

MOTIVATION OF TOURISTS THROUGH MARKETING STRATEGIES OF OLUMO ROCK TOURIST COMPLEX

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ABSTRACT: *In Nigeria, Travel and Tourism had contributed immensely to the growth of GDP and also to employment. Tourism marketing in destination must take into consideration the behaviour of visitors for effective campaign design. The study investigates how visitors got information about the Complex and major motivating factors that attract visitors to the Complex. Structured questionnaire was employed to obtain information on the major objectives of the study. Majority of the visitors to the complex are youths. Visitors preferred use of brochures, travel guides and social media as marketing strategies. Push factors are observed to motivate tourists more for fun, excitement, relaxation and sightseeing. Tourists' sources of awareness to the Complex are not different in respect to their demographics; also visitors who organise visits for themselves complain less about challenges of the Complex. Management of the Complex must endeavour to improve on infrastructure and recreational facilities for fun, sightseeing, relaxation and excitement.*

KEYWORDS: Information, Motivation, Tourists, Marketing, Olumo Rock Tourist Complex,

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has contributed to the economies of many countries globally (Aziz and Ariffin, 2009;). Nigeria, a country of over 356 square miles land area is endowed with distinct tourism attractions. In Nigeria the direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP in 2013 was 757.3 billion Naira, estimating that tourism contribution is valued at approximately 1.3 trillion with a 2.6% contribution to employment (1,636,500 jobs) (Adeleke, 2014; Mbanefo, 2014a). Tourism in Nigeria is a catalyst of social cohesion going beyond the immediate impact of job creation and its positive economic consequences. In 2013, Nigeria recorded a total of 4,037,808 international tourist arrivals which accounted for US\$649,468,486 in expenditure, while domestic tourism arrivals for 2013 recorded 3,081,808 with \$470,606,780 expenditure (Mbanefo, 2014b).

A travel motivation or motive is defined as set of attributes, when aggregated together describes a place as a travel destination (Aziz and Ariffin, 2009). These include all elements that are related to a destination and to travelling to the places such as the physical and cultural characteristics of the destinations, and actual distance required to get to the destination. Tourist motivations are important socio-cognitive variables that must be taken into account to better understand the destination choice process, while the understanding of how tourists acquire information is important for marketing decision. Specifically the study examines the factors that motivate tourists to the Tourist Complex. In line with the assertion of Kozak (2002) that there is need to focus on tourists demographics while examining motivating factors in destinations, the demographic characteristics of tourists to the Tourist Complex were considered. The study also examined how tourists got information about the destination and the marketing strategies employed by the Tourist Complex.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tourism marketing in destinations should be able to understand that searching the behavior of tourists is imperative for effective campaign designs. Marketing destination involves communicating with potential visitors to influence decisions on destination preference, intention to travel and product choices (Lai and Vinh, 2012). According to Gartner (1993), information is capable of originating through induced information which are promotional materials such as brochures and posters, and tour operators' and travel agents' input. He explained that self-information through the mass media also plays a role. Also organic information could be from friends, relatives and personal experience. Marketing destination for awareness is a promise to the consumer that products will be delivered to them with all the features described and communicated, and a delivery of customer satisfaction of a product (Lai and Vinh, 2013).

Academic scholars have put up several theories and approaches to explain why people decide to travel for vacations and holidays (Morrison, 2013). He however stated that Dann's (1977) push and pull theory is the most accepted among the more specific explanations of tourist motivation. He stated that 'push' factors are within individuals whereby people attempt to take care of internal drives such as need to escape from a certain environment. The 'pull' factors are the products of marketing the destination to invite people to visit. Visitors are motivated to travel by the 'push' factor, while specific tourism destinations are selected by visitors by the 'pull' factor. Klenosky (2002) explained that the 'push' factors are related to tourists' needs and wants which include the need to escape, rest, relax, go for adventure, health and fitness, prestige and social interaction. The 'push' factors are determinants of whether to go to a destination or not, while 'pull' factors determine which destination to go. They further stressed that 'push' and 'pull' factors vary according to the origins of tourists; and this may be due to economic, socio-cultural and geographic differences.

Also academic researchers have offered models that have made one to understand why people pick their destinations. Morrison (2013) deduced the following factors from these models.

- Socio-psychological: Um and Crompton (1990) explained that this factor includes the personal characteristics, motives, values and attitudes of the tourist as they are linked closely with people's motives for pleasure/leisure travel.
- Situational: The problem an individual, family or a group of people have as a result of financial constraints, lack of available time to travel.
- Interpersonal: The influence of family members, other relatives, friends, opinion leaders and others.
- Awareness levels: Tourists have to be aware of destinations before they can consider them for pleasure/leisure travel.
- Destination images: these are the perceptions of people about destinations.
- Destination products: these are factors such as attractions, events, experiences and activities that determine the acceptance of a destination by tourists.
- Marketing and promotional communications: The messages and images transmitted by Destination Marketing Objectives (DMOs) and tourism sector stakeholders through various channels.
- Past experience in visiting: it is generally accepted that previous visitors to a destination has greater tendencies to revisit that particular destination than those who have not yet visited.

- Geographic origins and cultures: The choice of travel destinations highly depend on tourist geographic origin and also by people's cultural backgrounds.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in Olumo Rock situated at Abeokuta, Ogun State Capital of Nigeria. Olumo Rock stands at a height of about 91.44m above the sea level. The rock which was believed to be sacred was a refuge for the first settlers in Abeokuta. Among the natural resources present in Olumo Rock Tourist Complex are amiable landscape, ancient carvings of past Egba kings, and a cave in the Rock where war plans were made, an Iroko tree that had lived for 200 years and art and cowries stuffed in to the rock.

The study was quantitative in nature and made use of survey research design. A structured questionnaire was designed to obtain information on the major objectives of the study. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section of the questionnaire sought information on respondents' demographic profile such as gender, age, purpose of visit, length of stay, travel companion, possibility of revisiting and recommending the Complex to others and mode of organizing visits. The second section sought information on marketing strategies employed by the Tourist Complex and preferred marketing strategies by visitors. The third section examined push and pull factors that motivate visitors to the Complex through a three-point Likert scale (agree, neutral and disagree).

Two hundred and eighty six visitors were surveyed within a period of five months (from December 2013 to April 2014). A non-probability sampling technique was used through convenient sampling where respondents were selected because of their convenient accessibility to the researcher. A total of two hundred and forty completed and usable questionnaire were obtained representing 83.9 per cent. Descriptive statistics through simple percentages were used to analyse results while Chi-square tests were employed to determine associations between variables.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents revealed that most (80%) of the tourists to Olumo Rock were youths within the age bracket of 18-40 years, with many of them (48.3%) being students. Respondents had varied reasons for visiting the Tourist Complex, among which are excursion (31.6%), enjoying nature and landscape (22.5%), day out (15.8%), and socializing with family and friend (14.2%). Most of the respondents (88.3%) were day visitors. Results also revealed that many respondents organized their visits themselves (48.3%), while 29.2% organized visit through their institutions and organizations. Only few (10.0%) organized their visits through Travel Agents

The results show that 56.7% of the respondents were visiting Olumo Rock for the first time. Most of the respondents (75.0%) agreed they would love to re-visit the Complex and also love to recommend the Complex to friends and relatives. Also most (75.0%) of the respondents would love to recommend the Complex to friends and relatives

Sources of Information about the Tourist Complex

Respondents got awareness about Olumo Rock through grapevine (23.2%), family and relations (12.5%), friends and colleagues (35.2%) handbills and magazines (16.7%),

radio/television (9.2%), internet (3%), Facebook/twitter (3%), advertising agents, and travel guide books.

Table 1: Respondents' Preferred Marketing Strategies

| Preferred Marketing Strategies | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
| Television/Radio | 54 | 14 | 172 |
| Facebook/Twitter | 177 | 7 | 56 |
| E-mail | 175 | 19 | 56 |
| Advertising Experts | 165 | 15 | 60 |
| Travel Guide Books/Magazine | 167 | 15 | 58 |

Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents agreed to prefer the use of social media such as Facebook, twitter, internet, e-mail for advertising the tourist complex. Also sources like travel guide books and magazines were preferred by tourists while very few preferred the use of television and radio.

Table 2: Factors that Motivate Tourists to Olumo Rock

| Pull Factors | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
|----------------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| Nature and landscape | 149 | 11 | 80 |
| Culture, arts, tradition | 123 | 10 | 107 |
| Weather/climate | 85 | 5 | 150 |
| Shopping | 89 | 22 | 129 |
| Past experience | 158 | 30 | 52 |
| Marketing strategies | 78 | 12 | 150 |
| Traditional fabric | 167 | 4 | 69 |
| Heritage sites | 137 | 5 | 142 |
| Rock climbing | 139 | 7 | 94 |
| Traditional environment | 56 | 7 | 177 |
| Push Factors | Agree | Neutral | Disagree |
| Escape from work | 165 | 5 | 50 |
| Relaxation | 217 | 2 | 21 |
| Meet new friends | 174 | 12 | 54 |
| Go for adventure | 171 | 7 | 62 |
| Excitement | 201 | 6 | 33 |
| Away from home | 199 | 3 | 38 |
| Sightseeing | 187 | 5 | 48 |
| To change environment | 198 | 1 | 41 |
| Challenges | | | |
| Incessant power failure | 147 | 37 | 56 |
| Poor internet connectivity | 95 | 54 | 91 |
| Location | 135 | 33 | 72 |

Results show that the major pull factors that motivate tourists to visit Olumo Rock were nature and landscape (189), artefacts and artwork (155), traditional fabrics (167) and past experience (158). The major push factors were relaxation (198), go for adventure (171), away from home (199), sightseeing (187), change environment (198) and meet new friends (174). Respondents

agreed that incessant power failure and obscurity of the location of the Complex posed a major challenge for patronage of tourists

HYPOTHESIS I

There is no significant relationship between demographics of tourists and marketing strategies of Olumo Rock Tourist Complex.

The result of chi-square test of hypothesis revealed that there was no association between marketing strategies of Olumo Rock Tourist Complex and the gender of tourists ($p=0.706$), age of tourists ($p=0.926$), and nationality of tourists ($p=0.861$). It means that tourists' sources of awareness about Olumo Rock Tourist are not different with respect to their demographics. In other words, demographic characteristics did not determine how the tourist got to know about the Complex. This implies that management does not have to choose medium of publicity targeting people of different demographics. The null hypothesis is thus accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected as the result of analysis concludes that there is no significant relationship between tourists' demographics and sources of awareness of Olumo Rock Tourist Complex.

HYPOTHESIS II

There is no significant relationship between value tourists place on the Complex and their suggestion for use of social media for publicity. The result of chi-square test of hypothesis revealed that there was no association between tourists' suggestions for use of social media for publicity and any of the four variables that shows the value they place on the tourist complex. This means that tourists' recommendation of social media for publicity is irrespective of being a first timer or not ($p=0.268$), their visit organizer ($p=0.051$), their decision to re-visit ($p=0.771$), and their decision to recommend visit ($p=0.823$). It means that tourists only got sincere in stating what they thought would make the tourist complex have more patronage in its own interest. The fact that the variable – visit organizer – was almost significant ($p=0.051$) shows that people that self-organised their visit had more information, more likely first-hand about the complex than those that came through travel agents and institutions. The null hypothesis is thus accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected as the result of analysis concludes that there is no significant relationship between value tourists place on the Complex and their suggestion for an intensive and extensive publicity

HYPOTHESIS III

There is no significant relationship between the value tourists place on the Complex and the service challenges of the Complex

The result of chi-square test of hypothesis revealed that there was no association between service challenges of the Complex (incessant power failure) and three of the four variables that shows the value they place on the tourist complex. This means that incessant power failure is not much of a challenge or threat to the patronage of the Complex. The probability coefficients for the variables are: first timer ($p=0.435$), their visit organizer ($p=0.013$), their decision to re-visit ($p=0.354$), and their decision to recommend visit ($p=0.439$). The fact that the variable – visit organizer – was very significant ($p=0.013$) shows that people that self-organised their visit may likely complain less of power outage than those that came through travel agents and institutions. This is because the former was more likely to come all out for fun and relaxation than the latter that may likely come more like a sceptic. It thus reveals that there is need for personal motivation of people to come for the strengths of the Complex – which is beautiful natural landscape and artefacts. The null hypothesis is thus rejected while the alternate

hypothesis is accepted as the result of analysis concludes that there is significant relationship between value tourists place on the Complex and the service challenges of the Complex.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result revealed that most of the visitors to the complex are youths. Jonsson and Devonish (2008); Ryan and Aglendon (1998) agreed that younger tourists are more active and are more likely to seek whole range of physical activities when visiting a destination, and that tourists who desire active and interactive experiences in tourist destinations are likely to be youths. The varied active reasons (enjoying nature and landscape, day out, socializing) for visiting the complex are justified since majority of the respondents are youths.

Visitors to the complex preferred use of impersonal information sources such as brochures, travel guides, and internet media. This is in agreement with Molina, Gomez and Martin-Consuegra (2010); Molina and Esrenban (2006). Results also revealed that visitors are loyal to the destination as many of the respondents would love to re-visit the Complex. Destination loyalty is viewed as an intention to revisit the destination and as tourist's perception of a recommendable place (Kuusik et al, 2011).

The study stressed that tourists' behaviour is motivated by both the external and internal factors. The study which is in line with Mohammad and Som (2010)'s findings which affirmed that tourists go on holiday because they want to fulfil their intrinsic desires and at the same time, their decisions on where they go are based on destination attributes. The study revealed that most of the tourists are motivated to visit the destination through the push factors. The pull factor however demonstrate that Olumo Rock Tourist Complex has a variety of potentials that could extend visitors' stay and motivate them to want to repeat visits. A successful integration of the push and pull factors would be essential for a more viable marketing strategies.

Also respondents indicated their preference for social media as marketing strategies and sources of awareness of visitors. To the Complex were not determined by the demographic profile. Visitors who were self-motivated in visiting, organised their tours themselves and complain less about the challenges facing the Complex.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Management of the Complex could use any form of marketing strategy regardless of the demographic profile of the tourists. However it must be noted more of social media strategies should be employed in marketing the Complex as majority of the visitors are youths. The Complex must give more incentives for tourists who organize their visits themselves as this group come mainly to appreciate nature and the fun, and so complain less about several challenges facing the Complex.

As more youths are motivated more by push factors such as excitement, fun, sightseeing, the management of the Complex must improve on tourist infrastructures and recreational facilities that enhance fun and excite in youths. The management of the Complex may need to collaborate with the state and local government in providing amenities and infrastructures for various that visit the Complex

CONCLUSION

Olumo Rock Tourist Complex is one of the tourist destinations in Nigeria that could enhance the visibility of the nation globally and improve the economic development of the nation if appropriate marketing strategies are employed. Nigerians, especially youths are often motivated by push factors to visit destinations mostly for fun, excitement, sightseeing and others. Although the demographic profile of the visitors does not significantly affect the mode of awareness to the Complex, majority of the tourists prefer social media as marketing strategies.

For future research, the impact on challenges facing the Complex on the flow of tourists will be considered.

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