



Destination marketing and tourists' choice: A comparative study of Nigeria and selected African countries

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship that exists between tourism marketing and tourists' choice and to compare the effectiveness of marketing to attract tourist to Nigeria and other selected countries of Africa. The study made use of secondary data collected from the database of world bank and world economic forum travel and tourism competitiveness index. The findings indicated that the effectiveness of marketing to attract tourist to Nigeria was not encouraging as it ranks below many competing African countries. This resulted in low tourist arrivals to Nigeria as compared to those with high rank of the effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists. The study recommends proper and coordinated marketing programmes target top tourism spenders and also regional offices to promote Nigeria as a competitive destination.

Keywords: destination, marketing, tourists, choice

Introduction

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries, or places outside their usual environment for personal or business (professional purposes [World Tourism Organization (WTO), 2014] ^[38]. The Tourism sector has been praised for its capacity to stimulate economic growth through job creations, and by attracting investments and fostering entrepreneurship, while also contributing, if properly harnessed, to preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, protection of cultural heritage and promotion of empowerment of local communities [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 2017] ^[23].

The rise of travels and tourism has shown significant resilience globally. Despite slow economic growth in advanced economies and geographical tensions in some regions, the travel and tourism section still account for a large part of the global economy (estimated to be approximately 9% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or US \$7 trillion) and employment while the number of international travelers continues to increase. The development of tourism destination areas all over the world has contributed to the increase in international tourist arrivals. Travel and Tourism generated US \$7.6 (10% of global GDP) and 277 million jobs (1 in 11 jobs) for the global economy in 2014. Recent years have seen travel and tourism growing at a faster rate than both the wider economy and other significant sectors such as automotive, financial services and health care. International tourist arrivals surged, reaching nearly 1.14 billion and visitor spending more than matched that growth (World Economic Forum (WEF), 2013) ^[33].

Since 1990s, tourism has increasingly contributed to Africa's growth, employment and trade. During the 1995 – 2014,

international tourist arrivals to Africa grew by an average of 6 percent per year and tourism export revenue, 9 percent per year. The average total contribution of tourism to 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. This means that tourism industry was supporting 1 out of 14 jobs in Africa (UNCTAD, 2017) ^[23].

Tourism competitiveness for a destination is about the ability of the place to optimize its attractiveness for residents and non-residents, to deliver quality innovative and attractive tourism services to consumers and to gain market shares on the domestic and global market places, while ensuring that the available resources supporting tourism are used effectively and in a sustainable way (Dupeyras & MacCallum, 2013) ^[14].

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria as a destination is blessed with abundant tourism attraction sites and events, that if properly harnessed are capable of acting stimulating the economic and social development of the country. Despite the abundance of tourism resources in Nigeria, the marketing approach and activities are still not effective and efficient (WTO, 2006; Ugwuonah, Agina, Okocha & Chris-Nnamchi, 2017) ^[37, 31].

Nigeria is competing for the available tourists with other countries of the world, especially in country of Africa that offer similar tourism experience, but due to her inability to improve on her marketing programmes as reported in 2006 by World Tourism Organization has resulted in downward trend in international tourist arrivals. International tourism arrivals to Nigeria slipped from 1,555,000 in 2010 to 600,000 in 2013,

visitors' exports contributed only 0.6% of the total exports in 2013 and 0.8% of total exports in 2014 (WTTC, 2014)^[31].

Despite the established views on destination marketing and tourists' choice, most of the research actually focused on cities and regions, and also in advanced economies. Not much has been done in the area of comparative analysis of destination marketing and tourists' choice at the continent level, especially in Africa. Few studies (Ugwuonah, *et al*; 2017; Esu & Ebitu, 2010; Ajake, 2015, Ali, 2013)^[31, 16, 1, 3] have been done on tourism marketing and tourist choice; but only the work of Ugwuonah *et al* (2017)^[31] ventured into comparing tourism marketing and economic growth of only two countries (South Africa and Seychelles) with that of Nigeria. Therefore, this study focused on comparing the influence of destination marketing on international tourist arrivals of Nigeria and other thirty-three countries of Africa.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to compare the effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists and international tourism arrivals to these selected African countries. Specifically, the study strives to:

- Examine the visitors' export of Nigeria in comparison with that of the selected African countries.

Review of related literature

Tourism destination and destination marketing

Various definitions of destinations are found in literature, which address destinations in a different manner.

Buhalis (2000)^[8] defines destination as "complex networks involving a large number of co-producing agencies supplying a wide range of products and services". He opines that destinations are an amalgamation of tourist products, offering consumers with an integrated experience. Similarly, Pike and Page (2014)^[27] describe a destination as an amalgam of a diverse and eclectic range of business and people who input have a vested interest in the prosperity of their destination.

Keyser (2009) as cited in Balkaran and Maharaj (2013)^[4] describes a destination as a defined spatial area made up of a mix of tourism resources, created facilities and support services and infrastructure, that are managed, marketed and consumed under a single brand identity. Similarly, Ispas (2014)^[18] sees destination as places with some form of natural or perceived boundary, such as the physical boundary of an island, political boundaries, or even market created boundaries.

It is widely accepted that tourism development for a destination is largely dependent upon tourism resources, both cultural and ecological, that the destination possesses in terms of their quality and quantity. Similarly, promotion, marketability and provision of tourism infrastructure are essentials for any meaningful tourism development (Ajadi, 2012)^[2]. The major task for any tourist destination is continuing to integrate resources and competences distributed among a range of different actors and to change these settings in products and services required by customers, activities which also require knowledge of tourism marketing (Kulcsar, 2012)^[22]. The increase of tourist destinations which involves diversification of the global tourism offer has as direct effect the deepening of the fight between tourist destinations, by

default of the entities with a crucial role in assessing the overall tourism product. Therefore, the primary objective of any tourist destination is attracting and keeping the consumer interest in tourism products and services as to the specific tourism potentials (Ispas & Saragi, 2011)^[13].

Destination marketing

According to UNWTO (cited in Pike & Page, 2014)^[27], 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. Published research related to destination marketing represents an important growth area in tourism that has evolved for a distinct paradigm and its significance according to Pike & Page (2014)^[27] is reinforced by four key propositions that are associated with global tourism: first, most aspects of tourism take place at destinations. Second, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) proposed that destinations were "the fundamental unit of analysis in tourism". Third, destination have emerged as the biggest brands in the travel industry and lastly, a large number of nations, states and cities are now funding a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) as the main vehicle to complete and attract visitors to their distinctive place or visitor space.

According to the WTO (2004)^[37], destination marketing "covers all the activities and processes to bring buyers and sellers together, focuses on responding to consumer demands and competitive positioning, is a continuous coordinated set of activities associated with efficient distribution of products to high potential markets; involves making decisions about the product, branding, the price, market segmentation, promotion and distribution.

Kotler, Bowen and Makeus (2006)^[6] see destination marketing as an integral part of developing and retaining a particular location's popularity. Too often, however, tourism planners focus only on destinations developments without paying attention to retaining and preserving the attributes that attracted travelers to the destination in the first place. Buhalis as (cited in Katharina, 2011)^[20], opines that Destination Marketing facilitates the success of tourism policy, which should ideally be in line with the strategic plan for overall regional development. It is widely accepted that tourism development for a destination is largely dependent upon tourism resources, both cultural and ecological, that the destination process in terms of their quality and quantity. Similarly, promotion, marketability and provision of tourism infrastructure are essentials for any meaningful tourism development (Ajadi, 2012)^[2].

Destination Competitiveness

Destination competitiveness is the ability of one country to create additional values and thus increase the national wealth by managing assets and processes, attractiveness, aggressiveness and proximity and by integrating these relationships within an economic and social model that takes into accounts a destination's natural capital and its preservation for future generation (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003)^[39] The success of founding destination in world markets is influenced by their relative competitiveness (Tanja, *et al*, 2011)^[30]. A competitive advantage can be achieved if the

overall appeal of the destination is synonymous to that of an alternative destination to potential visitors. However, it must be highlighted that the competitiveness of the tourism destination is not defined by the set of rigid natural, cultural, artistic or environmental resources, but it is seen as an overall appeal of the destination. Consequently, tourism will achieve a formidable position on the tourism market if a destination is capable of gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. In order to achieve proper matches between tourism resources and management strategies, it is necessary for the industry and government to determine and understand the market and strongest points of new country's competitiveness. (Tanja, *et al*, 2011)

According to Crouch (2011) ^[11], tourism destination needs to develop, maintain, protect and strengthen their competitive position at a global level. The development of a destination competitiveness model will allow tourism stakeholders to identify key strengths and weakness, highlight opportunities for visitor attraction development and develop strategies to capitalize on these opportunities and to counter possible threats to future alteration development (Balkaran & Maharaj, 2013) ^[4].

There are many models created in an attempt to measure competitiveness as a unique phenomenon. Models differ according to the defined factors not determine competitiveness and their grouping (Tanja, *et al*, 2011). The most comprehensive and current academic modelling to date has been that of Crouch (2011) ^[11], while major industry modelling has been undertaken by the WTTC and World Economic Forum (2013; & 2015) ^[33, 35]. A long-term view of competitiveness is paramount, and from a strategic planning perspective, sustained destination competitiveness requires two fundamental elements: resources representing sources of comparative advantage and effective destination management most elements of which the DMO has no control (Pike & Page, 2014) ^[27].

Consumer behaviour and choice of destination

Consumer behaviour is a highly important issue for all marketing activities which have the purpose to promote and sell tourism products. According to Fratu (2011) ^[17], tourism consumer behaviour is seen as the ensemble of its acts, attitudes and decisions regarding choosing, buying and consumer tourism products and services, and also its post consuming reactions.

Tourist behaviour is understood as a consumer's entire set of (specific psycho-physical predispositions) actions, activities and conduct, connected with making choices in given economic, social and demographic conditions, whereas the object of consumer behaviour is the individual who carries the status of a consumer (tourist), and who represents not only themselves, but also their households, the subject of this behaviour is the process of satisfying tourist needs which become revealed when the consumer starts using the functional values of tourist products in the given tourism

region while on a trip. Consequently, the decision-making process referring to the tourist trip (i.e. the process of satisfying needs) consists of the following five stages: feeling the need to travel; searching for information, forming choice options for the possibilities of satisfying the needs and their assessment, the purchase of tourist products, and the feelings upon satisfying tourist needs (Niemczyk, 2014) ^[25].

A satisfied and content tourist is an individual who has the opportunity to be able to satisfy his or her individual wants. Such a situation occurs when the expectations of a tourist towards the trip are at least equal to what they encounter during the real trip at the place of reception (Kiezel, 2008; Mazurek-Lopacinska, 2005; Niemczyk, 2014) ^[21, 23, 25]. Therefore, satisfaction is the feeling which results from the trip, and the state which is actually formed during the trip (Niemczyk, 2014) ^[25].

The degree of satisfaction exhibited in tourist behaviour usually occurs in the form of their loyalty to a given destination. Consumer's loyal behaviour towards a tourist destination is usually analyzed in two categories: recommendation and return (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005; Niemczyk, 2014) ^[26, 25]. The loyalty of a tourist towards a destination might be interpreted as the degree to which a tourist consistently retains a positive attitude towards a place and maintains that interest despite alternative incentives supporting the choice of other destinations. Loyalty is a measure of the highest involvement and fidelity of the consumer. Loyal customers use the services of a tourist destination more often, spend more money than they would in their regular place of residence in the equivalent time, recommend tested tourist products more often by word of mouth, are less likely to accept a competitor's offer, and are faithful to their service providers. A tourist expresses their acceptance for the chosen area of stay or reception, as well as for the tourist service providers of that area. Creators of destinations strive to retain the largest number of satisfied loyal customers (Niemczyk, 2014) ^[25].

Tourism Product Promotion and Choice of Destination

Marketing communication forms a key aspect of the delivery of tourism and hospitality services. This sector is heavily dependent on marketing because of the industries special characteristics as services. However, marketing communications is a great deal more than simply about advertising. Getting the right messages to the right people is perhaps one of the most important factors in determining the success of this sector (Suli, Cani & Suli, 2013) ^[2]. Cirikovic (2016) ^[10] argues that the key role in achieving the competitive position of the company and the tourism belongs to marketing communication. 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 but also to gather feedback on how these are received and appreciated (Bogan, 2014) ^[5].

Table 1: Tourism Communication Types

Tourist information categories	Personal level	Impersonal level
Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - travel agencies; - tour operators; - tourism providers; - tourist information centers; - tourism offices abroad; - advertising agencies; - tourism fairs and expos. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - radio, TV advertising; - newspapers, magazine advertising; - printed materials; - video materials; - cinema materials; - landline and mobile phones; - websites.
Noncommercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - close friends; - family members and relatives; - neighbors, coworkers; - strangers; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tourist programs; - specialized press; - guides, tourist catalogues; - specialized film studios.

Source: Bogan, E. (2014) Communication and promoting policy in tourism marketing. *International Journal of Academic Research in Environment and Geography*, 1 (1), pp.1-6

Communication is a complex mechanism of sending out images and messages about the tourist destinations and about the products offered to potential clients. This includes all the internal and external actions of an economic entity (company, agency, and association) that gathers knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of the market participants that they use for creating promotional materials targeted on the market and the customer segments (Bruhn, 1999) [7]. In the current development state of tourism at an international level, marketing has become a major economic tool when potential clients are choosing a tourism destination, but also insures development and respectively modernization of tourism activities in the medium and long-term. This approach derives from the fact that the tourist is an increasingly busier professional with their own obligations, who can evaluate a tourism product through real and fair marketing (Bogan, 2014) [5].

By communication, any tourism entity aims to identify the target markets and the preferences of their potential clients who may become loyal consumers. To accomplish this goal, the entity must achieve a constructive and homogenous sum of all the data and information that may be the basis for determining the reaction patterns of the competition and can

select promoting methods and techniques they can later on use for promoting their services. The decision to purchase a tourism product is taken either as consequence of an existing previous experience of the tourist, or because of prior promotion for that product.

According to Bogan (2014) [5], purchase decision represents a temporal sequence of recognizing necessities or desires, of searching and evaluating alternatives, of choosing the tourist product and the post-purchase evaluation. He argues that consumers can manage and increase the self-esteem in the purchase decision process if; they have previous experience (they contact a tour operator or travel agency that always offered trust and quality products, according to their requests); they use services of providers whom they know or are recommended by friends and family; they receive warranties from the providing entities for unfavourable situations, by offering another destination or another tourist service pack, similar to the previously purchased one; they purchase cheaper and more accessible tourist products, taking on the risk for quality related issues of the destinations, they research and check the information they receive, gathering messages and promotional materials from various sources.

Table 2: Promotion Means for Tourism

Mass-media	Promotional actions	Mass-media and event compilation	Promotional actions and event compilation
Commercials for radio, television or printing	Games, competitions, raffles, lottery, coupons	Speeches and press conferences, specialized workshops	Meetings and commercial presentations
Printed specialty guides and catalogues	Small gifts and souvenirs	Sponsoring some forms of tourism	Other fairs and commercial exhibition
Brochures, flyers and other printed materials	Fairs, exhibitions, and tourist events	Proprietary means of information	Personal mail offer
Billboards, posters, advertising messages, demos, photo exhibitions	Protocol trips for journalists, cultural and economy attachés	Tourism company or advertising magazine	Sport, cultural, national and international events
Internet	Group sales, sales	Planning special events	Religious events
Audio-video materials (CDs, videos)	Short advertisements in large malls	Telemarketing	Book fairs

Source: Bogan, E. (2014) Communication and promoting policy in tourism marketing. *International Journal of Academic Research in Environment and Geography*, 1 (1), pp.1-6

Related theory and model

This study is anchored on the Grand Models Theory and The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Model

Grand Models Theory

In the 1960s and 1970s a considerable number of researchers introduced the earliest and the most influential theories of decision making, the “grand models” of consumer behaviour (Mohammadi & Mohamed, 2011). The early pioneering models were proposed by Howard and Sheth (1969), Nicosia (1966) and Engel, Kollat and Blackwell, (1968). These three models are considered the grand models of consumer behaviour and many tourism models have been based upon them (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005)^[28].

Grand models are based on a theory which illustrates consumer decision making as a multi staged and complex process involves five main stages: (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) alternative evaluation and selection, (4) outlet selection and purchase, and (5) post purchase processes (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005; Mohammadi & Mohamed, 2011)^[28, 24]. This theory discusses decision making process as a funnel like one, in that tourists narrow down choices among alternatives. The choices influenced by socio-

psychological factors like attitudes, motives, values, personal characteristics and also non-psychological factors like product design, price, and advertising (Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005)^[28].

The central theme of grand models in travel context discusses stages an individual will take after recognizing that there is a need to travel and to get away from home. Tourists then search for information about destination alternatives and in evaluation stage, it is the time to evaluate selected destinations and choose the suitable on based on his/her own beliefs. Consumer behaviour theory in destination choice models claim that tourists collect and analyze information from gradually reduced range of alternatives and eventually select the best possible choice. Tourists’ final choice is based on evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of each possible outcome (Mohammadi & Mohamed, 2011)^[24].

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Model

First compiled in 2007, the travel and tourism competitiveness index (TTCI) measures the set of factors and policies that enable the sustainable development of the travel and tourism sector, which in turn, contributes to the development and competitiveness of a country (WEF, 2017)^[35]

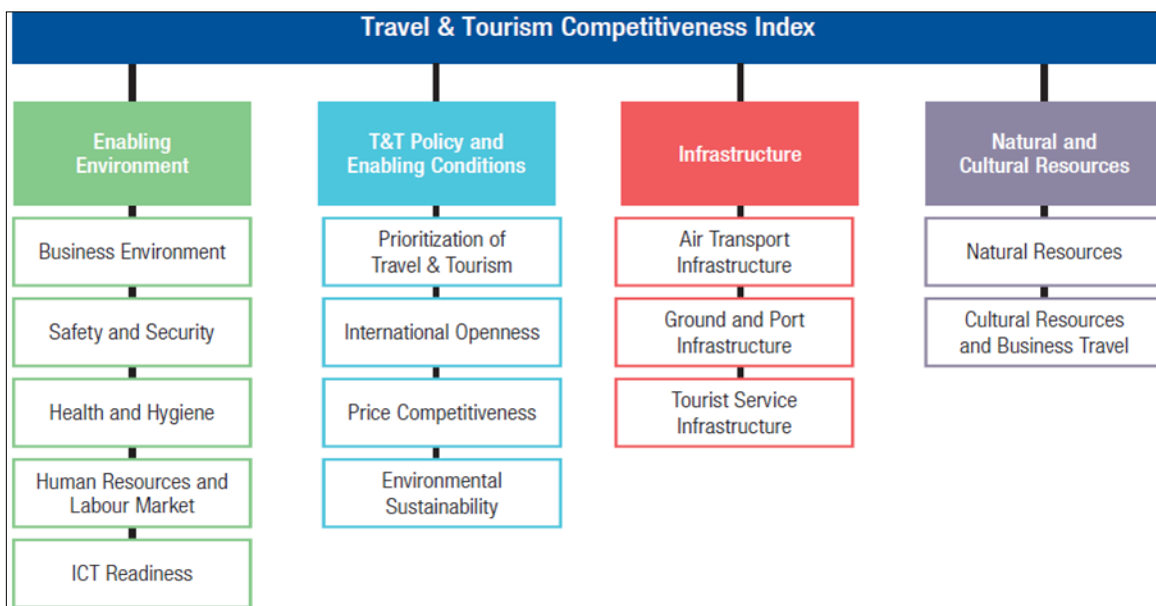


Fig 1: The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Model

Source: WEF (2017) The travel and tourism competitiveness index (TTCI). World Economic Forum Publications

The model has been developed in the context of the world economic Forum’s industry Partnership programme for Aviation and Travel, and in collaboration with Bloom Consulting, Deloitte, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), THE UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).

The model is based on 14 pillars and organized into four sub-indexes: the enabling environment sub-index, which captures the general settings necessary for operating in a country; the T&T policy and enabling conditions sub-index, which captures specific policies or strategic aspects that impact the

industry more directly; The Infrastructure sub-index, which captures the availability and quality of physical infrastructures of each economy; and the Natural and Cultural Resources sub-index, which captures the principal “reasons to travel”(WEF, 2017)^[35].

Methodology

The secondary data approach was used to gather relevant data and information used for this study. Rankings of marketing programmes to attract tourists were extracted from Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Report by World Economic Forum (WEF). International tourism arrivals in bound receipts were also extracted from World Bank Database for the 33 African countries.

Data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings**Table 3:** The ranks and scores on effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists for African countries in 2017

Country	Effectiveness of marketing to attract tourists	
	Rank Global	Score (1-7)
Morocco	42	4.8
Egypt	109	3.5
Tunisia	101	3.6
Algeria	127	2.7
South Africa	40	4.9
Namibia	26	5.2
Botswana	33	5.0
Zambia	77	4.1
Zimbabwe	111	3.4
Lesotho	15	5.5
Mauritius	14	5.5
Kenya	25	5.2
Tanzania	69	4.4
Rwanda	6	5.9
Uganda	78	4.1
Ethiopia	86	3.9
Madagascar	83	3.9
Mozambique	100	3.6
Malawi	122	3.0
Congo, DR	134	2.1
Burundi	115	3.2
Cape Verde	68	4.4
Cote d Ivoire	63	4.4
Senegal	98	3.7
Gambia	47	4.8
Gabon	130	2.6
Ghana	97	3.7
Cameroun	119	3.1
Benin	126	2.7
Nigeria	132	2.4
Mali	54	4.6
Sierra Leone	118	3.1
Mauritania	83	3.9
Chad	128	2.7

Source: WEF (2017) The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017 for Africa. World Economic Forum Publications

Table 3 above shows the global rankings and scores of African countries as regards effectiveness of marketing and branding to attract tourist in the latest 2017 edition. From the table, Nigeria rank 132nd with a score of 2.4 which is below

the mean score of 3.5. This shows that marketing programmes to attract tourists to Nigeria are still inadequate eleven years after WTO reported about inefficient and ineffectiveness of marketing programmes of Nigeria.

Table 4: International tourist arrivals, International inbound receipts, contribution of tourism to GDP, employment and average receipts per annual for African countries in 2017

Country/economy	International tourist arrivals	International inbound receipts (\$m)	Contribution of tourism to GDP (\$)	Contribution of tourism to employment	Average receipts per arrival (\$)
Morocco	10,176,762	5,852.8	7,735.4	731,525	575.1
Egypt	9,139,104	6,065.1	14,482.8	1,110,550	663.6
Tunisia	5,359,309	1,380.8	2,524.5	185,290	257.7
Algeria	1,710,000	307.7	5,887.4	327,306	179.9
South Africa	8,903,773	8,234.7	9,339.9	702,824	924.9
Namibia	1,388,000	378.0	373.9	28,792	272.3
Botswana	1,528,000	948.3	619.1	28,399	620.6
Zambia	932,000	660.1	627.3	94,213	708.3
Zimbabwe	2,056,588	886.0	703.0	180,028	430.8
Lesotho	320,000	34.4	114.9	34,402	107.6
Mauritius	1,151,252	1,431.7	1,321.0	58,641	1,243.6

Kenya	1,114,100	723.0	2,296.0	592,300	649.0
Tanzania	1,104,000	2,230.6	1,906.1	386,427	2,020.5
Rwanda	987,000	317.8	261.3	59,036	322.0
Uganda	1,303,000	1,149.0	920.0	464,305	881.8
Ethiopia	864,000	394.9	2,504.2	1,013,860	457.1
Madagascar	244,321	574.0	548.0	208,360	2,349.4
Mozambique	1,525,000	192.8	469.7	280,408	124.2
Malawi	805,000	36.8	230.7	205,034	45.7
Congo, DR	191,000	0.1	236.2	78,319	0.5
Burundi	131,000	2.2	68.9	37,829	16.6
Cape Verde	519,722	351.3	275.5	33,741	675.9
Cote d' Ivoire	1,441,000	184.2	707.3	100,813	127.8
Senegal	1,006,600	423.0	756.6	274,451	420.2
Gambia	135,000	120.0	69.2	49,063	888.9
Gabon	187,332	9.0	142.3	3,943	48.0
Ghana	879,000	818.8	1,189.4	292,042	912.8
Cameroun	812,000	450.0	899.1	141,724	554.2
Benin	255,000	154.0	204.6	53,552	603.9
Nigeria	1,255,000	403.9	8,282.8	650,836	321.8
Mali	159,000	212.0	441.4	78,335	1,333.1
Sierra Leone	23,798	23.0	81.1	18,866	966.5
Mauritania	30,000	29.0	0.0	0	965.2
Chad	120,000	25.2	156.2	20,468	210.2

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

Table 4 above shows the international tourist arrivals, international inbound receipts, contribution of tourism to GDP, employment and average receipts per annum for African countries by 2017 report of World Economic Forum. From the table, Nigeria attracted 1,255, 000 of tourists which is a sign

of an increase from the previous years but not to be compared to other African countries that have articulated marketing programmes and proper packaging of their tourism industry like South Africa, Cape Verde, Uganda, Botswana, Namibia, Tunisia, Egypt, and Algeria.

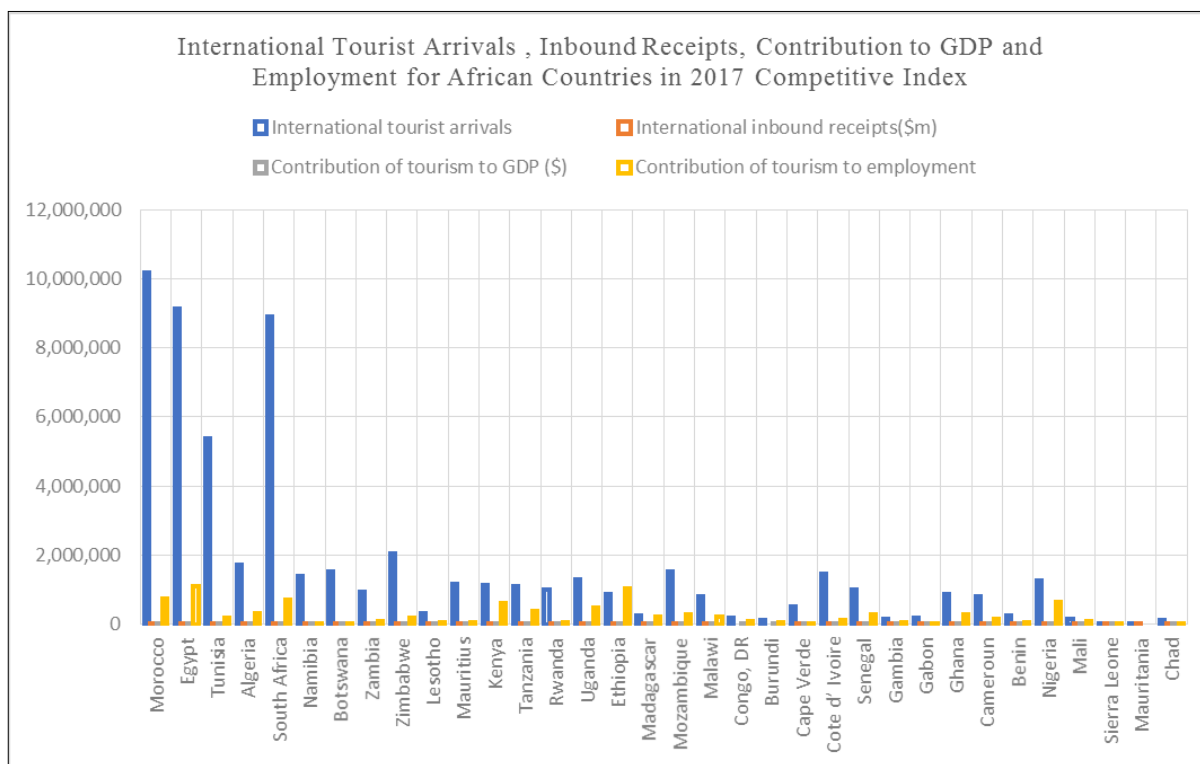


Fig 2: International Tourist Arrivals, Inbound Receipts, Contribution to GDP and Employment for African Countries in 2017 Competitive Index

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), 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 decline in the

world oil price.

Summary of Findings

1. There is a weak relationship existing between effectiveness of marketing and choice of destination in Nigeria as measured by international tourist arrivals.
2. The marketing programme of the tourism industry is not only ineffective and inefficient, but equally underfunded. The public sector is not able to fund the required marketing programmes to attract enough international tourists to the country.
3. The ineffectiveness of the marketing of tourism products contributed to the low number of international arrivals coming into Nigeria.
4. A robust tourism sector contributes greatly to employment generation, foreign exchange, poverty alleviation and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These contributions are experienced in Nigeria but not as expected as the effect is still insignificant as compared to competing nations in Africa.

Conclusion

Tourism has boasted virtually uninterrupted growth over time, despite occasional shocks, demonstrating the sector's strength and resilience. International tourist arrivals have increased from 25 million globally in 1950 to over 1.1 billion in 2015. International tourism now represents 7% of the world exports in goods and services, up from 6% in 2014.

Many tourism destinations are competing for the international tourist arrivals by putting many different strategies together to appeal to the tourists to make their destination a choice. Many destinations through their destination marketing organisations (DMO) apply marketing strategies to project the image of the destination at the international level and make the total tourism package attractive, affordable and satisfying.

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 product packaging, tourism promotion, and tourism product availability. Nigeria needs to study the success factors of top tourism countries in Africa like south Africa, Mauritius, Kenya etc. especially in the area of marketing.

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).

Recommendations

1. Destination marketing at the national level requires a strategic partnership in developing promotional programmes. A tourist in another country needs to be aware of what Nigeria can offer. Therefore, various promotional tools should be integrated to reach various segments of the international markets. Some well-

documented commercials should be produced and aired on major international televisions and cables, a viable website launched, use of social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram etc. to interact with the potential tourists, and interactive mobile applications to showcase the tourism potential of the country.

2. Destination marketing organisations should work closely with international media, such as Cable Network News (CNN) in promoting tourism in the country. Many countries promote in international media to attract international tourists and also place news stories in order to create good image for the destination.
3. Tourism marketing offices and representatives should be opened not only in African countries but also in top spender countries like China, United States, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Russia, Canada, South Korea, Italy and Australia to help in marketing research to discover factors that influence their destination' choice, disseminating information and marketing programmes about tourism in Nigeria.
4. The tourism commercials should stress more on the local contents of the country's tourism sector. Local foods, markets, music, dances, arts and crafts, ecotourism sites, and low prices which are the strength should be the focus of the commercials.

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