DESTINATION MARKETING AND TOURIST REVISIT INTENTION OF PORT HARCOURT PLEASURE PARK IN POST COVID-19 ERA

Gideon Chukwunwem UBOEGBULAM *PhD* **& Inemesit RICHARD AKPAKPAN**

University of Port Harcourt, Faculty of Management Sciences, Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism, Choba, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author: *Gideon Chukwunwem UBOEGBULAM
Email : u.gideon@yahoo.com

A B S T R A C T

The study examined the relationship between destination marketing and tourist revisit intention in Post covid-19 era of Port Harcourt Pleasure Park. Three hypothesised relationships were formulated, with destination image, brand awareness, and fear arousal serving as the dimensions of destination marketing while customer satisfaction was used as a measure of tourist revisit intention. The study adopted descriptive survey research to test the influence of destination marketing on tourist revisit intention at the Pleasure Park with a sample size of 100   determined with Freund and Williams formula for unknown population   The study hypotheses were analysed using Multiple Regression Analysis and the result showed that only destination image had a significant effect on tourist satisfaction at the Port Harcourt Pleasure Park, while the effect of brand awareness and fear arousal was insignificant. The study concluded that a well-developed and implemented destination marketing strategy can improve the satisfaction of tourists at the Port Harcourt Pleasure Park   The researchers recommended that the establishment of a destination marketing organisation will lead to the promotion of the destination image of Port Harcourt.

K E Y W O R D S

Destination Image, Brand Awareness, Fear Arousal, Tourist Satisfaction, COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become an essential commercial sector in many developing countries in recent years (Arman et al, 2019).Tourism offering is a series of experiences achieved through the combination of a diverse array of products and services. Appealing to tourists is a key project of marketing strategies in the tourism industry. A key to attracting tourist to destinations appears to be the revisit intention after satisfying tourists requirements. Tourists revisit intention which refers to their perceived likelihood of coming back to the same destination is a specific element of favourable post consumption behaviour and is a key component of tourism loyalty (Cele& Scott, 2004; Loi et al, 2017).

Tourism marketing is the collective name given to the various marketing strategies used by businesses within the tourism industry. Tourism is one of the world's largest industries the tourism industry is extremely competitive. Tourism destination marketing is now widely recognized as an essential component in the management of destinations. Tourism destinations use promotion and marketing communication strategy to influence destination image (Beerli& Martin 2004). Other tools such as narratives and visuals are used to create meaning in the market, deploying media and information and communication technology as enablers (Magala 2001). Destinations can influence image formation directly through secondary place interactions with visitors (Kim & Richardson 2003).

Among other factors, tourists' satisfaction is a vital element to achieve revisit intention and success of any destination (Mai et al., 2019).Hence, destination marketing should be focused on planning and utilizing available resources to attract visitors and offer satisfactory services which in turn results in positive outcome which creates revisit intention. The adverse impacts of covid-19 have negatively affected all industries around the world including tourism (Crossley, 2020). Following the World Health Organization (WHO) warnings, most nations restricted individual's movements, closed tourists attractions and suspended public events and business activities (Loannides&Gyimothy, 2020). Tourism and hospitality businesses were, therefore, forced to suspend their operations and services. The relationship between destination image, brand awareness and the intentions of tourist to visit destinations have been examined in previous studies. Covid-19 presented an intriguing challenge to both international and local tourism. The outstanding concern to tourists due to the emergency of the pandemic is the issue of fear of the unknown. This has resulted in lack or minimal trust by the tourists. This study intends to examine the impact of fear arousal or safety concerns, brand awareness and destination image on the decision to tourists to revisit destinations. In the Post Covid-19 Era.

The outbreak of Covid 19 had caused significant disruption to tourism and required airlines, hotels, cruise companies, restaurants and other businesses to adapt accordingly and keep up with the latest tourism trends. Customer safety has always been a major concern for those in the tourism industry. Customer needs in this area have evolved with the emergence of Covid-19. It is based on the foregoing that this current study was designed to investigate the effect of destination marketing on tourists' revisit intention at the Port Harcourt Pleasure Park.

Literature Review

Destination Marketing

Wahab, et al (cited in Ana 2015,p 919) described tourism destination marketing as the management process through that helps the National Tourist Organisation, and tourist service providers/ organisations to identify their selected tourists, actual and potential, communicate with them in order to ascertain and influence their travel behaviour (wishes, needs, motivations, likes and dislikes) at all

levels (local, regional, national and international levels). In addition, the process helps the tourism marketers to formulate and adapt their tourist products and other marketing mix elements with the marketing goal of achieving optimal tourist satisfaction thereby fulfilling their objectives. In this current study, the dimensions of destination marketing used are destination image, brand awareness, and fear arousal.

Destination Image: As a result of perceptual and cognitive processes, the destination image is formed from several sources of information (reference groups, membership, media etc). Thus, any person can build an image of any destination (in their mind) without ever being there. There are various definitions available in literature regarding image. According to Nguye and Leblanc (2001), image is the full extent of the impressions which an enterprise has left in the mind of consumers. Image is the result from the perception customers have in terms of a company (Del Bosque, Martin &Collado, 2006). The impact an image has is the full extent of the impressions which an enterprise has left in the mind of consumers. The impact an image has on the mind of the consumer materializes with the impact established by the conglomeration advertising, public relations, word-of-mouth advertising and through the experiences consumers have with the goods and services. The image of an enterprise is a significant variable which can have a positive or negative effect on the marketing activities of the enterprise (Kandampully&Suhartanto, 2000).

The general image of a destination is established as a result of a cognitive and affective assessment of the destination (Iiban, Korogluu&Bozok, 2008).Destination image consists of two components. There are cognitive image and affective image. While cognitive image reflects the information or beliefs a person has about a destination (Baloglu, 1999). Affective image portrays the emotions or feelings a person has about a destination (Chen &Uysal, 2002; Kim & Richardson, 2003).

Destination image is a symbol of quality and ethical behaviour towards stakeholders. It is a multidimensional concept, as it incorporates admiration, respect, trust and confidence, consistent, performance and effective communication regarding organizations (Braun, Eshuis, Klijn, &Zenker, 2018; Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson & Beatty, 2009). As tourism is a reputation dependent industry, the destination image, which is created by its DMOs, is a more stable indicator of performance than brands or images from tourist's perspective (Dastgerdi& De Luca, 2019).

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness is the way consumers' associate brands with certain products that they want to have. Consumers receive brand awareness through effective marketing communication channels such as the latest innovations, mobile phones and online guarantees about product quality and credibility that help reduce risk in product evaluation and selection when buying products (Aaker, 1996, Buil et al; 2013; keller and Lehmann, 2003; Rubio et al, 2014).

A brand consists of a name and a label that distinguishes a product or a firm from its competitors. Brand awareness plays a crucial role in consumer decisions. Chen et al; (2014) stated that the products with high brand awareness are likely to be in the consideration, when consumes choose from among several products in the same category. Brand awareness is how readily consumers can think of certain attributes of a familiar product. These attributes simplify product information and purchase decisions.

Consumers tend to choose famiar brands with high brand awareness when making purchase decisions. Brand awareness is a tool that simplifies purchase decisions. They infer quality of a product based on its brand awareness and have high intention to purchase familiar brands of products than to purchase those of unfamiliar brands.

According to Cheng et al; (2014), brand awareness influences consumer purchase decisions. Creating brand awareness is the first step to ensuring that product is included in the consideration set of a potential consumer because brand awareness can further affect their decisions.

Through brand awareness, consumers are able to recognize and differentiate products and services. Individual customers can remember the logo of the specific brand having the intimacy and acquaintance which may lead to purchase more products from the brand (Kim & Lee, 2018).

In terms of visiting destination and brand awareness, visitors recall a certain destination out of several and identify the difference through variety of functional attributes and activities (Roy, Battachanya, & Mukherjee, 2018). Increase brand familiarity due to a stronger association and repetitive positive acquaintance between consumers and brands may encourage revisiting intention (Tran et al, 2019). Consequently, brand awareness leads to revisit intention for a certain destination.

Fear Arousal: Tourism industry thrives on trust and willingness of tourists to take risk, embark on trips and activities that promotes tourists behavior. Outbreak of covid-19 presented substantial challenges to stakeholders within the tourism sector due to the psychological, economic, and social effects on the society and in turns, decision of people to embark on tourism (Madhav et al 2018). Pandemic and its consequences have significant impact on fear arousal (Moukaddam, 2019). Based on the perceived level of fear or risk, human behavior gradually changes, along with the actions taken to relieve it (Addo et al, 2020; Laros&Steenkamp, 2005).Giusti and Raya (2019), stated the major risks for visitors include health issues, crime, political issues and natural disasters. Additionally, Fennell (2017) concluded that factors and states regarding fear of travel are shock, panic, risk, worry and anxiety.

Concerning health, the impact of fear arousal related to covid 19 on domestic tourists' behaviour has act been examined yet, in Port Harcourt Pleasure Park. However, several tourism studies articulated that risk perception substantially impacted tourists' intentions to visit on destination.

Tourist Revisit Intention
Tourists' revisit intention connotes the behavioural intention of tourists to revisit a particular destination for touristic experiences. In this current study, the measure of tourist revisit intention is tourist satisfaction which is used interchangeably with customer satisfaction.

Tourist/Customer Satisfaction: Zang et al (2011) established that satisfaction is a vital component of tourist experience. Satisfaction plays a key role in the decision of the tourist to revisit a destination. In the context of tourism, customer satisfaction have several indicators such as: quality and availability of recreational facilities, management's quick response to visitors' concerns, professional and cordial behavior of employees etc. satisfaction is considered as aggregate feelings (Cole& Scott, 2004)). Cong (2016) considered tourist satisfaction as emotional response that follows from cognitive responses to service experience.

Empirical Review and Hypotheses Development

Castro, Quisimalin, de Pablos, Gancino, and Jerez, (2017) carried out a research to identify and validate determinants of tourist satisfaction in the provinces of Chimborazo, Cotopaxi, Pastaza,Tungurahua, in Ecuador. The determinants considered where product, price, tourist service and distribution. The study used anunknown sampling frame of 610 random tourists, representative with a 14 item questionnaire. The result of the statistical analysis showed a positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and variables of infrastructure, attention, cleanliness of the establishment and availability of parking; food and fun; ease of finding places and availability of service information; positive tourism experience, gastronomic and cultural tourism, and successful choice of destination.

Aliman, Hashim, Wahid, and Harudin, (2016) examined the antecedents of tourist satisfaction at Langkawi Island in Malaysia. The study sampled 500 tourists with a questionnaires used for primary data collection. Regression analysis result showed that destination image, social-security, tourist expectations, and costs and risks, had positive and significant influence on tourist satisfaction. The most important predictor of tourist satisfaction was found to be social-security, followed by tourist expectations, destination image, and costs and risks.

From the foregoing, it could hypothesised that,

H1: Destination image has significant effect on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt.

H2: Brand awareness has significant effect on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt.

H3: Fear arousal has significant effect on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The researcher adopted the survey research design. A survey research design is an efficient method for systematic collection of data from a broad spectrum of individuals.

Population of the Study: The population of the study was tourists and consisted of males and females including teenagers, youths, and adults.

Sampling procedure/sample size determination

The population was large and unknown. In this case the researcher adopted Frend and Williams formular to determine the sample size to be involved in the study.

$$n = \frac{z^2(pq)}{e^2}$$

n = Sample size sough

z = Standard deviation for the desired confidence value

p= Probability of percentage of positive responses

q = Probability of percentage of negative responses

e = Level of significance

n = unknown

z = 1.96

p = 0.93

q = 0.07

e = 0.5 (5% level of significance)

$$n = \frac{1.96^2(0.93 \times 0.03)}{0.05^2} = \frac{3.8416(0.0651)}{0.0025} = \frac{0.2500}{0.0025} = 100$$

Thus, 100 people constituted the sample size of the study.

Data Collection methods: The primary data was obtained through a structured questionnaire which was completed by the respondents.

Instrument Design: Questionnaire was the best instrument to illicit required information from respondents. The questionnaire was titled "Destination Marketing and Tourist Revisit Intention". Questionnaire items were measured by 5-points likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The instrument consisted of 16 items.

Data Analysis Technique: The data obtained the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The data were tabulated and entered in SPSS for descriptive statistics. To achieve the stated objectives and to test the hypotheses multiple regression analysis was conducted.

Results
Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Sex of Respondents		
Male	39	39.0
Female	61	61.0
Age (years)		
15-25years	43	43.0
26-35years	47	47.0
36-45years	6	6.0
46 years above	4	4.0
Educational Level		
First School Cert	8	8.0
SSCE	26	26.0
OND/HND	35	35.0
BSc	25	25.0
MSc/MBA/MA	5	5.0
PhD	1	1.0
Marital Status		
Single	21	21.0
Married	68	68.0
Divorced	7	7.0

Widowed	4	4.0
Occupational Status		
Student	22	22.0
Employed	31	31.0
Unemployed	7	7.0
Self-employed	40	40.0
Number of Visitation		
Once	55	55.0
Twice	30	30.0
More Often	15	15.0

From Table 1, the outcome of the finding revealed that 39.0% of the tourists are male while 61.0% are female which indicated that majority of the tourists are female. On the age of tourists, the finding revealed that 43% of the tourists were aged 15-25years while 47.0%, 6.0% and 4.0% were aged 26-35years, 36-45years and 46years above respectively. The finding revealed that 8.0% of the tourists possess first school certificate, 26.0% had SSCE level education, 35.0% had OND/HND level of education while 25.0%, 5.0% and 1.0% of the tourists had BSc., MSc/MBA/MA and PhD level of education respectively. Furthermore, the study observed that 21.0% of the sampled tourists are single, 68.0% of them are married while 7.0% and 4.0% of the sampled tourists are divorced and widowed respectively. The occupational status of the tourists revealed that 22.0% are student, 31.0% are employed, 7.0% are unemployed while 40.0% of the tourists are self-employed. Among the sampled tourists, 55.0% of them claimed to have visited the tourist centre once, 30.0% claimed to have visited twice while 15.0% claimed to have visited the tourist centre at several time and often.

Hypothesis testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested using Multiple Regression analytical tool.

Testing of hypotheses 1, 2 and 3
Decision Rule

If PV < 0.05   =   Hypothesis is supported

PV > 0.05   =   Hypothesis is not supported

Table 3 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.893[a]	.798	.793	.24731

a. Predictors: (Constant), Fear Arousal, Brand Awareness, Destination Image

Table 3 shows that R is .893, and represents the simple correlation between the dimensions of destination marketing (destination image, brand awareness and fear arousal) and tourist satisfaction which is a measure for revisit intention and is very high. R^2 value ("R" Square) is .798 and adjusted R square is .793. This implies that 79.8% of the variance in tourist satisfaction (revisit intention) can be explained by the changes in independent variables of destination image, brand awareness and fear

arousal. With the regression model able to explain more than 60% (threshold) of variance in the dependent variable: tourist satisfaction (Moosa & Hassan, 2015), this model is considered as a 'good fit'.

Table 4 ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.362	3	10.121	165.468	.000[b]
	Residual	7.707	126	.061		
	Total	38.069	129			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Fear Arousal, Brand Awareness, Destination Image

From Table 4, the result of the analysis shows that F value was significant (p=.000). With this result, the model is valid and it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the destination marketing indicators and the tourist satisfaction which describes the tendency to revisit the attraction site.

Table 5 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.705	.168		10.124	.000
	Destination Image	.456	.072	.671	6.324	.000
	Brand Awareness	.099	.066	.125	1.499	.136
	Fear Arousal	.100	.075	.121	1.325	.187

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Table 5 provides the multiple regression analysis for the contribution of the three dimensions of destination marketing used in the study and hypothesised as H1, H2 and H3 respectively. The table shows that un-standardized beta (β) of destination image, brand awareness and fear arousal are: (β = 0.456),(β = 0.099), and (β = 0.100) respectively. This specifies that destination image made the greatest contribution to the model.

The result of the regression analysis shows that only destination image, (β = 0.456, p=0.000 < 0.05) provided by Port Harcourt as a destination in influencing their customers' satisfaction which in turn enhances the behavioural intentions of visitors made significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable, while brand awareness (β = 0.099, p=0.136>0.05) and fear arousal (β = 0.100, p=0.187>0.05) did not.

Therefore the model can be written as:

Customers Satisfaction = 0.456(DI) +0.099(DA) +0.100(FA) + 1.705.

The model suggest that by associating any of the three dimensions of destination marketing of a destination brand, the empirical model can increase the level of customers' satisfaction and by

implication the tendency to revisit the destination for recreational when other things remain constant. Accordingly therefore, changes in destination image at the destination can have the biggest influence on level of visitor satisfaction and by extension visitors' intention to revisit the destination for touristic experience as its beta co-efficient (β = 0.456, p=0.000 < 0.05) is the highest and significant.

Testing of hypotheses 1, 2 and 3
Decision Rule

If PV < 0.05   =   Hypothesis is supported

  PV > 0.05   =   Hypothesis is not supported

H1: The outcome of analysis show that destination image had significant effect on tourist satisfaction to the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt (β = 0.456, p=0.000 < 0.05).

H2: The outcome of analysis show that brand awareness had no significant effect on tourist satisfaction to Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt (β = 0.099, p=0.136< 0.05).

H3: The outcome of analysis show that fear arousal had no significant effect on tourist satisfaction to Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt (β = 0.100, p=0.187< 0.05).

Discussion of Findings
Discussion of Results

Hypothesis 1 posited a significant effect of destination image on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt. With β = 0.456, p=0.000 < 0.050, the effect is significant. This result is consistent with the prediction of H3 and is therefore supported. This is consistent with the findings of Castro, et al and Aliman, et al (2016).

Hypothesis 2 posited a significant effect of brand awareness on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt. With β =0.099, p=0.136< 0.05 the effect is not significant. This result is not consistent with the prediction of H2 and is therefore not supported. This contradicts the findings of Castro, et al and Aliman, et al (2016).

Hypothesis 3 posited a significant effect of fear arousal on tourist satisfaction at the Pleasure Park in Port Harcourt. With β = 0.100, p=0.187< 0.05, the effect is not significant. This result is not consistent with the prediction of H3 and is therefore not supported. This contradicts the findings of Aliman, et al (2016).

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between destination marketing and tourist revisit intention of Port Harcourt Pleasure Park in post Covid-19 era. The findings of the study suggest that destination marketing have the potentials to stimulate tourist revisit intention to tourist destinations through tourist satisfaction. The implication, therefore, is for stakeholders in the tourism industry to seek ways to promote tourist destinations in Port Harcourt and other regions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

(1)   The management of Pleasure Park and other tourists destinations in Port Harcourt should sustain easy accessibility, rejuvenating capacity, awareness creation through advertisement from different media platforms to enhance tourist satisfaction.

(2)   Relevant stakeholders should establish destination marketing organization in order to promote the image of Port Harcourt as a tourists destinations to actual and prospective tourists.

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