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Role of Marketing on Tourism Development in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria

¹Clement Ukayi Anake & ²Makyur, Onyeché Anita

^{1&2}Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State
Nigeria

Corresponding Email: anaclem@yahoo.com

Abstract

Plateau state has great tourism potentials, some of which have been developed while others remain untapped. The study assesses the role played by marketing in tourism development in the study area. Stratified random and purposive sampling techniques was used to select 5 respondents each from the 45 tourism establishments selected. Finding shows that all the establishments engaged in various marketing and promotion of the industry through various channels including advertisement, internet, poster, brochure, bill board, news report, handbills, word of mouth. Another finding was that most of the sampled tourism establishments markets and promotes their product/services. Based on the findings, some of the recommendations include: that these tourism establishments should have marketing and promotion plans to guide them in marketing activities; they should create awareness among their employees and to encourage other methods such as television, radio and word of mouth.

Keywords: Tourism, Establishments, Marketing, Awareness, Jos North

Introduction

Tourism is a rapidly growing sector of the economy and is one of the largest industries in the world. It plays a significant role in the socio-economic and political development in the countries that are endowed. These include employment generation, preservation of the biodiversity, diversity of culture and life. Tourism has been a major driver of socio-economic development in western countries and also an alternative strategy for sustainable development of the rural sector.

Plateau State is blessed with numerous developed and potential tourist attractions, such as the cold temperature, scenic landscapes; beautiful festivals etc. which when fully developed and promoted will create great impact on the state economy. The development of tourism as a critical sector is believed to play

important role in the socio-economic and political sector of Plateau State economy. However, this has either not been seriously considered or fully developed by the State. Owan, (2012) observed that tourist attractions in Plateau State are yet to be developed or publicized thereby depriving the State of improved living conditions and quality of well-being of the population.

For resorts, effective promotion may mean translating the resort message with the appropriate types of marketing. Since promotional strategies may not be at the top of a firm's list for investing available resources, researching the existing public resources available for local and direct marketing may be more cost effective. Marketing and promotion activities according to Owan, (2012) should focus on activities that will lead to the increase in sales and dominance of tourist to the area.

Promotion influences the attitudes and buying behaviors of customer in the target market. Most specifically a resort's activities should encourage product purchase and market expansion (Owan, 2012). Promotion is therefore important for positioning and firmly establishing resorts as a whole, enhancing product development, distribution and creating relationship among others.

The economic potential of tourism in the Jos North Local Government Area is substantial therefore making marketing and promotion of tourism products essential, to inform tourist to visit the area. One of the most important decisions managers of tourism industries may need to make centers on effective promotion of tourist products. There is dearth of information on the activities of tourism industry in the Jos North L.G A.

This study become necessary so as to establish the role marketing activities has impacted on tourism industry in the Jos North L.G.A of Plateau state to make it a tourism haven as a big basket with a combination of some elements like Product development, promotion, distribution, pricing, relationship management and others.

The Research Problem

Jos North is known for its natural endowments' attractions such as beautiful climate, waterfalls, green vegetation's and undulating ridges on the plateau which comprises low grasses and trees. Cultural values and historical potentials abound in the plateau which according to Ayodele (2002), acts as a pull factor. These attractions are either not developed or not

known to the public hence, reasons for low patronage.

Tourism in Jos North suffers from neglect, lack of patronage or poor publicity to potential tourists. As a result of this, several potential impacts that would have been accrued to the host people, has not been realized. These identified problems can in many ways be linked to inadequate marketing and promotion and therefore set the pace for why there is need for this study.

It has also been observed that most literature on the role of marketing in tourism development are outside the study area and the few in the study area are not on tourism marketing. This may explain why tourism in the State in general and in the study area in particular suffers from neglect or lack of patronage or poor publicity to potential tourist. The identified problems can in many ways be link to inadequate marketing and therefore set the pace for why there is need for the study.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to assess the role of marketing in tourism development in Jos North, Plateau State.

Specific objectives of the study are to:

- i Identify tourism attractions in the study area.
- ii Examine the level of tourism attractions' development in the area.
- iii Identify marketing strategies used by management of this attractions
- iv Assess how these marketing strategies have impacted on tourist's patronage
- v Assess people's awareness of these attractions in the area.

Research Questions

- i. Are there tourism attractions in the study area?
- ii. What is the level of tourism development in the area?
- iii. What are the marketing strategies used by management of the tourism attractions?
- iv. Has these marketing strategies impacted on tourist patronage?
- v. Are the residents of the area aware of tourism attractions in the area?

Scope of Study

The study covered a general survey of tourism development in Jos North as a catalyst for economic growth in Nigeria, it x-rays the contents of tourism (the components of tourism development) and covers the factors that have enhanced or hindered the roles of marketing in the development of tourism industries to grow and analyses how they have managed such issues in the past.

Literature Review/Conceptual Framework

Concept of Tourism Marketing

Tourism marketing is identifying and anticipating the needs of tourists and providing facilities to meeting their needs, notifying them and accessing to motivate them. According to Brown, (2009) the aim of tourist travelling round the world is to see attractions in various destinations as tourist products are different from physical products. Zahrer (2009) observed that the major problem and barriers in tourism industry are institution and organization where parallel organization with lack of coordination among the agencies has affected revenues earnings from tourism.

Tourism marketing has numerous benefits which includes providing a more reliable and enduring base to the operator, making the operators to identify new product opportunities amongst others

Concept of Marketing

Marketing refers to all activities of market assessment and customer's needs of that market, with the evaluation of service, facilities, the costs of achieving the target and facilities that contain customer's satisfaction. This includes programs targeted to specific groups of customers and encourages them to purchase or use the services (Van, 2007).

Marketing begins with a creator and ends with a consumer. It's the process by which consumers learn about and obtain products and services. Marketing is more than just advertising, though it does include that aspect of the process. It also includes the media through which a product or services offered and the research that goes into the full decisions of how to package and sell it (Shaw & Williams, 2004).

Hence marketing in the tourism industry is imperative. (1) Tourism marketing has been defined as the systematic and coordinated efforts exerted by the National Tourist Organizations and the tourist enterprises at international, national and local levels to optimize the satisfaction of tourists, groups and individuals, in view of the sustained tourism growth (Shaw & Williams, 2004).

Modern marketing is heavily based on the "marketing concept" which holds that businesses and organizations should, Design their products/services to meet customer needs and wants, Focus on those people most likely to buy their

product rather than the entire mass market; and Develop marketing efforts that fit into the overall business objectives.

Types of Marketing

Shaw & Williams (2004) and Brown (2009), identified the types of marketing to include: Niche, Internet, Offline, Outbound, Inbound, Direct, Drip, social media, Personalized and Trade show. Other types include branding, promotion, increase customer awareness, growing the local economy, promoting local brands, Employment, new opportunities, social advantages, destination marketing

Research Methodology

Study Area

Jos North is one of the Local Government Areas of Plateau State, North Central of Nigeria. It is bordered to the North by Bauchi State; Bassa LGA, in the North West; Jos East LGA in the East and Barkin Ladi LGA in the South East. It lies between Longitude 9° 55' 42.56" N and Latitude 8° 53' 31.63" E

The area cover an area of 291 square kilometers and has population of 429,300 at the 2006 census. The Area enjoys two types of climates; dry climate and wet climate in northward, while the southward is dominated by the wet south west trade winds which prolong rains up to October. The unique features of the area are its high relief, especially in the north, and geological history. The high relief in the study area provides a hydrological centre for many rivers in Northern Nigeria and confers on the Northern part of the state a cool climate suitable for livestock and crops. The process of the formation of its relief makes the area one of the mineral rich site in the country.

The study area is noted for its drainage networks, it is made up of streams that constitute the sources of major river draining the Northern part of Nigeria, and hence it is regarded as the hydrological centre of Northern Nigeria (Falconer 1921). This is owing to the fact that the watersheds of some rivers systems come together at a point near the Plateau draining into the Benue (Alford, et al 1979).

Jos North falls largely within the northern guinea savannah zone which consists mainly of short trees, grasses typically mosaic vegetation. Near some are thick hedges of Cactus, which have been planted around household farms or compound lands. Fringing woodlands or gallery forest can be found along some river valleys.

Agriculture is the main stay of the area's economy, with about 80% of the population actively engaged in farming. The area is endowed with mineral resources such as Tin, Columbite, and is mined locally. More than 70% of the area's landmass is under cultivation with various crops and livestock depending on the nature of soil, topography, climate and, weather conditions which are suitable for livestock, poultry and fishing as well as other crops as wheat, Strawberry, Apples, Irish, Potatoes, Acha, Maize, Tomatoes, Onions, and Carrots etc.

Research Design

This research adopts the survey method to generate data for quantitative analysis. The survey method is most appropriate as the study seeks the views of the respondents in assessing or evaluating the role played by marketing in tourism development in the area (Wimmer and

Dominick (2011) and Chukwuemeka (2002).

Study Population

According to Plateau State Tourism Corporation, there are a total of 45 registered tourism attractions exists in the study area. From this population, appropriate sample size was selected as explained below.

Sampling Frame

| Category | Names of resorts |
|------------------|---|
| Media Attraction | Light bearer. New gate, AIT, PRTVC- FM, PRTVC- TV, NTA Jos, Ice FM, Silver Bird. |
| ACCOMMODATION | Sharna place Jos, Crest Hotel, Jerrote Hotels Ltd, Gordon house hotel, Semshak Hotel, Hill-station hotel. |
| RESORT | PSTC, Jos wild life park, korretsHamle. |
| TOUR OPERATORS | Zoological garden, PSTC, national Museum |

Source: Plateau State Tourism Cooperation (2020)

Instrument for Data Collection

The study made use of the following instrument to collect data; questionnaire, participant observation and interview method. Oral interviews, well-structured questionnaire were used to generate data for quantitative analysis while the focus group discussion were employed to

generate data for qualitative analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected through the use of questionnaire and interview method was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results and Discussion

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| Variable n (225) | No of Respondent | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Age: | | |
| 20-30 | 42 | 19 |
| 31-40 | 92 | 41 |
| 41-50 | 50 | 22 |
| 51 and above | 41 | 18 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |
| Gender: | | |
| Male | 105 | 47 |
| Female | 120 | 53 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |
| Marital Status: | | |
| Married | 153 | 68 |

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Divorced | 10 | 4 |
| Single | 62 | 28 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |
| Years of Work | | |
| Experiences: | | |
| 5-10 | 50 | 22 |
| 11-15 | 42 | 19 |
| 16-20 | 81 | 36 |
| 21- and Above | 52 | 23 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |
| Level of Education: | | |
| SSCE | 66 | 29 |
| NCE/DE | 30 | 13 |
| HND | 100 | 45 |
| BSC | 20 | 9 |
| MSC and above | 9 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 225 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

Table 4.2: Types of Tourism Attraction

| Tourism Attraction | Sample | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Resort | 5 | 11 |
| Restaurants | 20 | 22 |
| Hotels | 20 | 44 |
| Museum | 2 | 5 |
| Parks and Zoo | 5 | 11 |
| Others | 3 | 7 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

Table 4.4 Medium of Marketing/ Promotion

| Medium of Marketing and Promotion | No of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Television | 105 | 47 |
| Radio | 56 | 25 |
| Newspaper | 32 | 14 |
| Magazine | 10 | 4.5 |
| Direct Mails | 10 | 4.5 |
| Interview | 7 | 3 |
| Others | 5 | 2 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

Table 4.5: Use of Printing Materials for Promotions

| Type of Printing Materials | No of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Brochures | 20 | 9 |
| Pamphlets | 50 | 22 |
| Visitors Guide | 5 | 2 |
| None | 150 | 67 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

Table 4.6: Use of marketing Plan

| Use of Marketing Plan | No of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| They have and use Marketing Plan | 82 | 37 |
| They have but do not use Marketing Plan | 50 | 22 |
| They don't have or use Marketing Plan | 93 | 41 |
| Total | 225 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

TABLE 4 Most effective marketing medium for tourism attraction

| Marketing strategies | Number of Respondents | (%) of Total |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Television | 95 | 42% |
| Radio | 50 | 22% |
| Newspaper | 20 | 9% |
| Magazine | 10 | 4.5% |
| Direct material | 10 | 4.5% |
| Word of mouth | 40 | 18.5% |
| Total | 225 | 100% |

Source: Field Work, 2023

TABLE 4 Employees awareness of marketing strategies

| Level of employee awareness | Number of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| High (Yes) | 108 | 48% |
| Low (No) | 106 | 47% |
| No existing (not sure) | 11 | 5% |
| Total | 225 | 100% |

Source: Field Work, 2023

TABLE 4: Frequency of public marketing awareness

| Marketing awareness frequency | Number of respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Never/rarely | 50 | 22% |
| Always | 85 | 38% |
| Sometimes | 52 | 23% |
| Not sure | 38 | 17% |
| Total | 225 | 100% |

Source: Field Work, 2023

TABLE 4 Customer feedback program

| Present of customer feedback | Number of respondents | Percentage (%) of total |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Yes | 98 | 44% |
| No | 110 | 49% |
| Not sure | 17 | 7% |
| Total | 225 | 100 |

Source: Field Work, 2023

TABLE 4 Role of Marketing/Promotion

| Roles of marketing/ promotion | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) | Remark |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Very important | 150 | 67% | Very high |
| Important | 46 | 20% | High |
| Fairly important | 20 | 9% | Medium |
| Not that important | 9 | 4% | Low |
| Not sure | 0 | 0% | Very low |
| Total | 225 | 100 | |

Discussion of findings

The study found that most or majority (41%) of the respondents that took part in the survey were between the age of 31-40 years and 41-50 years old (22%) being the second dominant age group in the study. This establishes that most of the workers in the tourism industry in the study area were of adulthood with few young and older populations. It was also found that, there seems a balance in the gender mix of the people working in this sector in the study area. Though as expected the female gender (53%) were much more than the male (47%) expressing that women participated in tourism and hospitality industry around the world. The study also found that 68% and the majority of the respondents were married while 28% of them were not yet married, thereby showing an industry still dominated by people of advanced in age.

Furthermore, the study found that, majority of the workers (36%) in the study area have between 16-20 years working experience thereby showing how long they have been working in the sector. A good number (23%) too has more than 21 years working experience in the tourism sector of the study area. The level of education of the respondents/workers was found to be dominated by those with Higher National Diploma (45%) a typical characteristic of the Nigeria tourism

sector. The second dominant levels of education group were those with senior

school certificate (SSCE), (29%) while those with B.sc and M.Sc., were very few (9% and 4% respectively).

In terms of the types of tourism attractions existing in the study area, the study found that Hotel were the dominant (44%) attractions followed by restaurant (22%) resort and parks and zoos share the same number (11%) each. This shows that, Hotels still stand out as the most dominant tourism attractions in any part of Nigeria. However, when it comes to the level of development of these tourist attractions, it was found that though most of the hotels (10%) were well developed, other attractions like parks and zoos (2%), restaurant (4%) and resorts (3%) were either partially developed or not yet developed. This still shows that hotel is always given more attention by developers as against other attractions.

The study further found that (47%) of the respondents picks television as the medium of the marketing and promotion followed by radio (25%) and newspaper (14%). It is not a surprise that television was the highest medium used since it provide the means for visual image of the attractions to its viewers and stand out as one of the most preferred means of advertisement all over the world.

The study also found that majority of the tourism businesses (67%)

uses none of the printing materials for advertisement and promotion. Though (22%) accept to have used pamphlets but brochures (9%) and visitors guides (2%) were the least printing materials for marketing and promotion of tourism attractions in the study area.

Accordingly, 41% of the attractions do not have marketing plan, while 22% of the attractions seems to have a plan but may not be using it for its purposes. And 37% accepted to have and then put to use their marketing plan. This is a testament to the fact that many of the tourism attraction or businesses in the study area do not have or used marketing /promotional plan.

The study found that television was seen as the most effective marketing/promotional means for tourism attraction in the study area. This was followed by radio 22%, and word of mouth 18%. The other marketing means like newspaper 9%, magazine and direct mail 4.5% each were not regarded as very effective means of promotion of tourism attraction in the study area.

It was further found that there were no much different with the high and low level of employee awareness of marketing strategies of the organization. It was almost at the same level between 48% for high and 47% for low with no clear cut different as stated before.

Again, the study found that, majority 38% of the respondents agrees to always carrying out frequent public marketing and awareness with 23% doing it sometimes but not always. 22% of the organization never or rarely conduct frequent public marketing awareness. It is believed that without frequent public awareness on the marketing and

promotion of the attraction, many people might not be aware of these attractions which could affects patronage negatively.

Again, there were no clear cut differences in the response on customer feedback. Though 49% says they do not have customer feedback program on marketing and promotion strategies, 44% of them agrees to have it in place.

Finally, there was a unanimous agreement on the role of marketing/promotion in the development of tourism attractions in the study area as majority of the respondents 67% believes it to play very important role and 20% of them believes that it is important. Another 9% believes it to be fairly important but only 4% believes it to not be so important.

Summary of Findings

From the study result as presented and discussed in chapter four, the following summary of findings are made from the work:

- a) Marketing /promotion plays a very important roles in the development of tourism attraction in the study area
- b) Television, Radio as well as words of mouth were the most effective medium for marketing/promotion of tourism attraction in the study area
- c) Customer feedback program was not very well articulated into developmental program of tourism attractions and other businesses
- d) Public awareness campaign on marketing and promotion was not regularly as possible though it was a key aspect of the program of tourism attractions
- e) Majority of employees of tourism attractions were not carrying along

or not aware of the marketing promotion program of their establishment.

- f) Many of the tourism attractions do not have nor use marketing/promotion plans.
- g) Hotels were the dominant tourism attraction in the study area

Conclusion

From the study findings, it is therefore concluded that, marketing and promotion is an integral part of tourism attractions development. It plays a key and pivotal role in the overall development and growth of tourism attraction in the study area, however, it was not well implemented by the management of tourism attraction in the study area so as to achieve it optimum goals.

Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations:

1. All tourism attractions and establishments in the study area should as a matter of important developed and have a marketing and promotion plan that will guide in their daily marketing and promotion activities
2. There should be awareness creation by tourism stakeholders to their employees and the public on the importance and need for marketing and promotion of tourism attractions in the study area

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