan (2011) lake Assal is the largest hypersaline lacustrine water body in Africa. This lake is classified as thalassohaline body, because sodium and chloride are dominant in its concentration. This lake has no flow outlet, meaning that its salinity is concentrated and its massive evaporation continues in this hot climate. It is 155 meters below sea level, which makes this lake the lowest point in African continent. According to the reviews in the TripAdvisor website, lake Assal is described as: This place is even more attractive than the way it is described in the reviews ![Belleretraite as cited in tripadvisor, 2014](“This place is absolutely magnificent, and a must see when in Djibouti.”)(Tripadvisor, n.d.), ‘It was worth the hassle to get there. Lac Assal is the lowest point in the African continent -155 m. from sea level, and a nature wonder’(Manila6 as cited in tripadvisor, 2013), An incredible Salt White Beach. 147m Under the sea, a terrific climate condition’ (Ginko D as cited in tripadvisor, 2013), ‘The choice of sights in Djibouti are limited in my opinion, so Africa's lowest point will be a “must see”. However, it is not only because of lack of choices, the drive there is interesting and floating in the sea is fun’ (Dgjohansson as cited in tripadvisor, 2013).

Lake Abbe is another saline lake of Djibouti which receives water from Awash river and is located on the border of Ethiopia and Djibouti. This lake is connected to other five lakes: lake Afambo, lake Bario, lake Gargori, lake Gummare, lake Laitali. The landscape is covered in chimneys where some of them reach 50 meters in hight and exhaust sulfured smokes rich with calcium. The only inhabitants of this place are a very large pink flamingo colony. The lake Abbe was used as a scenery for a movie ‘Planet of apes’ first part (Guillen, A., Guillen, I., 2013). Reviews on tripadvisor show travelers admiration by this place: ‘Worth the bumpy road to see such amazing geothermal topography! Stayed the night in a "local" hut which was an experience that went along with a wonderful two days..’ (jetta 1950 as cited in tripadvisor, 2014), ‘The landscape is marked by calcareous chimneys, former marine fumaroles. It is a fantastic sight...’ (Helen N as cited in tripadvisor, 2013), ‘It was cool to walk around the chimneys. The guide showed us where there were hot springs with steam coming out of the ground. There were so many different ways to see the chimneys and the lake, from high up/far away to being up close by hiking around them. Sunset and sunrise were really cool too...’ (Becky0222 as cited in tripadvisor, 2013).

Day forest national park is another unique place in Djibouti where the variety of tree species, such as fig, jujube, olive, juniper and momosa can be found. It is home to a wide variety of bird species, antilopes, gazelles, cheetahs, hyenas, monkeys, warthdogs and many more (Schraeder, P., J., n.d.).

**Diversity on tourism product and visitor experiences**

In order to know the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination the touristic attractions offered by the country were researched, then the measure of the satisfaction with its touristic services was taken and tourists asked of their views of Djibouti.

As it was stated in the regional investment conference Tourism as citted in Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) the tourism product of Djibouti is mainly centered on four activities:

- Diving in the Sept Freres archipelago, the Gulf of Tadjoura, Obock, the islands of Musha and Maskali, and Le Goubet;
- Fishing in the Bay of Goubet, Arta Beach or the Sables Blancs;
- Bathing, chiefly at the islands of Musha and Maskali, the Sables Blancs, Le Goubet and the Gulf of Tadjoura;
The Bush: discovering the main natural resources (Assal and Abbe Lakes, Dead forest, Le Goubet, Dittilou, Bankoualé and Randa).

Here are the reviews received about the diving offer in Djibouti: ‘Yes!!!Djibouti is a great place to Dive, the best periods are during October to January, this is when the weather is simply perfect and of course is the period when you can see the Whale Sharks on the surface...’ (Puelma Traveller as cited in tripadvisor, 2010), ‘This may or may not have been the best day of my life! Dolphins are the best mammals in the world and you can ride them and all...’ (Tyler B as cited in tripadvisor, 2014), Had a great time on the Deli this weekend, with Sonja Karjalainen, Lisa Steffers Culpepper, Joshua Boohoo, and all the other fun people we met. Looking forward to more trips with fun folks, great food, and amazing underwater life’ (Culpepper as cited in Facebook, 2015), ‘Thank you for giving me a great time in the week I spent diving with you guys on Deli, sorry I didn’t say goodbye but thought that we would see you again on land! It was a wonderful experience that I strongly recommend to all divers interested in whale sharks and the unexpected presence of David and his team were the cherry on top of the cake hope to see you again!!’ (Victoria Norden as cited in Facebook, 2014).

Here are the reviews received about the fishing offer in Djibouti: ‘...Kayaking around the Turtle Island is great for a fun and easy weekend outdoor activity when you want to get out in the nature.’ (Tomomi M as cited in tripadvisor, 2015), ‘...They also offered kayak fishing trips, paddle boarding, and an overnight kayaking camping trip. If your looking for an adventure this is the place to go. they have something for everyone. doesn't matter if your a first time adventure seeker or a long time adrenaline junkie.’ (Frank M as cited in tripadvisor, 2015).

Here are the reviews received about the bathing offer in Djibouti: ‘Its clear water beaches has a beauty that will leave you impressed. The sensation when he discovers this place is you feel you are one of the few unspoilt havens on the planet. It's a mix of cultures and beauty !!’ (Bahar_Dar as cited in tripadvisor, 2015), ‘The hotel facilities are great and there is plenty to keep busy (or not): of far niente on the beach walks island and diving in crystal clear sea.’ (Pedro Vill as cited in tripadvisor, 2015), ‘We only spent one night (a Wednesday) on Moucha Island but loved it...The island itself is pretty barren, but has plenty of swimming coves to explore, if you don’t mind the crabs. There’s one main beach that fills up with day-trippers, but it never felt crowded. You can rent kayaks and snorkeling equipment and there’s also a bar/restaurant and basketball court.’ (Brett_Ashley as cited in tripadvisor, 2014)

**Sociocultural diversity**

Agreement was signed between Djibouti and the world bank for 6 million us dollars in order to fulfill the plans for to finance the Geothermal Power Generation Project. According to World bank (2015) ‘This project will tap into Djibouti’s volcanic riches as a source of power, and will play an important role in their policy to reach 100% green energy use by 2020.’

**Improved transport infrastructure**

Two new airports are being built in Djibouti. The country expects to transform itself into a regional travel, tourism and business hub for Africa. Together the airports will cater over two million passengers, over 100 thousand tons of cargo and create 2000 jobs. The direct rail link to Addis Ababa is also currently under construction and will be completed this year. Furthermore Djibouti is planning to start working on liquefied natural gas and crude oil in 2015, which will bring work to four new ports , which are already being built. (African aerospace, 2015)

Road transport in Djibouti is directed more towards an international trade, where local transport is pushed to a second place. (Nations Encyclopedia, n.d.). Local transport includes taxis, car rentals, water taxis and busses. According to iExplore (n.d.)The best way to travel between towns and cities is to ride regular buses or use local mini bus system in the capital. Moreover roads are in good condition especially in the main city and between towns, however for more remote areas one should choose a car. (iExplore, n.d.).

**Growth and diversity of beauty, health, wellness and spiritual operations and services**

As mentioned under the paragraph 5.2, 76% of the respondents of expat/tourist questionnaire claimed to have never visited a wellness center in Djibouti. 77% of the 33 respondents who admit to using wellness services in Djibouti stated to use Kempinski spa, 2% Acasias hotel and Muriel’s, Sheraton hotel and Naas share 1% each (See Appendix 3.8).
The findings from the expat/tourist questionnaire indicate that the favorite wellness treatments amongst expats who visit spa facilities turned out to be massage (43%), steam bath (22%) and face and head procedures (9%). The majority, (66%) of the respondents express willingness to try out wellness procedures combined with the healing ingredients of the lake Assal (See Appendix 3.14). Furthermore the respondents were asked to indicate the most essential item/service at such resort. Figure 6 shows that 21% of the respondents put an emphasis on service, knowing that the service field is not very developed in Djibouti. Moreover an accommodation and wellness represented equal of 18% respectively. In addition, as you can see in figure 7, expats and tourists were asked which cuisine would satisfy their taste buds the most. As a result of that 43% indicated Mediterranean cuisine as their preference, followed by Djiboutian cuisine (16%), Indian cuisine 10% and Italian cuisines receiving 9% of the respondents preferences. 69% indicate with the idea of visiting lake Assal resort, of which 48% would like to stay for a weekend, 24% for only one night, 4% for a week and 3% more than a week. Additionally respondents were asked how many times they would visit lake Assal resort while staying at Le Goubet hotel: 39% expressed the desire to visit lake Assal wellness resort once while staying at Le Goubet hotel. 38% would pay a visit twice, 1.5% would like to visit it for a weekend or three to four times and 3.5% would not be interested at all (See Appendices 3.20; 3.21; 3.22).

Respondents were asked to rate a list of procedures taken from the preliminary plan written by Djibouti tourism group. The rating scale indicated choices such as: Yes very much, Somewhat yes, Neutral, Somewhat no and not at all. In order to organize the data the most common answers have been grouped as displayed in figures 8; 9 and 10.
First of all the list with possible massages, including brief descriptions, was given to the enquiry respondents, who were asked to rate them according to their likeability. As it can be seen from the table above, harmony massage generated the most of the ‘Yes very much’ answers (38%), followed by back, neck and shoulders massage, which scored as high as 36%. In addition, 32% indicated the Swedish massage as the most attractive one, 29% of the respondents believed they would choose deep tissue massage at the wellness resort. Reflexology and anti-stress massages each generated 28% of the respondents likeability.

Moreover, if one looks at the most unattractive massage procedures, it can be seen that Shirodhara massage scored 11.5% in ‘No, not at all’ option, followed by Avayanga and aromatherapy massages, which represented equal of 11%. Thai and Shiatsu massages were as well assigned to the most dislikeable ones amongst Djibouti tourists and expats, scoring 10% each.
In regards to figure 9, depicting the results of the most likeable and dislikeable steam bath procedures, rated by the expats and tourists of Djibouti, it can be seen that 38% of the respondents rated hammam as the most appealing steam bath experience, followed by Salt cave sauna, which received 28%. Additionally, Amethyst sauna received 27% and Cavitosonic sauna scored 25% of the respondents likeability. However herbal sauna amounted to 14% of 'No, not at all' option chosen by respondents, followed by Rose quarts and Brine Grotto saunas, that each received 12%.

![Table 1: Preferences over procedures, N=138](image)

Accordingly to figure 10, it can be seen that Deep facial was most likely to be chosen by the expats and tourists of Djibouti, in case of visiting the lake Assal wellness resort, however almost the same percentage of people would choose Ice cave and volcano bath as preferred therapies, followed by Mud wrap (24%), Salt peeling (23%) and Massaing (23%).

Furthermore, referring to the table 9, 19% of the respondents would not like to receive a sea weed wrap followed by 15% who did not express the willingness to receive Mud wrap or deep facial procedures. Animosity was as well expressed towards color therapy and Rhassoul treatment constituting 14% each.

**Products**

Interviewees were asked to describe the products they use for their treatments and their origins. Manager of Nass beauty salon revealed that Guinot cosmetics is used for the facials, Schwartzkopf and Wella for the hair treatments and Peggy Sage is used for the massages and body scrubs. All of the production is imported from France, keeping in mind that most of their clients are French. Furthermore French cosmetics have a good image amongst Djiboutians, meaning that it attracts more local customers (See Appendix 4.1). Moreover Maya a masseus from Kempinski spa is mainly using Pevonia and St. Barths cosmetics, which are shipped from France. In addition to this the essential oils are used for the treatments as well, this type of product is usually delivered from India, by the co-workers who travel (See Appendix 4.4) The manager of Kempinski spa affirmed that they use lake Assal salt as the scrub material for their hammam as well as the Thai mud for the body wrap (See Appendix 4.2). Furthermore the manager of Acasias hotel revealed that there is no one kind of cream or essential oil their use, the change takes place every couple of months once they receive a new delivery, which is usually made by the colleagues or friends traveling to Dubai or India (See Appendix 4.6).

**Treatments**

In regards to the most popular treatments of Djibouti spa clientele interview under appendix 4.1 displays favored procedures in Nass beauty center. The manager of this institution claimed that hair and facial treatments are the most booked services in their salon, describing it as the post effect of salty water damage which runs through most of the Djiboutian home faucets and leaves people suffering from acne and damaged hair. When talking about body treatments, the manager pointed out the cellulite treatment and the weight loss massage are the most desired ones amongst Djiboutian ladies as they tend to be overweight, however French military men are mostly focused on massages and their wives usually use hairdressers services or book an appointment for facials. Moreover Rachit a masseus from Kempinski spa explained that most of their clients come from France and U.S., bearing in mind the fact that Kempinski spa has a contract with the U.S. base, where the militants can come to have a massage whenever
they want to. Military men mostly book back and sholder massage, relaxing treatments, hammam and generally everything what relaxes the muscle. Another big part of their clients are French women who usually come for facials, body wraps, body peeling treatments and body masks to make the skin look younger (See Appendix 4.3). Kempinski spa masseus Maya said that the clients usually book Balinese massages as the masseus itself is from Bali (See Appendix 4.4). Despite that Pradhi a masseus from Kempisnki spa claimed that the clients usually book Swedish, Ayurvedic and back and shoulders massages (See Appendix 4.5). Masseus from the spa of Acasia hotel explains that Ethiopian and back and shoulder massages are the most popular in their spa (See Appendix 4.7).

Advice for the lake Assal resort from the interviewees
All of the managers and beauticians were asked to give an advice to the lake Assal wellness resort as to what in their opinion is the most essential in this type of spa. According to the manager of Nass facials and hair masks should be incorporated into the menu, in order to retreat the skin from salt. Furthermore knowing the area one could use the salt to relieve the ache in feet, it could be used as a scrub or simply incorporated in feet massage (See Appendix 4.1). Rachit from Kempinski spa suggested using salt only for the decorations, however Maya and Pradhi claimed that wellness center on the banks of lake Assal is a good idea and that it should have massages for relaxation, a lot of moisturizing treatments and lake Assal salt could be used in sauna as a scrub (See Appendices 4.3; 4.4; 4.5)
6 Discussion

6.1 What is the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination?

In order to unveil the ways to attract tourism to Djibouti by using natural resources of the country, figuring out the image of this country is the first step towards understanding its potential attraction. Balogu & McCleary as cited in Zhang (2014) claim that it is one of the most important factors in tourist’s decision making process. Furthermore cultural aspects such as climate, price and friendliness of the locals is what triggers the motivation to visit the place. The research findings partially proved this statement right as it has been determined that the expats and tourists of Djibouti pay the most of their attention on three areas: weather/climate (27%), Beautiful country (15%) and Attractions (13%), although another segment – local people score 7%, however it is much less than the other description words of the country provided by the respondents. As a result of this two of the three mentioned areas were important to the expats and tourists of Djibouti.

Schofield, Ross & Elso-Ahola (as cited in Alqurneh et al., 2014) noticed that satisfaction is a great measure to evaluate products and services of the destination, therefore a couple of factors were divided into positive and negative as thought to have advantageous or disadvantageous effect of ones perception of the destination. In fact study findings of the secondary research of Office national du tourisme de Djibouti (2012) have identified that it meets most of the Schofield, Ross & Elso-Ahola (as cited in Alqurneh et al., 2014) provided features. One of the positive influences are ‘The cultural heritage of the country of the destination’ which can be applied to Djibouti case where travelers appreciate the preserved folklore. Another factor ‘Provides property and fun’ is assimilated with Diversity of sailing activities provided by the country of Djibouti. Feature ‘The behavior of local people towards tourists’ meet the ‘Endearing and friendly locals’ statement. Two of the advantageous factors: ‘Attractive nature and environment’, ‘Availability of natural resources’ are reflected in the ONTD (2012) results which state ‘Sights that make Djibouti a unique and attractive destination’. Correspondingly the majority of the disadvantageous factors coincide as well. ‘Lack of hygiene’ and ‘unsanitary conditions’ encounter with ‘Cleanliness of the city is not very high’. Furthermore, ‘Poor infrastructure facilities for tourism’ correspond to the statements: ‘Djibouti airport: waiting time for the bags is too long, unusable toilets, carrier harassment’ and ‘Dilapidated taxis and driver disability to speak English’. The last disadvantage ‘Begging and cheating’ meets the ‘A major street begging’ statement provided by the ONTD (2012) research.

6.2 What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness resort and what are the reasons?

The research findings have determined that the majority (69%) of the respondents were interested in visiting the lake Assal wellness resort. Chen, Prebensen & Huan (2008) explain that wellness travelers not only focus on relaxation, body and spirit pampering, but as well the activities in the nature, socializing and participation in recreation activities. However according to the earlier research by Mueller and Kaufman (2001), the results show that wellness guests were seeking for high quality amenities, preferably with non-smoking areas, information about wellness, relaxation, cultural facilities and healthy advice to bring back home with them. In fact, the research findings support the latter theory where 28% of the respondents based their will to visit lake Assal wellness resort on health benefits, 17% on beauty of the surroundings, 15% on relaxation and 8.5% on learning experience. Therefore Chen, Prebensen & Huan (2008) theory mention before, does not apply in this research. Moreover Crompton (1979) suggests that push and pull factors are usually used to examine the relationship between motivation and the choice of the destination. Oh, Uysal & Weaver (1995), explain that ‘push’ factor involves the intellectual stimulation, motivation for socializing, rest and relaxation, escape, physical activity and self-esteem development. ‘Pull’ factor usually evolve around traveler perception of the destination, involving attractions available, natural resources and culture (Hallab, 2008). In particular, pull and push behavior was depicted by the expats and tourists of Djibouti, where pull factors were expressed by: ‘health benefits’, beauty of the surroundings’, ‘New entertainment’ and weather, while push factors were articulated by: ‘relaxation’, ‘General interest’, ‘Learning experience’. As a result, study findings support Klenosky (as cited in Boulay et. Al., 2013) statement that push and pull factors should be seen as essentially related. Thus, such findings are of importance in attempting to explain the motivation behind choice to visit lake Assal wellness resort and determine the probability of return.
6.3 How could lake Assal wellness resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs?

Wray, Laing & Voigt (2010) suggest five leading factors in destinations development: significant natural environment, diversity on tourism product and visitor experiences, sociocultural diversity, growth and diversity of beauty, health, wellness and spiritual operations and services, improved transport infrastructure. According to the secondary research executed by the researcher, Djibouti fulfills four out of five factors, where transport infrastructure is partially fulfilled, however some improvements towards it have to be made. As a result it partially supports Wray, Lang & Voigt (2010) theory, showing that Djibouti is suitable for tourism destination development after the infrastructure of roads is taken care of.

Joshi and Sharma (2004), state that strong market-oriented process, including extensive customer knowledge and customer involvement in product development can project future customer needs, which is very important while developing a new product. This approach was applied in this research, with reasoning to foresee the future wishes and needs of the impending customers of lake Assal resort. In regards to the latter, the research results have indicated that Adequate and reliable service is the most important aspect in the wellness center, followed by accommodation and wellness. Nevertheless, study findings suggest that respondents prefer Mediterranean cuisine the most (43%). This can be addressed to the 26% of the respondents being from the Mediterranean region.

Questionnaire findings have identified Harmony massage, Back, neck and shoulder massage and Swedish massage as the most appealing to the tourists and expats of Djibouti. This data correlates with the interview results where the most popular treatments turned out to be back and shoulder massage and Swedish massage. Although these results links only by two factors, however it is a strong element, as it has been mentioned by a couple of hospitality and wellness institutions in Djibouti, therefore it shows that expats wishes and wellness institutions services coincide. As a matter of fact this can be considered as one of the plausible results behind the high density of militants living in Djibouti and their need for muscle relaxation after high intensity training camp.

Therefore it supports the Joshi and Sharma (2004) statement that extensive knowledge on the customer and their involvement in product development can project future customer needs.

Jonsson & Huijbens (2005) state that ‘a bathing culture has thus developed to become a modern dual manifestation of wellness, as a venue of regular physical exercise (body) and epicurean delights (social/soul). Furthermore Mak et al. (2009) suggest that the motivation factors of Hong Kong spa-goers were presented to be: relaxation and relief, escape, self-reward and indulgence, health and beauty. In fact, study findings have identified that Hammam, Cavitosinic sauna, Salt cave sauna and Amethyst sauna, are the most popular amongst steam baths of expats and tourists of Djibouti. Interview findings support the results mentioned above as Kempinski spa receives a lot of military men whose one of the most popular treatments is hammam. These findings partially support the theory stated before as Bathing culture is considered to be somewhat social and relaxing and undoubtedly has health benefits. Knowing Djibouti and its narrow resources for spa and wellness treatments, the research limits have to be taken into account, however the density of guests received by these institutions is higher, due to the lack of the wellness resorts.

Hall (1992) explained that physical flexibility, better digestion and circulation, weight loss, mental and physical relaxation, stress management etc. are spa goers motivations. In regards to the most likeable treatments, the results have indicated that deep facial, volcano bath, ice cave and salt peeling are the most popular amongst tourists and expats of Djibouti. As a matter of fact, the interview results display similar information, where the facial treatments and body treatments such as body wrap, body peeling and body masks were mentioned. Previously mentioned treatments have similar characteristics as explained by Hall (1992), excluding the digestion and flexibility.

According to Mate (2013), recent spa trends reveal that the branded spa products are on a hype now. In fact Djibouti tourism group is planning to develop lake Assal product brand and use it in their wellness center. This action as well supports the theory of Kucukusta & Guillet (2014) which states that branded spa products are usually preferred by the spa centers which want to position themselves as luxury spas. This statement suits the description of lake Assal wellness resort as it is planning to stay on a high end of spas. On the other hand according to the research findings French and Arabic cosmetics are very well trusted in Djibouti and local products are not very well valuable amongst locals, however 66% of respondents admitted to wanting to try wellness procedures combines with the ingredients from lake Assal. Knowing that lake Assal wellness resort is targeting expats and tourists of Djibouti.
7. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that findings of this research have provided some valuable insights about the subject, taking into account its nature and possibilities to develop tourism in Djibouti, however it is still very limited from the scope and nature perspective. The goal of this research was to find out the ways to contribute to Djibouti tourism by using the resources of the lake to develop wellness. Below the answers to the three sub-questions can be found, which later on adds up to the answer of the main question.

7.1 Answered sub-questions
These are the answers on the 4 sub-questions of the research.

I. What is the image of Djibouti?
The image of this country is determined in two: positive and negative, ways. The ONTD research was compared with the results of this research and it can be said that the image of Djibouti according to these criterions have not changed much since 2012. Travelers still point out Djiboutis touristic attractions and friendly locals, however in 2014 travelers call attention to its great weather, beautiful and unique sights. However Djibouti was as well described as dirty and poor. All in all the assumption can be made upon this results that Djibouti is generally seen from the positive side and has a unique image where its beauty, weather, culture and some third world vexations come together.

II. What is the interest of tourists and expats of Djibouti in the new lake Assal wellness center and what are the reasons?
The research has shown that majority of the respondents are keen of the idea of visiting the lake Assal wellness resort. The main reasons behind are the health benefits, beauty of the surroundings, relaxation and learning experience. The unwillingness to visit the place was mainly based on general lack of interest, location (far away), preservation of the nature, weather, timing (too much time to get there) and stating that other places are better. Moreover push and pull factors which were measured regarding traveler motivation to visit Djibouti were quite important in understanding their motives in a deeper motion. Consequently to the findings of this research, health benefits, beauty of the surroundings, new entertainment and weather were determined as push factors, while relaxation, general interest and learning experience were described as pull factors. The latter factors play a bigger role in decision making process to visit lake Assal resort, therefore the pull factor is dominant in this research. All things considered the attributes of the destination are playing a bigger role in traveling motivation, where the image of the destination is stronger than the inner motivation to travel. Findings also indicate that health benefit aspect is the most enticing aspect as well as nature of the destination according to the study findings.

III. How could lake Assal resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs?
The research has shown that lake Assals’ chemical compound is of high similarity to the Dead Sea, therefore the assumption is made that its resources can be used in the same way as the dead sea is used, however further scientific research is needed in order to find out the extent of the healing materials in the water and mud of lake Assal. Moreover the development of the destination was measured according to the five factors of Wray, Laing & Voigt (2010) Djibouti is ready for the wellness destination development, however one of the factors (transport infrastructure) has to be improved in order to start put the first steps in wellness destination development process. Customer needs and wishes were researched and the results determine that adequate service, proper accommodation and wellness facilities are the most essential in the lake Assal wellness center. Therefore, most expected treatments in this resort are harmony massage, back, neck and shoulders massage, Swedish massage, Hammam, Cavitosinic sauna, Salt cave sauna, Amethyst sauna, deep facial, volcano bath, ice cave and salt peeling. To summarize, the relaxation and the development of lake Assal products are the most important, because of the more than sufficient amount of respondents willingness to try these relaxing procedures made out of the lake Assal ingredients. Additional findings indicate that the cuisine preferences mainly focus on Mediterranean foods.
7.2 Answer research question

How can Djibouti tourism group contribute to tourism in Djibouti, by using the sources of lake Assal to develop wellness?

To conclude with, Djibouti tourism group can use the image of Djibouti determined by this research results and focus on the positive aspects for its marketing and use it to compensate the negative facets out. Consequently the pull factor has to be given thought to, in order to develop the appealing setting for the future customer, including the combination between the environment and its uniqueness, not forgetting to apply the push factor in its resort in order to create an attractive and diverse package. Furthermore the transport infrastructure has to be paid attention to in order to eliminate obstacles in wellness destination development phase. Additionally, future customer needs and wishes are depicted in the results of this research, therefore the expectations of the first guests received can be better met, resulting in a positive word of mouth and possible retention in this way bringing in the wellness holiday makers who are willing to spend their money in this country.

7.3 Recommendations

Solutions offered by this research to the organization are based on theory that is mainly focused on tourism, wellness, destination development and customer wishes and needs. In particular marketing and product diversification are strong solutions when undertaking the measures to attract expats and tourists. The first recommendation to Djibouti tourism group is to focus on marketing, depicting the right image of Djibouti on the digital mediums as well as the physical promotion activities within the country allowing the expats who stay at different hotels to see that Djibouti is more than the port and the capital city. Providing the realistic image of the countries unique treasures will allow tourists to form the accurate image about the destination and have the right expectations towards it. Consequently the first step towards the marketing strategy will be executed as the target market is already determined. The next advice would be targeting the product according to the target market. The target group and its needs and wishes are already known, so Djibouti tourism group has to apply this information once the decisions about products and services have to be made. In addition, knowing the high accumulation of the military camps in Djibouti, group packages directed towards this client should be implemented. Furthermore Djibouti is a home to diplomats whose stay duration is relatively short. Consequently, the advice to make special promotion towards business tourists promoting the lake Assal resort with its day-spa facilities should increase interest of such diplomats. Furthermore the hotel at Le Goubet is of great importance, because of its geographic position, which is one hour away from the capital and less than half an our away from Goubet port. In this way the stable number of business travelers and militants would be obtained.

In addition the disadvantageous summer climate of Djibouti around the lake Assal could be tackled using the ‘push’ factors – contradictory treatments (ice cave and cold related treatments) in this way not only boosting the demand but as well tackling rough climate at the destination during summer months, especially during the month of Ramadan, when the city of Djibouti is quiet and not many entertainments can be found.

During the destination development phase the transport infrastructure has to be improved, especially the road and the transportation to the lake Assal resort and back to the capital. Improved reachability of the destination eliminates unnecessary obstacles for the tourists and expats and improves the decision making process by eradicating the unnecessary stress. Additionally, the concept of customer satisfaction has to be paid sufficient amount of attention to. Lake Assal wellness resort has to choose its staff very selectively according to the preliminary criteria. The reasoning behind this action is that the service to tourists and expats in Djibouti is one of the most important attributes in the wellness institution.
Lastly, in order to develop a cohesive concept where lake Assal is in the center of attention, the more thorough research of its chemical compound and healing abilities has to be undertaken. Djibouti tourism group has to acquire the scientific proof of lake Assal effectiveness towards certain illnesses then the expansion towards international wellness goers can be implemented.
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Appendices

1. Organizational charts and contact information of the internship companies

1.1 Djibouti tourism group

Company address: Hogesteenweg 47, 4871 MR, Breda
Telephone: +253 77026849, +31 6 18942102
E-mail: Djibouti.tourism@gmail.com
Blog: http://djiboutiguidebook.wordpress.com
1.2 National tourism office of Djibouti

Company address: Place 27 Juin
Telephone: (253) 21352800
Fax: (253) 21356322
E-mail: infotourism@intnet.com
Website: www.visitdjibouti.dj

1.3 Sheraton Djibouti hotel

Company address: BP 1924, Plateau du Serpent, Djibouti, Djibouti
Website: www.sheratondjibouti.com
Phone: (253) 21 32 80 00
Fax: (253) 21 32 88 88
Email: Djibouti.reservation@sheratondjibouti.com
2. Empty research tools

2.1 Quantitative/qualitative questionnaire

Hello dear tourists and expats! This survey was created in order to figure out the popularity of wellness services among tourists and expats of Djibouti. Your participation in this survey is the key in developing the idea on wellness facilities in this country. Thank you in advance for your precious time and sharing your valuable views on this subject! We wish you a pleasant stay in Djibouti!

1. Who are you?*
   - Tourist
   - Expat

2. Where are you from?*
   - USA
   - France
   - Canada
   - Italy
   - Spain
   - Germany
   - Japan
   - China
   - UAE
   - Kenya
   - Ethiopia
   - Other:__________

3. Is this your first time in Djibouti?*
   - Yes
   - I visit Djibouti a couple of times a year
   - I live here permanently
   - I live here temporarily
   - I visit Djibouti from time to time
   - Other:__________

4. Describe Djibouti in 3 words
5. How long is your stay in Djibouti?*

- 1-3 days
- 3-7 days
- 7-14 days
- 2-4 weeks
- 1-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6-12 months
- a couple of years
- Other:

6. What is the purpose of visiting this country?*

- Its natural attractions
- Diving spots
- You or one of your family members got deployed
- Business
- Water sports
- Fishing
- Backpacking through Djibouti and neighboring countries
- Other:

7. Have you visited any spa/beauty/wellness facilities in Djibouti?*

- Yes
- No

8. If the answer to Q7 is yes, please indicate the name of the facility/facilities and explain why you liked or disliked it

9. Which treatments do you usually choose, when using wellness facilities?
10. Have you heard of lake Assal? * so called lac Assal is a saline lake, which is more than 155 meters below sea level and in fact is the lowest point of African continent. It as well shares the same ingredients in its water, surroundings and the air as the dead sea.

- Yes
- No

11. Have you been to lake Assal? *

- Yes
- No
- Other: 

12. Would you be interested in visiting a resort built on the banks of lake assal? Explain why? *

13. Please specify why you would or would not like to visit this wellness centre?

14. Would you be interested in trying wellness procedures combined with the healing ingredients from the lac Assal and its surroundings? *

15. Which of the below displayed massages would you like to receive at lake Assal wellness resort? *

<p>| Harmony massage -The treatment combines relaxation massage and reflexology with drops of warm sesame |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, very much | Somewhat yes | Neutral | Somewhat no | No, not at all |</p>
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<th>Yes, very much</th>
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<td>drainage of the lymph which carries waste products away from the tissue back toward the heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical massage - oil massage designed to focus on specific problem in order to ease pain and release muscle tension</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Rating" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Rating" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aromatherapy massage - use essential oils to promote healing and a feeling of well-being and relaxation in the recipient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swedish massage - combines various hands-on techniques including gliding, kneading and cross-fiber friction to break up muscle knot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Yes, very much</td>
<td>Somewhat yes</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Somewhat no</td>
<td>No, not at all</td>
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<td>Anti-stress massage - a combination of various different massage techniques, where the body, soul and spirit is at peace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back, neck and shoulders massage - soothes away tension in the upper body, breaks down knots and improves your flexibility. It helps to relieve headaches and improves blood circulation within head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflexology massage - Oil massage designed to release muscle tension, assist blood circulation while focusing on relaxing tense areas</td>
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<td>Ayurveda massage - is a</td>
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<td>Service</td>
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<td>Avayanga - sensational</td>
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<td>treatment</td>
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<td>inspired by the Indian</td>
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<td>doctrine</td>
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<td>which includes</td>
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<td>warm sesame oil</td>
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<td>along the length of the body</td>
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<td>using long, gentle movements</td>
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<td>Shirodhara - face and head</td>
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<td>massage</td>
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<td>inspired by the Ayurveda</td>
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<td>ritual, which includes</td>
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<td>pouring warm sesame oil on</td>
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<td>the 'third eye'</td>
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<td>Thai massage - stretching</td>
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<td>and pressing</td>
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<td>along the energy</td>
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</table>
Shiatsu - a massage method from Japan. The massage is carried out by pressing on the energy line to release the tension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16. Which of the below displayed saunas would you like to receive at lake Assal wellness resort?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes, very much</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amethyst sauna - helps to relax, get rid of bad dreams and other aches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hammam - is a steam bath, which raises the body temperature above normal and stimulates the immune system, opens the pores and detoxifies the body</td>
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<td>Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cavitosonic steam bath - ultrasonic sea water bath improves the quality of water, water to skin adhesion and promotes blood circulation</td>
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<td>Herbal sauna - is a sauna where herbs are mixed with steam. It treats skin ailments and conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrared sauna - is a type of sauna that uses light to create heat. Delivers all of the benefits as regular sauna however at the lower temperature</td>
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<td>Rose quartz sauna - promotes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brine Grotto sauna - 35-45°C, sea salt along with essential eucalyptus and mint extracts cleanse and soothe the airways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt cave sauna - where everything is made of salt (from lake Assal). Especially beneficial for the sinuses and respiratory tract. Is known for absorbing moisture, cleansing, clearing mucus and killing bacteria.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Which of the below displayed procedures would you like to receive at lake Assal wellness resort?*...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, very much</th>
<th>Somewhat yes</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat no</th>
<th>No, not at all</th>
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<tr>
<td>body to temperature extremes to provide instant cooling and contract the blood vessels, which stimulates circulation and oxygen intake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color therapy - uses light in the form of color to balance 'energy' lacking from a persons body, whether it is on physical, emotional, spiritual or mental levels</td>
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<td>Volcano bath - a mud bath made out of the mix of hot springs and the mud found in the region (lake Assal)</td>
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<td>Yes, very much</td>
<td>Somewhat yes</td>
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<td>Rhassoul treatment - full body coverage in rhassoul clay, which moisturises the skin, detangles hair etc.</td>
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<td>Salt peeling - an invigorating body exfoliation with vitamins based on saline water minerals, with a classic massage that envelops the entire body with a sense of absolute relaxation</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massaing - an invigorating body exfoliation with vitamins based on saline water minerals, with a classic massage that envelops</td>
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<td>Yes, very much</td>
<td>Somewhat yes</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>No, not at all</td>
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<tr>
<td>the entire body with a sense of absolute relaxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mud wrap - a heated mud wrap rich with minerals assist in reducing joint aches and general relaxation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deep facial - is a face massage using minerals from the saline water lake Assal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sea weed wrap - eliminates toxins from the body, applies warmth to it making it sweat and get rid of all the toxins</td>
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</table>

18. What would be the most essential item which would improve your stay at this kind of resort? (can be a piece of furniture, some special service, procedure etc.)

19. Which cuisine would you prefer the most?
20. Would you like to spend a night if there would be an accommodation at Le Goubet?*
Le Goubet is 30 minutes away from lac Assal

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<tr>
<td>Yes, very much</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

21. If you decided to stay at le Goubet hotel, how many days you would be willing to stay?

- ☐ only one night
- ☐ a weekend
- ☐ a week
- ☐ more than one week

22. How many times, while staying at Goubet hotel, would you like to visit lake Assal center?

- ☐ Once
- ☐ twice
- ☐ Other: [ ]
2.2 Qualitative interviews with managers

1. Are there any wellness facilities in your hotel? Describe and explain what kind of.
2. Is there a plan on implementing wellness into your hotel?
3. What kind of wellness facilities do you have or would be willing to have?
4. If there would be a brand making wellness products with the minerals and healthy muds from the lake Assal, would you be interested in using them? (if no wellness and no plans for it, soap and shampoo for the guests)?
5. What are the reasons for this?
6. How do you think it would affect your business?

2.3 Qualitative interviews with beauticians

1. What is your background in beauty/wellness treatments? (study)
2. How long have you been working in this field?
3. How long have you been working in Djibouti?
4. What is your occupation at the moment?
5. What products, treatments do you apply on your clients?
6. Where do you get your products?
7. What treatments are the most popular at your current workplace?
8. Have you ever worked with treatments/products made from saline lake? (such as balneotherapy, heliotherapy, thalassic therapy, mineral mud-polio therapy)
9. What kind of treatments are the most popular when talking about saline water?
10. What are your clients at the moment?
11. Do you have clients who ask for this kind of treatments?
12. Do you have any advice for the lake Assal wellness resort?
13. Would you be interested in cooperating with such resort, in terms of procedures, production, promotion, etc.?

2.4 Sample size of the mixed method questionnaire

\[ n = \frac{(1.65/m)^2 \ p(1-p)}{2} \]

\[ N = \frac{(1.65/0.07)^2 \ 0.5 * 0.5}{0.5} = 138 \]
2.5 Operationalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-question</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Research design</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the image of Djibouti as a tourism destination?</td>
<td>Destination image</td>
<td>Positive vs negative factors</td>
<td>Positive views</td>
<td>Q4, Q5, Q10, Q11, Q13</td>
<td>Mixed method questionnaire</td>
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<td>expectation</td>
<td>Negative views</td>
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<td>Positive vs negative factors</td>
<td>Knowledge on natural sightsees</td>
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<td>Positive views</td>
<td>Positive views</td>
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<td>Negative views</td>
<td>Negative views</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Would tourists and expats of Djibouti be interested in the new spa and what are the reasons for it?</td>
<td>Traveling motivation</td>
<td>Push and pull factors</td>
<td>Travelers motive of coming to Djibouti</td>
<td>Q2, Q3, Q5, Q6, Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14</td>
<td>Mixed method questionnaire</td>
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<td>Attraction by the country</td>
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<td>Interest in the lake Assal wellness resort</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. How could lake Assal wellness resort attract tourists to Djibouti by focusing on wellness and customer wants and needs?</td>
<td>Customer needs and wishes</td>
<td>Customer preferences</td>
<td>Essential areas</td>
<td>Q18, Q19</td>
<td>Mixed method questionnaire</td>
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<td>Cuisine choice</td>
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<td>preferred procedures</td>
<td>Treatment preferences</td>
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<td>Q15, Q16, Q17</td>
<td>Mixed method questionnaire</td>
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<td>preferred procedures</td>
<td>Steam bath preferences</td>
<td>Steam bath preferences</td>
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<td>preferred procedures</td>
<td>Massage preferences</td>
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<td>Development of regions using wellness</td>
<td>renovation of the major touristic locations</td>
<td>Significant natural environment</td>
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<td>Qualitative secondary research</td>
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<td>Diversity on tourism product and visitor experiences</td>
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<td>landscape commodification</td>
<td>Sociocultural diversity</td>
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<td>Growth and diversity of beauty, health, wellness and spiritual operations and services</td>
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<td>Improved transport infrastructure.</td>
<td>Improved transport infrastructure.</td>
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Mixed method: Mixed method questionnaire

Qualitative: Qualitative interviews with beauticians and managers

Qualitative secondary research: Qualitative secondary research
2.6 Analysis of mixed method questionnaire

Matrix of the quantitative data
The Excel file with all of the needed information can be found in the CD attached

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Questions 4, 8, 9, 13, 18, 19 analysed in MAXQDA program
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### Additional Codes

- Mediterranean: 59
- Japanese: 2
- Italian: 13
- Indian: 14
- German: 5
- Fast Food: 7
- Djiboutian: 22
- Chinese: 3
- Asian: 3
- Mix: 9

### Additional Tags

- Hot, dry, sunny
- Good location and busy
- Hot but nice
- Port, crab, hot
- French, charming, full of opportunities
- Safe, friendly, authentic
- Remove, exotic, raw
- Different
- Beach, relax, sun
- Beach, alcohol, relax
- Quiet, different
- Small, lovely, wild
- Hot
- Small, smells, friendly
- Green area for investment
- I like it
- Little, friendly, exotic
- Special, hot, Ethiopian food
- Little, various landscape
- It's ok for a African country
- Custom, somali, calm
- Hot, humid, ugly, beautiful
- Hot, dirty
- Hot, slow, quiet
- Very good country
- Small country, hot
- Very nice people
- Peaceful, nice people and good food
- Exotic beauty
- Potential, poor, unreserved
2.7 Analysis of qualitative interviews with beauticians and managers of the wellness/hotel facilities of Djibouti

Laura: Your clients? the people who come here for treatments?

Asya: aaaah, yes, yes, the main clients come to NASS are France, USA, Djibouti, Middle East, but I can honestly say 70% clients are French, the biggest military people and their families, wife you know, also children. The rest of the clients are Djiboutians.

Laura: I see, and could you tell me more about the products you are using on your clients?

Asya: Of course. U mean for beauty or hair? Because we also do face, u know what I mean?

Laura: Yes, make up?

Asya: Yes make up, for weddings it is very popular, we do nails, hair, facials.

Laura: I would like to know more about the facials and beauty treatments

Asya: Yes ok, for the facial we use Guinot, it is very good quality brand and we never had complaints. People like it. Amm, for hair we use Schwarzkopf and Weles also good. What else (pause) for message u use Penny Sage and also for body scrub, the quality is also very good.

Laura: Where do you get your products from?

Asya: All our products are imported from France. U know our clients are from France so it is good. Also Djiboutians like French cosmetics, women think it is high quality if it is French, or imported.

Laura: What treatments are the most popular in NASS?

Asya: The most popular treatments are hair treatments, facials - Djiboutian water is very salty and not healthy for the hair and skin, that is why so many women have (topps with finger on her face) or damaged skin. Faces are drenched from always sweating, especially in the summer season. People are tired and their bodies are tired as well. water is not clean so the skin cannot heal, also Djiboutians do not get enough vitamins to support the healthy bodies work. All treatments are popular at NASS, especially the cellulite treatment and the weight losing massages. If you have ever seen Djiboutian women they are over weight (laughs and gestures the belly around her with her hands). Local ladies take care of their hair and make up, these are the most popular. Frenchies more like massage, especially men, who are in the military, their wives like facials, haircuts, we also cut the hair of children.

Laura: Have you ever worked with products or treatments made from salty water?

Asya: No never. Oh wait, I think we used one product made with the dead sea water. It was a massage cream.
3. Quantitative/ qualitative questionnaire results

All of the numerical data received through the questionnaires can be found in an excel file under the name of 'Matrix thesis'. Below you can find already worked out figures which directly or indirectly have been used for this project.

3.1 Incoming visitors of Djibouti, based on 138 responses

![Pie chart showing the distribution of visitors to Djibouti](image1)

3.2 Demographic information of the incoming visitors, based on 138 responses

![Pie chart showing the demographic distribution of visitors to Djibouti](image2)
3.3 Interval of visiting Djibouti, based on 138 responses

N=138

Interval of visiting Djibouti

- I live here permanently
- I live here temporarily
- I visit Djibouti a couple of times a year
- I visit Djibouti from time to time
- Yes

3.4 Image of Djibouti based on 205 descriptive words received from 81 respondent.

N=81

Image of Djibouti
3.5 Length of the stay, based on 138 responses

![Length of stay chart]

- Tourists
- Expats

3.6 Reasons of visiting Djibouti. Answers: business, job, scientific research, deployment, were merged together as some of the respondents who were deployed identified themselves as being on business and vice versa.

![Purpose of the visit chart]

- Backpacking through Djibouti and neighboring countries
- Business
- Diving spots
- Its natural attractions
- Water sports
3.7 Visits to SPA facilities based on 138 respondents

![Pie chart showing visits to SPA facilities with N=138.]

3.8 Most visited wellness facilities in Djibouti, based on 22 responses

![Bar chart showing percentage of visits to various wellness facilities in Djibouti with N=22.]

- Kempinski: 90%
- Muriel’s: 10%
- Acasias hotel: 20%
- Sheraton hotel: 30%
- Naas: 40%
3.9 Favorite wellness treatments by expats and tourists of Djibouti, based on 66 treatments chosen by 44 respondents.

![Favoured treatments by expats and tourists](chart)

3.10 Tourists and expats knowledge on lake Assal, based on 138 responses

![Knowledge of lake Assal](chart)

3.11 Tourists and expats who have or have not visited lake Assal, based on 138 responses

![Visits to lake Assal](chart)
3.12 Expats and tourists level of interest in visiting lake Assal

![Interest in Visiting Lake Assal Wellness Resort](image)

**INTEREST IN VISITING LAKE ASSAL WELLNESS RESORT**

- Neutral: 25%
- No, not at all: 17%
- Somewhat no: 7%
- Somewhat yes: 7%
- Yes, very much: 44%

*N=138*

3.13 Main reasons for willing to visit or not willing to visit lake Assal, based on total of 63 respondents of which 47 were positive towards the idea of the visit and 16 respondents were not

![Main Reasons in Visiting Lake Assal Resort](image)

**MAIN REASONS IN VISITING LAKE ASSAL RESORT**

- Health benefits: 28%
- Beauty of the surroundings: 15%
- Relaxation: 15%
- New entertainment: 11%
- General interest: 11%
- Learning experience: 8%
- Weather: 6%

*N=47*
3.14 Interest in lake Assal wellness procedures, based on 138 responses

N=138

Interest in lake Assal wellness procedures
3.15 Preferred massages for the lake Assal wellness center, based on 138 responses

![Preferred massages chart](chart_image)

3.16 Preferred steam baths, based on 138 responses

![Preferred steam baths chart](chart_image)
3.17 Preferred therapies and treatments, based on 138 responses

N=138

Preferred therapies

- Ice cave
- Color therapy
- Volcano bath
- Rhassoul treatment
- Salt peeling
- Massaging
- Mud wrapping
- Deep facial
- Sea weed wrap

3.18 Most essential areas in the wellness center, based on 66 responses from 49 respondents

N=49

Most essential areas in the wellness center

- Service
- Accommodation
- Wellness
- Hygiene
- F&B
- Ambience
- Environment
- Transportation
- Local decorations
- Relaxation
- Security
- Price
3.19 Preference over cuisines for the wellness center lake Assal

N=138

Preferred cuizine

- mix: 43%
- Asian: 9%
- Chinese: 10%
- Djiboutian: 2%
- Fast food: 7%
- German: 2%
- Indian: 16%
- Italian: 5%
- Japanese: 4%
- Mediterranea

3.20 Willingness to stay at Le Goubet hotel

N=138

Willingness to stay at Le Goubet hotel

- No, not at all: 23%
- Somewhat no: 3%
- Neutral: 8%
- Somewhat yes: 20%
- Yes, very much: 46%
3.21 Length of stay at Le Goubet hotel as estimated by expats and tourists of Djibouti, based on 109 responses

![Length of stay at Le Goubet hotel](image)

3.22 Frequency of visiting lake Assal wellness resort while staying at Le Goubet hotel, based on 116 responses

![Number of visits to lake Assal resort while staying at Le Goubet hotel](image)
4. Qualitative interview results

4.1 Manager/ beautician of Nass institute of beauty
Laura: Good morning, thank you for receiving me on such short notice
Asiya: No problem, we are not fully booked today
Laura: Shall we start right away?
Asiya: Yes of course (giggles)
Laura: Asiya could you please tell me something about your background in this field?
Asiya: Sure, ammm, let me think, sorry for my English, is not so good.
Laura: No problem at all, if you do not understand a question just ask to explain and I will do my best to explain.
Asiya: Alright, ehm... I got my certificate in France. Don’t know how to explain, but I got it there.
Laura that’s alright. How long have you been working in this field?
Asiya: well I started working as aesthetician once I started working at Nass, so it is 3 years. usually I come from Yemen, but I live in Djibouti.
Laura: Interesting, so all of the time you are here in Djibouti you have benn working for Nass?
Asiya: Yes, you understand, the owner is my cousin, she opened salon in 2000 and she invited me to do work here and, then I got my diploma and come.
Laura: Who are your main clients at the moment?
Asiya: sorry?
Laura: Your clients? the people who come here for treatments?
Asiya: aaaa, yes, yes, the main clients come to NASS are France, USA, Djibouti, Middle East, but I can honestly say 70% clients are French, the biggest military people and their families, wife you know, also children. The rest of the clients are Djiboutian.
Laura: I see, and could you tell me more about the products you are using on your clients?
Asiya: Of course. U mean for beauty or hair? Because we also do face, u know what I mean?
Laura: Yes, make up?
Asiya: Yes make up, for weddings it is very popular, we do nails, hair, facials.
Laura: I would like to know more about the facials and beauty treatments
Asiya: Yes ok, for the facial we use Guinot, it is very good quality brand and we never had complaints. People like it. Amm, for hair we use Schwartzkopf and Wella also good. What else (pause) for massage we use Peggy Sage and also for bodyscrub, the quality is also very good.
Laura: Where do you get your products from?
Asiya: All our products are imported from France. U know our clients are from France so it is good. Also Djiboutians like French cosmetics, women think it is high quality if it is French, or imported.
Laura: What treatments are the most popular in Nass?
Asiya: The most popular treatments are hair treatments, facials- Djiboutian water is very salty and not healthy for the hair and skin, that is why so many women have (tapps with finger on her face) or damaged skin. Pores are clogged from always sweating, especially in the summer season. People are tired and their bodies are tired as well, water is not clean so the skin cannot heal, also Djiboutians do not get enough
vitamins to support the healthy bodies work. All treatments are popular at NASS, especially the cellulite treatment and the weight loosing massages. If you have ever seen Djiboutian women they are overweight (laughs and gestures the belly around her with her hands). Local ladies take care of their hair and make up, these are the most popular. Frenchies more like massages, especially men, who are in the military, their wives like facials, haircuts, we also cut the hair of children.

Laura: Have you ever worked with products or treatments made from salty water?

Asiya: No never. Oh wait, I think we used one product made with the dead sea water, it was a massage cream.

Laura: Do you know lake Assal here in Djibouti and the benefits of its water?

Asiya: Yes but I have never been to lake assal and I believe it is not healthy for the skin and body. Salty water dries out everything. No, no, I do not think there are benefits of this lake.

Laura: If there was a Spa center near lake Assal, what would be your advice for the treatments and products?

Asiya: I would advise lac Assal resort to have facials to heal the skin from the salt, hair masks also for the same reason. Salt is perfect for relieving the ache in the feet, it could be used as a scrub or incorporated in the feet massage. I would incorporate clean/treated water (no salts) for all of the treatments.

Laura: Would you be interested in having business with lake Assal spa, or maybe working there, or even using the products made from the minerals from the lake?

Asiya: Nass would not be interested in using the products from lake Assal as there is no research done yet so we would not like to take the risk, however if the product is dermatologically tested and as well natural we would be willing to try. But I do not think it is a very interesting offer as it is far away and Nass is more focused on beauty, including makeup, cellulite treatment, haircuts etc., we are not a spa centre.

Laura: I understand, well this was the end of our interview, thank you so much for your time.

Asiya: (smiles) it’s ok.

4.2 Manager of the Kempinski spa
Laura: Hello Sir, thank you for having me, my name is Laura.

Sheloob: It is no problem. I am Shaloob, tell me how I may assist you?

Laura: Could you be so kind and tell me what kind of facilities exist in your Spa?

Sheloob: At the moments we have ayurvedic massage, Balinese treatments, hammam, rahasoul and similar treatments. It is not a big Spa, however it is made for our guests, so it is perfectly enough.

Laura: Could you expand a little bit and tell me what kind of brands you use?

Sheloob: Of course, we use main two brands for our treatments: St Barth and Pevonia, also some essencial oils are imported from India however no specific brand is known, it changes from time to time.

Laura: Do you incorporate any saline water treatments or products in your Spa routine? Or maybe even the salts and muds from lake Assal?

Sheloob: At the moment we use lac Assal salt as the scrub material for our Hammam. Furthermore we use Thai mud for our body wrap.

Laura: Who are your main clients?

Sheloob: Main clients are the families of French, USA, german soldiers. I could roughly say that French expats takes up to 70% of all of our customers.
Laura: If there would be a brand making wellness products with the minerals and healthy muds from the lake Assal, would you be interested in using them?

Sheloob: If there would be the possibility to have the same or better quality mud for our body wrap procedures, that would be very welcome, of course the price plays the main role and the opportunity shall be discussed with the management team. I believe it would increase our profit as people are more likely to buy detoxing and skin focused treatments and products.

Laura: What kind of advice you would give to lake Assal wellness resort? What would be the most essential areas to pay attention to?

Sheloob: I would advice to educate people on the components of lac Assal, as even locals do not know the healing power of this lake.

4.3 Masseus 1 of Kempinski spa

Laura: Hello, my name is Laura I will ask you a couple of questions about the treatments of Kempinski spa and clients.

Rachit: Yes alright. As much as I can tell I will.

Laura: Thank you. Shall we get started? (Rachit Nodds). What is your background in beauty and wellness treatments?

Rachit: I gained my education in India. I am from India. I have a specialisation in Ayurvedic massages, but I can also perform different kind of massages.

Laura: How long have you been working in general?

Rachit: Ammm... a couple of years, around 6 or 7, i think 7.

Laura: How long have you been working in Djibouti?

Rachit: Almost one year.

Laura: What is your occupation at the moment?

Rachit: I am a masseushere, at Kempinksi Spa.

Laura: What kind of clients do you receive the most?

Rachit: I believe most of the clients are French and Americans (U.S.). We have a contract with American base so they have discounts and come here very often.

Laura: What are the most popular treatments in Kempinski Spa?

Rachit: Military guys, they mostly like back and shoulder massages, relaxing treatments, hammam, everything what relaxes the muscle. There are a lot of French women coming for facials, body wraps, body peeling, body masks to make the skin look younger. There is no one popular treatment, we have many options, but I think relaxation massages and steam baths are more popular amongst men and beauty treatments (mentioned before) among women.

Laura: Do you receive Djiboutian clients?

Rachit: This is the only spa in Djibouti, but we do not receive a lot of Djiboutians, it is too expensive for them.

Laura: Have you heared about lake Assal?

Rachit: I heard about lake assal as a destination to visit, but I have never been there, I am working all the time.

Laura: Do you have any knowledge on the health benefits or the ingredients of lake Assal, such as different kind of minerals?
Rachit: No, I have no knowledge of the minerals of lake assal, I don't think it can be used in spa.

Laura: Have you ever had a client asking for this type of treatments?

Rachit: No never.

Laura: If there would be the Spa centre near lake Assal, what would be your advice to them?

Rachit: I would use the salt only for the decoration, as we have it right now in our spa. We have salt marbles and crystals. I would not suggest lake assal for spa, too dry and hot.

Laura: Aha, this is the end of my questions, thank you so much for being a part of my research project, your help is very much appreciated.

Rachit: (Bows, nods and leaves the room)

4.4 Masseus 2 of Kempinski spa

Laura: Good day, my name is laura

Maya: Hello laura, I am Maya

Laura: Could you tell me something about your background? where did you get your education, what is your specialisation?

Maya: I come from Bali. I gained my education in Indonesia. I am specialised in Balinese massage, and generally I can do thai, ayurvedic and other massages.

Laura: How long have you been working in Djibouti?

Maya: For almost three years

Laura: What kind of clients do you usually receive?

Maya: Most of my clients are from the hotel, so all types of people, from all over the world, but I also receive a lot of military guys from U.S. base and sometimes French base too

Laura: What are the most popular treatments?

Maya: People mostly book Balinese massages with me because they know I am from Bali and I do it well.(smiles)

Laura: What kind of products do you use for your treatments and where do you get them?

Maya: We mainly use Pevonia and st. Barths cosmetic for our treatments, I like essential oils we use, they are pure and smell really nice. Usually we get them from India, they get delivered or someone who lives there and goes on holiday brings them with him/her.

Laura: Have you heard of lake Assal?

Maya: I don’t know lake Assal.

Laura: lake Assal is a salty lake in Djibouti, which is around 150 meters below sea level and is compared to the dead sea. It has healthy minerals which are considered to be good for the skin. Amm, If there would be a Spa at the lake Assal, what would be your advice to them?

Maya: Wow I don’t know, don’t think having a resort there would be popular. It is far away and there is nothing there. Well, if you build a spa centre maybe it would attract more people however Kempinski is closer. I would advise lake Assal resort to have all sorts of relaxation massages and a lot of moisturising treatments, to help the skin to recover after salt. Also salt can be used as a scrub and people could even use it in the sauna to clean the skin.

Laura: I see, well It was a pleasure to meet you, thank you for your answers, and I wish you all the best in your further career.

Maya: Thank you thank you! (laughs)
4.5 Masseus3 of Kempinski spa
Laura: Hello, my name is Laura and I am going to interview you today about your work.
Pradhi: Yes that's alright, I am pradhi, from india, nice to meet you.
Laura: Nice to meet you too, shall we start right away?
Pradhi: Yes we can
Laura: What is your background in beauty/ wellness treatments?
Pradhi: I am specialised in indian massages, such as Ayurveda and many more.
Laura: How long have you been working as a masseus?
Pradhi: Around 5 years now
Laura: And how many of them do you work in Djibouti?
Pradhi: I believe almost a year (thinks for a minute), eleven months it is.
Laura: Who are your main clients?
Pradhi: Most of my clients are Americans, and they usually like Swedish massage, ayurvedic massage, back and shoulders massage. Cannot really tell a lot of treatments are popular.
Laura: What treatments are the most popular in Kempinski Spa?
Pradhi: Ayurvedic massages, head and sholder massages, they are very relaxing for the military or business people.
laura: Have you heared of lake Assal?
Pradhi: yes i have but, I have never been there, it is far away and I am working all the time.
Laura: Do you have knowledge on saline water treatments?
Pradhi: No I heared about dead sea but don't know much.
Laura: Imagine if there would be the Spa center near the lake Assal, what would be your advice to them? What they should pay attention to?
Pradhi: In the case of spa center built near lake assal I think it is a good idea. Djibouti is a little bit boring, not many attractions, I think they should have massages for relaxation for militants. Also fresh water, without salt.
Laura: So this is the end of our interview, thank you very much.
Pradhi: No problem, it was a pleasure.

4.6 Manager of Acasias hotel
Laura: Hello, my name is Laura, thank you for taking some time of your busy schedule to have a meeting with me.
Ehtasham: Hello, I am Ehtasham.
Laura: Alright let's get started then.
Ehtasham: Sure
Laura: Do you have any wellness facilities in your hotel?
Ehtasham: yes we do, they are not very big, we just opened up, so there is no promotion on our media site or anything like that.
Laura: I see, what kind of facilities do you have?

Ehtasham: We have massages and facials, maybe we will expand in the future, however it is not known yet.

Laura: Who are the main clients of the wellness facilities you have?

Ehtasham: Ammm Most of our clients are from the hotel, could not tell you the country or region, it is just too international

Laura: What are the most popular treatments in your wellness facilities?

Ehtasham: We have massages and facials, both of them are pretty popular. We are planning on expanding a little bit, however it takes time as our spa centre is very new. We just started giving the treatments to our hotel guests, we do not have any information about it on our website or anywhere else so only the guests of the hotel know about it. Of course we are working on the promotion of our spa department

Laura: What products do you use in your wellness facilities?

Ehtasham: We use a lot of different types of massage oils and creams, we get them all from Dubai. When one of our workers travel they usually pass Dubai and bring the needed oils. They are usually indian or Arabic oils.

Laura: Do you know lake Assal?

Ehtasham: yes I do, as a matter of fact i visited it twice, it's a nice place.

Laura: Imagine if there was a spa near lake Assal, would you be interested in cooperating with such resort, in terms of procedures, production promotion, maybe using its products made of the salty water of lake Assal?

Ehtasham: If lake assal resort would offer us some products for spa we would be glad to try them out however, first of course we would test them, then use it on our customers and see the reaction if it is positive then we would consider ordering from you.

Laura: If you could give advice to lake Assal, what would it be?

Ehtasham: My advice to lake assal resort would be to get a good dedicated staff and focus on delivering a good service to its customers.

Laura: Good advice! Well we came to an end of our interview, I would like to thank you for your precious time.

Ehtasham: You're welcome, any time! (laughs)

4.7 Masseus of Acasias hotel

Laura: Hello my name is Laura, may I interview you, it wont take more than 20 minutes.

Ehitna: Hello, I am Ehitna, Yes you may.

Laura: Could you please tell me something about your background Ehitna? Where are you from, what is your education in wellness field and so on?

Ehitna: I am from Ethiopia and I have qualifications for the Ethiopian massage, so I am really good at it, but I can as well do other massages like Balinese, Thai and more.

Laura: How long are you working as a masseuse?

Ehitna: 10 years

Laura: And how long do you work here in Acasias?

Ehitna: I am in Djibouti for already 1 year and the same amount of time I am working in Acasias hotel.
Laura: What products do you use on your clients?

Ehitna: I use essential oils, we usually get them from India or Dubai.

Laura: Which treatments are the most popular?

Ehitna: I would say Ethiopian massage is the most popular one, also back and shoulder massage.

Laura: Who are your main clients?

Ehitna: Most of the clients are from the hotel, business people, as not that many people know about us yet.

Laura: Do you know lake Assal?

Ehitna: I know lake Assal but I’ve never been there.

Laura: Have you ever worked with products made out of saline water?

Ehitna: No I have never worked with products with salty water, not sure if it is good for the body.

Laura: Have you ever had a client asking for such treatments?

Ehitna: I have not had any clients who would ask for such treatments.

Laura: If there would be the Spa center near lake Assal, what would be your advice to it?

Ehitna: Make sure to hire the best therapists.

Laura: great advice Ehitna. Well it was the last question from me, so thank you for participating in this interview.

Ehitna: welcome