

IMPACT OF FESTIVAL TOURISM ON SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE BUSINESSES IN ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE: A STUDY OF LISABI FESTIVAL

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Abstract

This paper assessed the impact of festival tourism on small and medium scale businesses in Abeokuta Ogun State. Lisabi festival was used as a case study. A total of 80 respondents were purposively selected for this research and a well-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data collected was subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics using Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The results showed that majority (66.3%) of the respondents were, aged between 16-30 (53.8%) and were self-employed respectively. Also, more than half (67.5%) of them were Christians, up to (98.8%) were Nigerians. While half (50%) of them made above 15,000 Naira per day during the festival. Also majority of the respondents claimed that the festival had positive impact on their small and medium scale businesses. There was a significant relationship between the occupation of the respondents and the festival respectively. Conclusively, Lisabi festival just like other festival is a tourist attraction that showcases culture, religion and nature. Also, it was reliably gathered that festival plays a vital role in Abeokuta, Ogun State. The Researcher recommended A Festival and community development program to improve sustainability and event hosting capacity, the production of local craft which would help to promote the image of Abeokuta and also provision of adequate security during lisabi festival in order to guarantee visitors safety.

Keywords: Festival tourism, small and medium scale businesses.

Introduction

Globally the importance of heritages to countries and even in developing nations like Nigeria cannot be under-emphasized. This is due to its economic, historical, tourist, aesthetic, educational and research significance. Nigeria is a multicultural society rich in cultural heritage with over 250 languages. Aremu(2008). Amzat & Muhammad-Baba (2012) employed a classificatory approach based on the type of environment where different Nigerian ethnic groups are located. The six largest ethnic group are the Hausa and Fulani, Igbo, Yoruba, Tiv and Efik/Annang. Other Nigerian ethnic groups apart from the ones listed are sometimes called “minorities” which constitute a smaller percentage Aremu (2012). The Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba makeup about 70% of the population of Nigeria. These Nigeria tribes have different cultures carried on by their people contributing to the immense cultural diversity.

The Yoruba tribes constitute almost 21% of the population of Nigeria. They inhabit the southwestern part of Nigeria. The igbo tribe is one of the major tribes in Nigeria with an appreciable number of people owing to the igbo tribes. Geographically, the igbo land occupies most of south eastern Nigeria and some of the major cities include Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri, Asaba and Awka.

Hausa is the largest tribe in Nigeria making up about 29% of Nigeria population. They live in the northern part of Nigeria, southern part of Niger and west end of Chad Republic. They occupy towns and villages including Kano, Kaduna, Ibadan, Katsina, Abuja and Sokoto.

The Fulanis and the Hausas are predominantly muslim while the igbos are predominantly christian and so are the efik people. The yorubas are equally likely to be either christian or muslim. Indigenous religious practices remain important to all Nigeria ethnic group.

Politically, Nigeria is divided into thirty-six states. Every ethnic group in Nigeria has its own stories of where its ancestors came from. These vary from tale of people descending from the sky to stories of migration from far-off places. Festival attracts tourist and create festival tourism Cudny (2012). Festivals are one of the fastest event

such as film theatre, music, street festival or other event related to entertainment and sport should be considered separately and referred to as Festival.

The festivals in Nigeria include, music festival, film festival, Christian festival which are Christmas and Easter, Muslim festival which are Eid- Al- Fitri and Eid -Al- Kabir and the cultural festivals which include, Eyo festival also refer to Adimu Orisha held in Lagos Island, Osun Osogbo festival in Osun state, Ofala festival in Anambra, Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi, Igogo festival in Owo, Sango festival in Oyo, Calabar festival in Cross River, Mannwu festival in Enugu, Igwe festival in Benin city and other festival which include Egungun, Ogun and Oro festival. The survey conducted by the International Festival and Event Association (IFEA), the special event industry is estimated to include some 4 to 5 million regularly reoccurring events and has a significant economic impact globally. Ogun indigenes are known for their customs and traditional values even with the advent of western education. In Ogun state, the festival celebrated include Olumo festival among the Egba, Ojude-oba among the Ijebu, Okousi amongst the Ikija, Oronna day among the people of Ilaro Yewa land, Igunnuko at Infolá and Lisabi festival

Ogun state is one of the state rich in culture. Lisabi festival is a celebration where the sons and daughters of the town which comprises four sections, Ake, Owu, Gbagura and Oke ona Egba, become growing forms of tourism activities and are becoming increasingly popular in rural areas as a means to revitalize local economy. People from far and near come together for the celebration. It is a week celebration used to commemorate a farmer and warrior called Lisabi. During the festival week people engage in different activities of which include competition among schools, dance among the market women and so on

Tourists are attracted by various elements, the most important of which it seems to be interesting, sometimes exotic culture presented during the event (Quinn, 2010). Moreover festivals are also treated as tourist product (Cudny et al., 2011). Besides, tourists want to attend event of an unusual atmosphere, meet people of similar interest and learn more about the world. Stephen J (2008) defines tourism as the sum of the phenomenon and relationship arising from the travel and stay of non-resident in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activities.

A festival is simply an event ordinarily celebrated by a community which portrays some characteristic aspect of that community and its religion or culture, such period is often marked as a local or national holiday.

Food is one vital resource, as many festivals are associated with harvest time (e.g. The new Yam festival). Festival is treated as a part of event tourism. According to (2008 and 2010), the tourism where the aim is to attend festivals is treated as a part of event tourism. Buczkowska (2009) treats travelling to festivals in a similar way. She believes that festivals are one of the most important goals of tourist trips within event tourism. This, in turn, she treats as a form of cultural tourism, in which people travel to different events.

Kowalczyk (2008) gave a geographical definition of cultural tourism, stating that it is “a set of behaviours connected with tourists’ authentic interest in cultural heritage (historical monuments, folklore, sites of important events, etc.), as well as their participation in a broadly understood contemporary cultural life”. Kowalczyk (2008) distinguished several forms of cultural tourism understood this way. One of them is cultural-artistic tourism, which may include trips to festivals and other cultural and art events.

According to Mika (2008), tourism where the main motives is the participation in cultural activities where people from far and near join in the celebration. The Festival enables people to enjoy culture and entertainment. Break free from everyday routine, meet new people and spend additional time with friends. It also have Educational purpose and healing purpose. This Festival in turn are seen as important tool for attracting visitors and building image within and out of the community.

The Economic impact of tourism arises principally from the consumption of tourism product in an area. Location of a festival is very important when it comes to tourism. This is determined by the time and type of festival.

Ogun State and other state are highly blessed in terms of culture which reflect in the festival that take place in various part of Nigeria but despite the huge potential of the festival, it has not availed the opportunity created by festival to foster unity among the indigenes and non-indigenes. Festival tourism create tourist from far and near to experience festival in Nigeria and despite that, government has not being able to package festival to improve the image of Nigeria among comity of nations, they develop projects which destroy cultural heritages

Moreso, Festival tourism have not been used to raise fund in order to help the local authorities and government in terms of infrastructural provision because during festival tourism, prominent people can be invited and they donate generously towards provision of social amenities such as good roads, electricity, water supply and so on

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of festival tourism on the socio-economic and the image of Ogun State. Specific objectives are to assess the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; to determine the impact of festival tourism on small and medium scale businesses and to assess the relationship between the socio-economics characteristics of the respondents and impact of festival tourism.

Materials and Method

The sample size involved the purposive selection of 80 respondents that were available in the study area during the festival. Data was collected with the aid of a well structured questionnaire design to seek the opinion and generate data during the festival. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: section A contains information on socio-economic characteristics while section b contains questions on impact of festival on small and medium scale businesses in Abeokuta. Data collected was subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics using statistical packaged for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0

Results

Table 1 shows the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents . More than half of the respondents were male (66.3%), within the age range of 16-30 (53.8%) and were civil servants respectively. Also the educational qualification of the respondents shows that only few of them had BSC and almost all (91.3%) were local tourist, Nigerians (98.8%) and business personel (98.8%). Their religion background shows that more than half (67.5%) were christian and made between 6000 to 10000 (55%) on daily basis while 50% of them made above 15000 during the festival period.

TABLE 1: socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondent

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 53 | 66.3 |
| Female | 27 | 33.8 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| Age | | |
| 16-30 | 43 | 53.8 |
| 31-45 | 32 | 40.0 |
| 45 and above | 5 | 6.3 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| Occupation | | |
| Artisan | 30 | 38 |
| Self employed | 33 | 41.3 |
| Student | 17 | 21.3 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| Educational qualification | | |
| SSCE | 28 | 35.0 |
| OND/NCE | 28 | 35.0 |
| HND | 8 | 10.0 |
| Bsc | 16 | 20.0 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| Nationality | | |
| Nigeria | 79 | 98.8 |
| Diplomat | 1 | 1.3 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| Religion | | |
| Christianity | 54 | 67.5 |
| Muslim | 21 | 26.3 |
| Traditional | 5 | 6.3 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |



Are you a business personnel

| | | |
|-------|----|-------|
| Yes | 79 | 98.8 |
| No | 1 | 1.3 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

If yes how much do you make on daily basis

| | | |
|-------------|----|-------|
| 1000-5000 | 21 | 26.3 |
| 6000-10000 | 44 | 55.0 |
| 11000-15000 | 88 | 10.0 |
| Above 15000 | 7 | 8.8 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

Have you made any sales from the festival

| | | |
|-----|----|-----|
| Yes | 80 | 100 |
|-----|----|-----|

If yes, how much have you made today

| | | |
|-------------|----|-------|
| 1000-5000 | 4 | 5.0 |
| 6000-10000 | 17 | 21.3 |
| 11000-15000 | 19 | 23.8 |
| Above 15000 | 40 | 50.0 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

Table .2: shows the percentage distribution of the impact of festival on the image of abeokuta.it was revealed that majority (97.5%) of the respondents agreed that lisabi festival attract tourist internationally, promote the good name of Abeokuta (96.8%), attract the increase of local and international tourist (97.5%). While more than half (73.8%) agrees that the ritual being made during the festival do not tarnish the image of egba people and also do not affect negatively interms of attendance. Respondents accept that festival does not promote the image of Abeokuta in a bad light and it has encouraged worshipping of idols (53.8%)

TABLE 2: Perceived impact of festival tourism on the image of Abeokuta, Ogun-State

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Does lisabi festival attract tourist internationally | | |
| Yes | 78 | 97.5 |
| No | 2 | 2.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |
| Lisabi festival promote the good name of Abeokuta both in Nigeria and abroad | | |
| Yes | 79 | 98.8 |
| No | 1 | 1.3 |
| TOTAL | 80 | 100.0 |
| do you think the local and international tourist spred the news of festival to people when they return home | | |
| yes | 70 | 87.5 |
| No | 10 | 12.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |
| does the ritual being made during the festival tarnish the image of egba people | | |
| yes | 20 | 25.2 |

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| no | 60 | 74.8 |
| total | 80 | 100 |
| do you agree that the ritual used to ward off evil during the festival affect the festival in terms of festival negatively | | |
| yes | | |
| no | 23 | 28.8 |
| total | 56 | 70.0 |
| | 80 | 100.0 |
| Does the festival promotes the image of abeokuta in bad light | | |
| yes | | |
| no | 20 | 25.0 |
| total | 60 | 75.0 |
| | 80 | 100.0 |
| do you think the festival encourages the worshipping of idol | | |
| yes | | |
| no | 43 | 53.8 |
| total | 37 | 46.3 |
| | 80 | 100.0 |

The table 3 below shows the impact of festival tourism on small and medium scale enterprises. It shows that majority (75.5%) of the respondents emphasize that the festival tourism has a good impact on their businesses, 21.3% believed it has negative impact while only few (3.8%) of the respondents says it has no impact on their businesses.

Table 3: Impact of festival tourism on small and medium scale enterprises in Abeokuta

| Impact | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Positive impact | 60 | 75.5 |
| Negative impact | 17 | 21.3 |
| No impact | 3 | 3.8 |

Table 4 below shows the association between socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents and festival tourism. It shows that there was a significant relationship ($P < 0.05$) between occupation of the respondents and festival tourism. However, educational levels and religion of the respondents showed no significant association ($P > 0.05$)

Table 4; Association between socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and festival tourism

| Variable | X^2 | Df | P-value |
|-------------------|-------|----|---------|
| Occupation | 14.64 | 6 | 0.02 |
| Educational level | 5.79 | 6 | 0.44 |
| Religion | 2.03 | 4 | 0.72 |

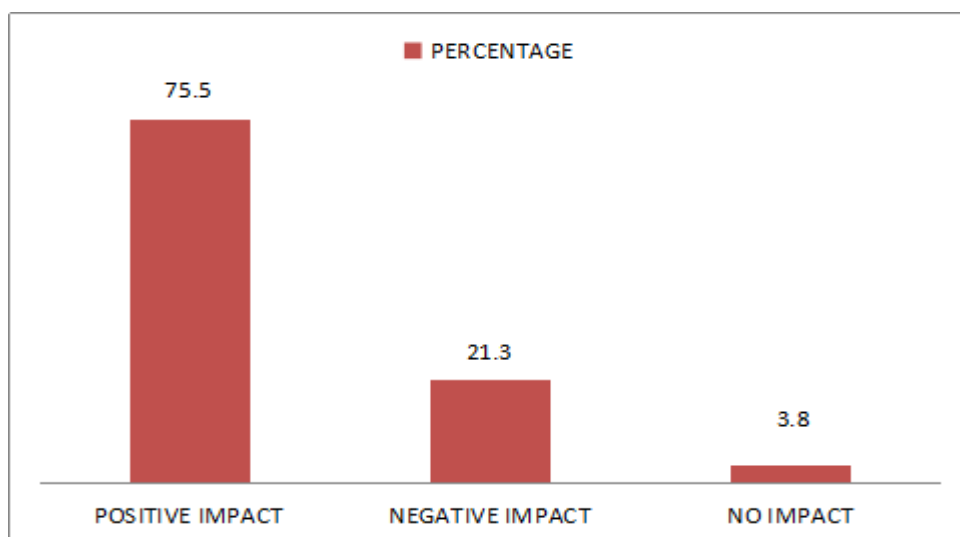


Fig 1: Impact of festival tourism on SMEs

Discussion

It was observed that majority of the respondents were male (66.3%), within the age range of 16-30 (53.8%) and were civil servants respectively. Also almost all (91.3%) were local tourists, Nigerians (98.8%) and business personnel (98.8%). In an attempt to identify the main socio-economic impacts of festival tourism, it was reported by (Eja, 2011) that events and festivals serve as catalysts that have the capacity to attract fun seekers especially to destination with great tourism potentials and increased trade for local business as a main economic benefit. This means that as visitors spend more days in a given destination, their long stay helps to improve the revenue base of the people and at the same time develop the local economy of the people. Profitability is in line with the findings of this study which revealed that majority (50%) of the business personnel make high sales during the festival than usual days. An indicator of the distribution of income which they generate on a daily basis revealed that 55% makes 6000-10000 and during the festival 50% make above 15000. This implies that at least half were able to generate more income which helps to improve their standard of living. However, majority of the business personnel make high sales which also boost the economy of the state.

Granovetter (1973) opined in his study that the public rituals, sites and events, such as festivals, celebrations, churches and temples help people to form a sense of community. The research conducted corroborates with the study (73.8%) that the ritual being made during the festival does not tarnish the image of egba people.

Other proposed dimensions were confirmed by Gursoy et al (2004) that festival strengthens the tie between the local residents and the tourists visiting the destination which from the findings shows that egba people are accommodating to host the tourist. The findings of this study further revealed that festival tourism has a considerable impact on the small and medium scale businesses. This finding is in consonance with what was reported by Richard and Palmer (2012).

Conclusion

Lisabi festival just like other festival is a tourist attraction that showcases Culture, Religion and Nature apart from its impact on the socio-economic and the image of Abeokuta, it also serves as a positive catalyst in the development of hospitality and tourism. The possibility to spend one's free time in an interesting way, develop one's interests and make new relationships is a particularly important function of festival tourism. Supporting cultural activity, promoting cultural institutions, as well as high culture, which is currently on the defensive, seems to be equally important. On the other hand, however, we must not ignore the dark side of festival tourism, namely its dysfunctions. In order to reduce them, it is necessary to manage festivals properly and cooperate with the local authorities, residents and entrepreneurs.

Recommendation

It has been reported that Ogun State is rich in culture with different tourist attractions, the growing and development of festival and attraction should be what the government and egba people would look into.

- festival and community development programme should more focused on the improvement and sustainability of businesses across the host communities.
- The government should encourage mass participation of the indigenes in the festival to make it a huge success.
- The government should provide adequate security during the events in order to guarantee the visitors safety while they stay in Ogun State
- Government should improve infrastructure and tourist destination to increase the rate at which tourists come into Abeokut

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