
INFLUENCE OF TOURISM MARKETING ON DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORING NIGERIA AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT: *This study descriptively examined the effectiveness of tourism marketing on destination competitiveness and economic development of Nigeria and other African countries. The main objective of the study is to examine and compare the ratings on effectiveness of marketing for Nigeria and that of other African countries. A secondary data was collected on country' marketing effectiveness, international tourist arrivals, contribution of tourism to GDP, employment and tourism exports receipts for Africa countries. Finding of this study shows that some countries in Africa are taking the issue of tourism marketing serious, as a result, have been able to attract significant number of international tourist arrivals, which has contributed immensely to their inbound receipts and GDP. Meanwhile, Nigeria's performance shows lack of sustained commitment to tourism marketing and has adversely affected the number of international tourists' arrivals, and its effect on inbound receipts and GDP.*

KEYWORDS: tourism marketing, destination competitiveness, economic development, Africa

INTRODUCTION

The travel and tourism industry has been acknowledged for its capacity to stimulate economic growth and development. The industry is becoming one of the main focus for economic revitalization especially in developing countries where attention is being directed to serve as an avenue for economic diversification (Awodele & Ayeni, 2011). The sector has been advocated by various groups, agencies, professionals and the academia, that if properly harnessed, contributes to preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, protection of cultural heritage and promotion of empowerment of local communities (Okocha, et al; 2019; UNCTAD, 2017; Ajake, 2015 WTTC, 2013).

The travel and tourism industry over the years have continued to make a real difference to the lives of millions of people by driving growth, creating jobs, reducing poverty and fostering development and tolerance (WEF, 2017). Globally the industry contributed US \$7.6 trillion to the economy (10.2% of global GDP) and is forecast to rise by 4.0% per annum to US \$10,986.5bn (10.8% of GDP by 2016). The industry also generated 292 million jobs (1 in 10 jobs on the planet) in 2016,

including jobs indirectly supported by the industry. This is expected to rise by 2.5% per annum to 370 million jobs in 2026 (11.0% of total (WTTC, 2017). Report by UNWTO and ILO (2014) shows that for every 30 new tourists to a destination, one new job is created; and today the travel and tourism industry has almost twice as many women employers as other sectors. In addition to creating opportunities for high-skilled workers, the industry plays a key role in creating opportunities for low-skilled workers, minorities, migrants, youths; the long-term unemployed, and women who prefer part-time work due to family responsibilities.

The development of tourism destination areas all over the world has contributed to the increase in international tourist arrivals. Globally, the arrival of international tourists in 2018 grew by 6% which is a consolidation of a strong result of 2017 (+7%) and exceeds the rate of 4% or higher growth recorded every year since 2010. An estimate of 1.403 billion international tourist arrivals were received by destinations around the world, some 74 million more than 2017. All regions enjoyed an increase in international arrivals, led by the Middle East (+10%) and Africa (+7%). Asia and the Pacific and Europe both went up 6% while the Americas grew 3% (UNWTO, 2019). Besides, visitor exports generated US \$ 1,130.9 billion (6.1% of total exports) in 2015 (WTTC, 2017) which grew to US \$ 1,126 billion in 2016 and US \$ 1,186 billion in 2017 (UNWTO, 2019). The growth is forecast to increase by 4.3% from 2016 – 2026, to US \$ 2,056.0bn in 2026 (WTTC, 2017).

In Africa, travel and tourism can be an engine for inclusive growth and sustainable economic growth. Ever since 1990s, the industry has contributed significantly to the growth of Africa's economy, generating employment and enhancing trade. From 1995-2014, international tourist arrivals to Africa grew by an average of 6 percent per year (UNCTAD, 2017). In 2018, arrivals increased by 7%, bringing the estimated number of international arrivals to 67 million. This figure represents 5% of the world's total. The growth was led by North Africa (+10%), while sub-Saharan Africa grew by 6% (UNWTO, 2019). The tourism export revenue increased by 9 percent per year reaching US \$29.2bn in 2016 and US \$32.5bn in 2017 (UNWTO, 2019). The average total contribution of gross domestic product (GDP) increased from \$69 billion in 1995 – 1998 to \$166 billion in 2011 – 2014, that is from 6.8 percent of GDP in Africa to 8.5 percent of GDP. Furthermore, tourism generated more than 21 million jobs on average in 2011 – 2014, which translates into 7.1 percent of all jobs in Africa, it shows that tourism industry was supporting 1 out of 14 jobs in Africa (UNCTAD, 2017).

The tourism potentials for Africa countries are enormous and the sector's multiplier effect on other sectors has led many countries into developing and implementing different marketing programmes to satisfy the needs and wants of the international tourists than the competing countries. Some of the marketing programmes include online promotion of tourist sites through videos, social media and social networks, creating appealing websites, mobile application development, attending international travel and tourism fairs, marketing offices abroad, partnership programmes with tour agencies and journalists etc.. Meanwhile, over the years, Nigeria as a country has not really committed to the development of her tourism potentials and marketing of her tourists attractions.

Looking at the UNWTO report of 2006 on Nigeria's tourism, it was discovered that tourism marketing is underfunded, ineffective and inefficient. While other African countries are committing resources to their tourism marketing, Nigeria's lack of prioritization of her tourism industry has not only affected the development of tourism potentials but adversely affected the marketing programmes to attract enough tourists to the country.

Furthermore, several studies have shown the importance of tourism to economic growth in terms of employment generation, poverty reduction, revenue generation, gross domestic product (GDP) and foreign direct investment (FDI) (Ajake 2015, Yusuff & Akinde, 2015; Adebayo, Jegede & Eniafe, 2014; Amalu & Ajake, 2012; Esu, 2012; Jiboku & Jiboku 2010; Uduma-Olugu & Onukwube, 2012). There are other studies that focused on the influence of marketing on the development of tourism potentials (Omole, Amodu, Olanibi & Emmanuel, 2013; Esu & Ebitu, 2010; Ajake, 2015; Ali, 2013; Agina, 2018). These studies highlighted the importance of marketing on the promotion of tourism industry but were not able to look at the position of Nigeria in marketing ranking towards destination competitiveness in Africa, and some of the success factors of the African countries doing well in destination marketing. Despite the effort of the previous studies, the current study seeks to assess how competitive are the countries of Africa in marketing of tourism potentials and its effect on the international tourist arrivals, employment generation, and visitors export, in relation to Nigeria's position. Getting the true picture would help in recommending future actions for the policy makers both in the national and the regional level of the country.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism and Destination Marketing.

There are various definitions for tourism marketing in the literature but only few will be discussed in this study. Krippendorff (1987) defines tourism marketing as "a systematic and coordinated execution of business policy by tourist undertaking whether private or state owned of local, regional, national or international level, to achieve an appropriate return". In the views of Tocquer and Zins (1987), tourism marketing is "a process which the structure of tourism demand is anticipated and satisfied by the design of a product (service), physical distribution, establishment of exchange value (price), communication between the tourism organization and its market, for the best interest of the company and consumers". These definitions capture the essence of tourism marketing, which is anticipating and meeting the needs of tourists for a profit to the service provider. Most tourism marketing programmes are geared toward attracting and keeping the consumer interest in tourism's products and services as to the specific tourism potential (Ispas & Saragi 2011).

In an increasing globalized and competitive market for tourism, destination marketing is acknowledged as a pillar of the future growth and sustainability of tourism destination. Published works related to destination marketing represents an important growth area in tourism that has evolved for a distinct paradigm and its significance, according to Pike and Page (2014) is

reinforced by four key propositions that are associated with global tourism: (1) Most aspects of tourism take place at destinations (2) The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) proposed that destinations were “the fundamental unit of analysis in tourism” (3) destinations have emerge as the biggest brands in the travel industry; (4) a large number of nations, states and cities are now funding a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) as the main vehicle to compete and attract visitors to their distinctive place or visitor place. Various definitions of destination marketing are found in the marketing and tourism literature and most focused on the activities and processes to bring buyers and sellers together. UNWTO (2004) see it as “a continuous coordinated set of activities associated with efficient distribution of products to high potentials markets; involves making decisions about the product, branding, the price, market segmentation, promotion and distribution”. Wahab et al cited in Pike (2004) define destination marketing as the management process through which the National Tourist Organization and/or tourist enterprise identify their selected tourist, actual and potential, communicate with them to ascertain and influence them wishes, needs, motivations, likes and dislike, on local, regional, national and international levels and to formulate and adopt their tourist products accordingly in view of achieving optimal tourist satisfaction thereby fulfilling their objectives. Destination marketing organization is charged with the responsibility of marketing identifiable destination. The organization promoted economic development of a destination by increasing visits from tourists and business travelers which generates overnight lodging for a destination, visits to restaurants and shopping revenues (Ispas, 2014).

Adequate and effective marketing and promotional programmes have been identified by various researchers as tools for enhancing tourism potentials (Omole, Amodu, Olanibi & Emmanuel; 2013; Esu & Ebitu, 2010; Ajake & Ali, 2013; Udumo, Anikpo & Ekpo-Eloma, 2013; Agina, 2018). Adequate and effective marketing should be the responsibility of the public and private sectors coming together through public-private partnership to develop attractive and appealing messages to the international markets (Agina, 2018). The appealing messages of tourism and hospitality services are conveyed through marketing communication. The special characteristics of the industry made it to be heavily dependent on marketing and getting the right messages to the right people is one of the most important factors in determining the success of the tourism sector (Suli, Cani & Suli, 2013; Cirikovic 2016). Through the communication policy and the means by which they materialize it, tourism entities aim to disseminate information about their activities, products and services as complete as possible and also gather feedback on how these are received and appreciated (Bogan, 2014). Tourism communication is classified according to tourism information categories: commercial and non – commercial. The commercial include, travel, agencies, tour operators; tourism providers, tourist information centres; tourism offices abroad; advertising agencies; tourism fairs and expose. The iron commercial include; close friends, family members and relatives; neighbours, coworkers, strangers (Bogan, 2014).

Tourism and Economic Development in Africa.

Over the past decade, Africa has recorded sustained and impressive economic growth rates. In 2013, growth rates averaged 4 per cent. Some countries grow at about 7 per cent or more and a

number of Africa countries are among the fastest growing economies in the world. However, this impressive growth has not resulted to high levels of human and social development, as Africa has a large part of her population trapped in poverty, facing rampant unemployment and inequality (UNECA, 2015). The working-age population in Africa is expected to grow by close to 70%, or by approximately 430 million people, between 2015 and 2035. Countries that are able to enact policies conducive to job creation are likely to benefit from the rapid population growth, while those that fail to implement such policies are likely to suffer demographic vulnerabilities resulting from large numbers of unemployed and/or under employed youth (WEF, 2017).

The African continent is truly blessed and adorned with rich diversity, an abundance of untouched resources, national beauty, cultural heritage and historical sites, wildlife, safaris beaches, deserts are more that, if properly harnessed, could provide considerable opportunities for cultural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and diaspora tourism (UNWTO, 2018). Tourism is widely recognized as an effective tool for socio-economic development due to the possible linkage with other sectors of the economy which allows it to facilitate employment opportunities, income and economic development and enhance quality of life (Ayeni & Ebohon, 2012; WTTC, 2015; UNWTO, 2018, Agina, 2018; Yusuff & Akinde, 2015; WTM, 2010, Gregory & Ajibola, 2013). Generally, there is an increasing and widely accepted belief that tourism can promote and cause long-run economic growth and this has manifested in many literature as the tourism-led growth hypothesis (Havi, 2013; Samimi et al; 2011; Giap et al; 2016; Bayramoglu & Ali, 2015; Alhowaish, 2016, Yusuff & Akinde, 2015). Tourism (domestic in bound or outbound) is considered as an important variable that promotes economic growth through fiscal earnings and revenue generation to any country and equally a principal export for 83 percent of developing countries are the most significant source of foreign exchange after petroleum (Robert, 2010; Eziocha, Ohaka & Dagogo 2015). Tourism is a labour intensive and tourism workers are very important for the guests' impression of the most country. Tourist arrivals create jobs directly in the hospitality industry, but through its indirect effects it also induces secondary employment in many tourism supportive sectors (Pavlic, et al, 2013). Various studies and reports have established a strong link between tourist arrivals and employment generations (WTTC, 2013, 2014, 2015, WEF, 2013; 2017; WTO, 2014; Pavlic et al., 2013, Zaei and Zaei, 2013; Samimi, Sadeghi & Sadeghi, 2013; Alhowaish, 2016; Holat, Turkarn & Gunay, 2010; Havi, 2013; Bayramoglu & Ari, 2014; Yusuff & Akinde, 2015; Giap, Gopalan & Ye, 2016; Jovanovic & Ilic, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

A research design is the instrument of conditions for collection and analysis of data in manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari & Garg 2014). A cross-sectional design was used to collect secondary data on marketing effectiveness, international tourist arrivals, contribution of tourism to GDP, employment and tourism exports receipts for Nigeria and other Africa countries from the databases of the World Bank, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and that

of World Economic Forum (WEF). The data collected were presented with descriptive statistical tools such as tables and graphs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Effectiveness of Marketing, International Tourist Arrivals, International Inbound Receipts, Contribution of Tourism to GDP and Employment per annual for African countries in 2017

Country	Effectiveness of Marketing Score (1-7)	International tourist arrivals	International inbound receipts(\$m)	Contribution of tourism to GDP (\$)	Contribution of tourism employment to
Morocco	4.8	10,176,762	5,852.8	7,735.4	731,525
Egypt	3.5	9,139,104	6,065.1	14,482.8	1,110,550
Tunisia	3.6	5,359,309	1,380.8	2,524.5	185,290
Algeria	2.7	1,710,000	307.7	5,887.4	327,306
South Africa	4.9	8,903,773	8,234.7	9,339.9	702,824
Namibia	5.2	1,388,000	378.0	373.9	28,792
Botswana	5.0	1,528,000	948.3	619.1	28,399
Zambia	4.1	932,000	660.1	627.3	94,213
Zimbabwe	3.4	2,056,588	886.0	703.0	180,028
Lesotho	5.5	320,000	34.4	114.9	34,402
Mauritius	5.5	1,151,252	1,431.7	1,321.0	58,641
Kenya	5.2	1,114,100	723.0	2,296.0	592,300
Tanzania	4.4	1,104,000	2,230.6	1,906.1	386,427
Rwanda	5.9	987,000	317.8	261.3	59,036
Uganda	4.1	1,303,000	1,149.0	920.0	464,305
Ethiopia	3.9	864,000	394.9	2,504.2	1,013,860
Madagascar	3.9	244,321	574.0	548.0	208,360
Mozambique	3.6	1,525,000	192.8	469.7	280,408
Malawi	3.0	805,000	36.8	230.7	205,034
Congo, DR	2.1	191,000	0.1	236.2	78,319
Burundi	3.2	131,000	2.2	68.9	37,829
Cape Verde	4.4	519,722	351.3	275.5	33,741
Cote d' Ivoire	4.4	1,441,000	184.2	707.3	100,813
Senegal	3.7	1,006,600	423.0	756.6	274,451
Gambia	4.8	135,000	120.0	69.2	49,063
Gabon	2.6	187,332	9.0	142.3	3,943
Ghana	3.7	879,000	818.8	1,189.4	292,042
Cameroun	3.1	812,000	450.0	899.1	141,724
Benin	2.7	255,000	154.0	204.6	53,552
Nigeria	2.4	1,255,000	403.9	8,282.8	650,836
Mali	4.6	159,000	212.0	441.4	78,335
Sierra Leone	3.1	23,798	23.0	81.1	18,866
Mauritania	3.9	30,000	29.0	0.0	0
Chad	2.7	120,000	25.2	156.2	20,468

Source: World Economic Forum (2017) & World Bank (2017). The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017. World Economic Forum Publications

Table 1 above shows the value of effectiveness of marketing, international tourist arrivals, international inbound receipts, contribution of tourism to GDP and employment per annum for African countries by 2017 report of World Economic Forum. From the table, Nigeria rank 127th in effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists with a score of 2.4 out of 7, which is below average mean. Top ranked destinations in Africa had better performance than Nigeria as regards destination marketing to attract tourists to their destinations. The top ranked African countries in Global ranking in 2017 are Rwanda (5.9), Mauritius (5.5), Lesotho (5.5), Kenya (5.2), Namibia (5.2), Botswana (5.0), South Africa (4.9), and Morocco (4.8). The effectiveness of destination marketing in these countries have impacted positively on the number of arrivals to their countries and improved on the tourism receipts and employment.

Nigeria attracted 1,255, 000 of tourists which is a sign of an increase from the previous years but not to be compared to top African countries that have articulated destination marketing programmes and proper packaging of their tourism industry like South Africa, Cape Verde, Uganda, Botswana, Namibia, Tunisia, Egypt, and Algeria. On international inbound receipts, Nigeria only recorded \$403.9 million compared to the receipts of South Africa (\$8.2billion), Egypt (\$6.0 billion), Morocco (\$5.8 billion), Mauritius (\$1.4 billion), and Tunisia (\$1.3billion). This is an indication that a well-developed tourism sector could be an alternative source of revenue to a nation especially the developing countries like Nigeria with various forms of economic problems such as recession due to fluctuation of crude oil prices in the world market.

Tourism is a major source of employment generation in most developing countries. From Table 1, it was observed that tourism in Nigeria contributed 650, 836 jobs in the 2017 tourism competitiveness index, Morocco (731,525), Egypt (1,100,550), South Africa (702, 824), Ethiopia (1,013,860). This shows that if the tourism sector in Nigeria is properly developed and harnessed, it would help in the reduction of unemployment rate in Nigeria.

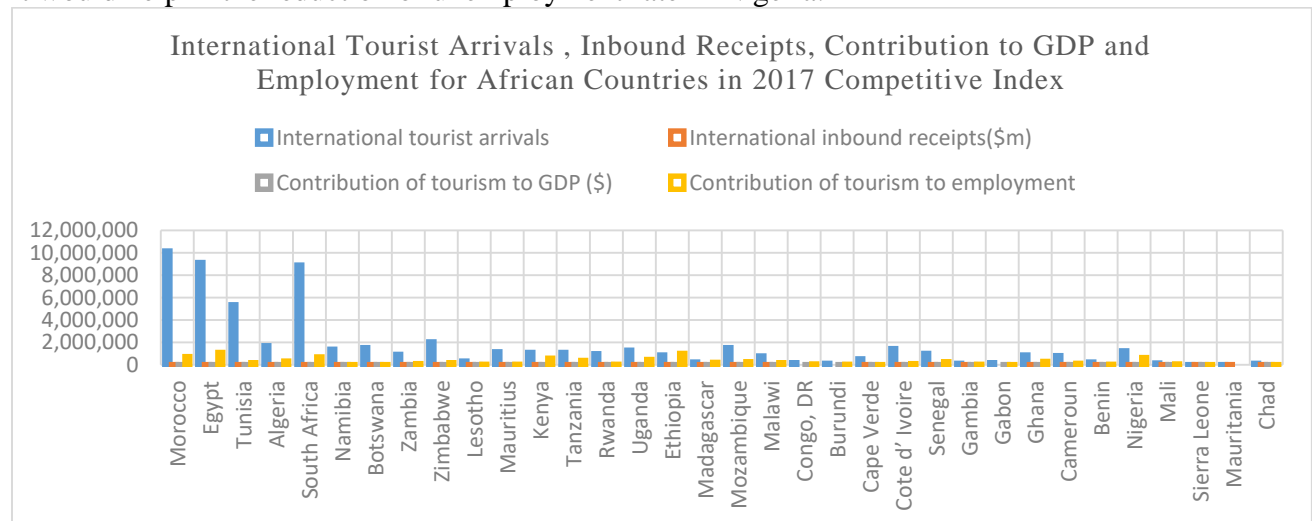


Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals, Inbound Receipts, Contribution to GDP and Employment for African Countries in 2017 Competitive Index

The finding of this study shows that some countries in Africa are taking the issue of tourism marketing serious, as a result, have attracted significant number of international tourist arrivals, inbound receipts and contribution to their GDP. Meanwhile, Nigeria performance shows lack of commitment in tourism destination marketing to attract international tourists. This is basically due to the fact that government over the years have not really done well to prioritize the tourism industry, as focus has been on the oil sector of the economy. This concurs with the views expressed by WTO (2006) that the marketing approach and activities towards tourism development in Nigeria are underfunded, inadequate and ineffective in attracting tourists. Besides, adequate and effective marketing and promotional programmes have been identified as tools capable of enhancing the tourism potentials of Nigeria (Omole, Amodu, Olanibi & Emmanuel, 2013; Esu & Ebitu, 2010; Ajake, 2015; Ali, 2013; Udumo, Arikpo & Ekpo-Eloma, 2013). In addition, having a clearer picture of the marketing and competitiveness index and positions of Nigeria and other African countries, from the current study gives reasons to probe more on why and what Nigeria is not doing well as regards marketing and also search for the success factors of other countries doing well in the area of destination marketing. Meanwhile, effective destination marketing should be the responsibility of the public and private sectors coming together through public-private partnership to develop attractive and appealing messages to both domestic and international markets (Agina, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Destination marketing is now acknowledged as a pillar of the future growth and sustainability of tourism destination in an increasing globalized and competitive market for tourists. An ever-increasing number of destinations worldwide have opened up to, and invested in tourism, turning it into a key driver of socio-economic progress through the creation of jobs and enterprises, export revenues, and infrastructure development. Many tourism destinations are competing for the international tourist arrivals by adopting different strategies to appeal to the tourists to make their destination a choice. Many destinations through their destination marketing organisations (DMOs) apply marketing strategies to project the image of the destination at the international level and make the total tourism package attractive, affordable and satisfying. Successful countries engage in promotional programmes like the tourism commercials on the international television stations, the internet and also on the websites, social media pages of the tourism national organisations. The tourism commercials, webpages and social media platforms of these countries are properly developed to include the local food, culture of the people, sights and sounds, an interactive platform and also mobile apps to showcase the tourism potentials of their countries.

Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural and cultural resources that if adequately harnessed and promoted are capable of attracting both domestic and foreign tourists, but over dependence on oil is hampering its development and marketing. In the face of oil price fluctuations, recession and with adequate marketing programmes for the tourism sector, it is capable of sustaining the economy or at least contributes significantly towards employment generation, public revenue, infrastructural development and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In order to develop and promote

Nigeria tourism potential and make Nigeria a competitive and a choice destination, urgent and credible actions are needed in the areas of travel and tourism marketing. Nigeria needs to study the success factors of top tourism countries in Africa like Rwanda, Mauritius, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Morocco, Kenya etc. especially in the area of marketing programmes.

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