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## **PERCEIVED FACTORS AFFECTING THE PATRONAGE OF DOMESTIC TOURISM IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study assessed the perceived factors affecting the patronage of domestic tourism in Osun State, Nigeria. The natural, historical and man-made facilities in the State are enough to support domestic tourism but not properly harnessed. The research adopted quantitative method and utilised primary data to administer questionnaire to eight strata of respondents in 27 tourist destinations. Travel characteristics of respondents were represented through a line graph. Data were analysed using linear regression and Pearson correlation. Results on the educational background of the respondents revealed that 63.9% had tertiary education, with most of the respondents (26.6%) earning between ₦31, 000 – ₦50, 000. The occupational distribution of respondents showed that students and private employees comprised of 13.2% each, as 50.70% of the respondents are in the age level of 20-39 years. Majority of the categories of respondents travelled for pleasure and leisure purposes, followed by visiting friends/ relatives as well as other purposes, and lastly travelling for business purposes. Findings from the study showed that there was a strong, positive and statistically significant correlation between residents' level of awareness and domestic tourism activities ( $r = 0.966$ ,  $n = 371$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The level of patronage of domestic tourism was significantly influenced by the socio-economic characteristics of respondents with regards to education, income, occupation, and age. There was also a strong, positive and statistically significant correlation between level of accessibility of tourist destinations and domestic tourism patronage ( $r = 0.706$ ,  $n = 371$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ). Findings of the study show that respondents were more involved in domestic tourism activities for pleasure/leisure purpose. Education, Income, Occupation, and Age had a positive influence on patronage or participation of the residents of the state in tourism related activities, as poor accessibility also affects patronage. The study concluded that socio-economic characteristics of Osun state residents such as education, income, occupation, and age had a positive influence on participation in tourism related activities particularly pleasure/leisure, and recommended better accessibility in terms of good road and signage for direction to tourist destinations.

**Keywords:** awareness, domestic tourism, osun-state, perceived factors, patronage

## Introduction

Awareness and patronage in the confines of marketing has been discovered to be connected in the marketing of tourism products and services (Aaker, 1996; Cretu and Brodie, 2007; Dawar and Parker, 1994; Hoyer and Brown, 1990; Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Mudambi, 2002; Rust *et al.*, 2004). The consumption of domestic tourism according to Crockett, *et al.*, (1999) can contribute immensely to the economy of any nation. The various natural and man-made endowments as well as the cultural attributes in Nigeria are more than enough to develop the tourism sector if properly harnessed (Ndanusa *et al.*, 2014). Tourists' choices of destination and involvement in recreational activities are influenced by a number of motivational factors (Bond, Packer and Ballantyne, 2015) among which are demographic variables such as age (Wilson *et al.*, 2013; Irimias *et al.*, 2016), gender (Andriotis, 2009), educational background, and income (Ibimilua, 2009), purpose of visit (Irimias *et al.*, 2016), occupation (Mitev *et al.*, 2015), attraction of the destination, and price levels in destination (Rajesh, 2013), and cost of transportation (Geurs and Wee, 2004).

In Nigeria there are enormous natural and cultural tourism resources that abound in all the states of the nation (Eja *et al.* 2012). These resources no doubt can provide interesting destinations for recreational and tourism activities (Bola, 2010). The availability of attractions, accommodation, amenities and accessibility are *sine qua non* to attraction of potential tourists. The Sub-Saharan Africa especially Nigeria has been noted to have quite a large array of attractions (Esu, 2013; Baker, 2014). Notwithstanding the various tourism resources that Nigeria is endowed with, the level of participation in recreational and tourism activities by Nigerians still requires attention (Ikprukpo, 1993). Because of poor attitudes of all stakeholders in the tourism industry, the average Nigerian has little knowledge (if any), about the benefits being involved in tourism, which has resulted in low participation in domestic tourism (Ibimilua, 2009). Empirical evidence in justification of this low participation and patronage was even presented by Ndanusa *et al.* (2014).

Osun state as part of Nigeria is not left out as the natural, historical and man-made facilities in the State are enough to support domestic tourism. These resources if properly harnessed will no doubt turn around the economic fortune of the state. Despite this huge potentiality, the immense contribution that the tourism resources can make to the social and economic development of the state has not been fully recognised and exploited (Gregory & Ajibola, 2013).

## Literature Review

Domestic tourism is a form of tourism in which local tourists travel within their own country so as to visit friends and relatives, as well travel for leisure. Domestic tourists have been described by Moseley (2007) as people that are resident in their own country travelling within that same country. This, however exclude residents that travel to other parts of same country put up their own homes, work for pay, or a person that is always travelling to other areas within the same country (Deng *et al.*, 2002).

Low level of awareness about the richness of domestic tourism destinations has been the bane of patronage of domestic tourism in developing countries (Ibimilua, 2009). Potential tourists therefore may not be able to visit such locations if they are not aware of their presence, location and richness. The interest of potential tourists to visit the tourism locations can be intrigued only if they have been informed of such tourism location (Moutinho, 2007). How tourist will now internalize the information so acquired about the tourism location will depend

on awareness and attitude of the tourist (Hassan, 2000; Moutinho, 2007). The tourist may not want to engage in further external searches for information if he already has enough information about local tourist attractions (Hassan, 2000).

For any tourism venture patronage is important for generation of revenue, and the patron in the tourism context is the person who travels to the tourism destination. This tourism patronage has been noted to be particularly low in developing countries (Ibimilua, 2009; Ndanusa *et al.*, 2014). This low of patronage and the factors that affect it has been variously highlighted by a number of researchers (Johnson *et al.*, 1998; Virden and Walker, 1999; Philipp, 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1999; and Juniu, 2000). Awareness and patronage are connected because patronage of tourist destinations will be poor if the tourists are not aware of such destination. The onus therefore lies on national and state tourism organisations and institutions to market tourism resources and products in their domain (Bhaita, 2002). These stakeholders are in the best position to first and foremost carry out aggressive marketing of tourism destinations under them to draw tourists or to enhance tourists' visitation (Okpoko, 2006). This can be seriously complimented by the efforts of various individual tourism firms who market their own components of the total tourism product in order to attract tourists. These firms are in the best positions to create and continuously develop brand identity that will positively impact on tourists and make Nigeria stand out as a tourist destination in the comity of nations (Worlu *et al.*, 2015). One of the major factors identified that affect destination patronage is accessibility (Morris, 1996; Aniah *et al.*, 2009; Omisore and Akande, 2009; Ogunbodede, 2012) with physical distance, availability and, cost being major constraints (Ikporukpo, 2002).

This research, therefore, aimed at examining perceived factors affecting the patronage of domestic tourism in Osun State. The findings of the study will give meaningful contributions about the factors affecting the patronage of domestic tourism in Osun State.

The objective of the study is to assess the socio-economic characteristics of tourists, while, the hypotheses of the study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The level of participation in domestic tourism is significantly influenced by the socio-economic characteristics of respondents.

Hypothesis 2: The level of awareness of local residents is not significantly related to domestic tourism activities.

Hypothesis 3: The level of accessibility of tourist destinations is not significantly related to domestic tourism patronage.

## **METHODOLOGY**

For the purpose of this research stratified sampling method was used. The population was stratified into eight heterogeneous occupational groups: civil servants, artisans, traders, health workers, road transport workers, academicians, students, and private employees. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the identified (developed) tourist centres from the Master List of developed tourist destinations collected from the Osun State Ministry of Tourism and Culture. The centres studied were selected using simple random technique (lottery method) for in-depth study and proper data collection.

The sample size for the study was determined using Yamane's formula. The population excluded children below ten year of age in the 2006 population age distribution. The exclusion

was necessary because of the factor for the stratification of the residents, leaving a population of two million, five hundred and seventy six thousand, and five hundred and seventy two (2,576,572).

Yamane's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n= sample size

N= target population

e= percentage of error (5%)

$$n = \frac{2,576,572}{1 + (2,576,572 \times (0.05)^2)}$$

$$= \frac{2,576,572}{1 + (6441.43)}$$

$$n = \frac{2,576,572}{6442.43}$$

$$n = 399.93$$

$$n = 400.$$

The four hundred (400) respondents were chosen from the eight earlier stratified groups. Fifty (50) respondents were chosen from each of the stratified groups. The civil servants were largely drawn from the State Secretariat, as traders were drawn from Osogbo and Ede. Artisans were drawn from Ile-Ife and neighbouring towns. Health workers were drawn from Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) teaching hospital, Akoda health centre, and Redeemer's University health centre staff. Road transport workers were drawn from different parks in Ede, Osogbo, Ile-Ife and their environs. Lecturers from Redeemer's University, Adeleke University, Osun State University (Okuku campus) and the Federal Polytechnic Ede were sampled as academicians. Students from Osun State University (Okuku campus) and students of Redeemers' University staff school were sampled as students. Private employees were drawn from non-academic staff of the Universities where the academic staff were drawn from and staff of Zenith Bank. Convenience sampling method was used in the distribution of the questionnaires to the respondents in each of the earlier stratified eight (8) groups. The method was favoured because the population size has already been stratified into more homogeneous groups which are the representative of the entire population.

The study used the questionnaire instrument for collection of information from respondents. The questionnaire was made up of 6 sections – A to F. Section A was designed to collect demographic information of the respondents. Section B comprised of questions on the level of awareness of tourist centres, while section C focused on the underlying factors that influence participation (patronage) in domestic tourism in the State, while section D was on the relationship between motivating factors and demographic characteristics of Osun State residents. The questions were closed ended questions, with some of them presented with Likert scale. Data were analysed using qualitative descriptive method to summarize information on demographic profile of respondents, while quantitative data generated were

analysed using linear Regression and Pearson correlation to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of confidence.

## **RESULTS OBTAINED**

### **Socio-Economic Characteristics of Tourists**

Results on the educational background of the respondents revealed that 63.9% had tertiary education, 24.8% had secondary education, and 10.5% had primary education, while 0.8% of the respondents were not educated. Findings on educational background of the respondent have thus revealed that most of the people who engaged in domestic tourism were educated. This agreed with the finding of Zimmer, *et al.* (1995) that education influenced travellers when choosing destinations.

The result on income distribution of respondents showed that 26.6% of the respondents earned between ₦31, 000 – ₦50, 000. This was respectively followed by those in income ranges of ₦51, 000 – ₦70, 000 (24.10%), ₦18, 000 – ₦30, 000 (22.60%), ₦71, 000 – ₦90, 000 (10.20%), while the least was recorded for income range of ₦91, 000 and above (3.20%). Findings of this study on income distribution have revealed that respondents with higher income range have the lowest percentage which showed that low disposable income was a constraint to domestic tourism participation. This finding does not support that of Zimmer *et al.* (1995) on disposable income and tendency to travel from home.

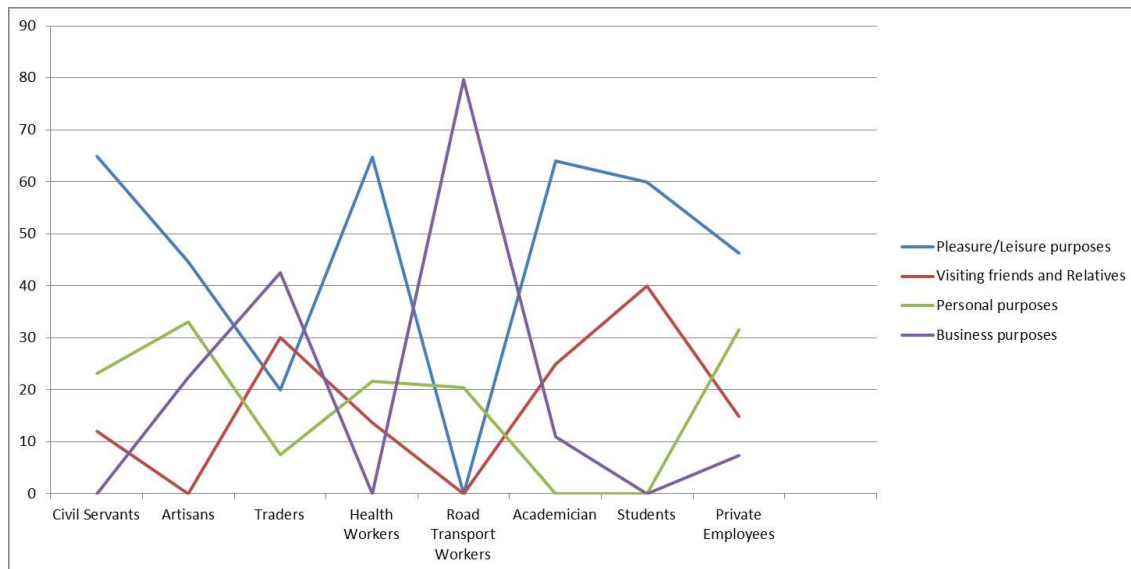
The occupation distribution of respondents showed that students and private employees comprised of 13.2% each. This was followed respectively by traders (12.7%), civil servants and artisans (12.4% each), health workers and academics (12.1% each), and road transport workers (11.9%).

### **Travel Characteristics of Domestic Tourists**

Result on travel characteristics of domestic tourists as presented in Figure 1 showed that 64.9% of civil servants travelled to tourist destinations for pleasure/leisure purposes, 23.1% engaged in domestic tourism activities for other personal purposes, while 12.0% participated in domestic tourism just to visit friends and relatives. On the part of artisans, 44.6% travelled to tourist destinations for pleasure/leisure purposes, 33.0% engaged in tourism activities for other personal purposes, while 22.4% participated for business purposes. The result further showed that 42.5% of traders participated on business purposes, 30.0% for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives, 20.0% for pleasure/leisure purposes, while 7.5% engaged in tourism activities for other personal purposes. The travel characteristics of health workers showed that 64.8% of the respondents travelled to tourist destinations for pleasure/leisure purposes, 21.6% engaged in tourism activities for other personal purposes, while 13.6% participated in domestic tourism on visitation to friends and relative. For road transport workers, 79.6% visited tourist destinations on business purposes, while 20.4% travelled to tourism destinations for personal purposes.

For the academicians, 64.7% travelled to tourist destinations for pleasure/leisure purposes, 25.0% participated in domestic tourism in order to visit friends and relatives, while only 11.0% travelled for business purposes. The result for both the secondary and higher institution students revealed that 60.0% travelled to tourist destinations for pleasure and

leisure purposes, while 40.0% participated in domestic tourism so as to visit friends and relatives. Most private employees (46.3%) travelled to destinations for pleasure and leisure purposes, 31.5% on personal purposes, 14.9% visited friends and relatives, while 7.3% travelled on business purposes.



**Figure 1: Travel Characteristics of Respondents**

**Influence of Socio-Economic Characteristics of Residents on Participation in Domestic Tourism**

The result of influence of socio-economic characteristics of respondents on participation in domestic tourism is as presented in Table 1. Finding from the empirical test supported the hypothesis that the level of participation in domestic tourism was significantly influenced by the socio-economic characteristics of respondents. The regression model was significant with P value of 0.000.

**Table 1: Regression of level of participation in domestic tourism as influenced by the socio-economic characteristics of respondents**

Regression Coefficient

Model summary

Regression Coefficient					
Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted	Std. error of the estimate	
1	0.797	0.634	0.631	3.04772	
ANOVA					
Model	Sum squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	5049.351	3	1683.117	181.203	0.000 <sup>(a)</sup>
Residual	2907.324	313	9.289		
Total	7956.675	316			

Note: Predictors (constant)

**Note:** a: Predictors constant: socio-economic characteristics (Age, income occupation education)

b: Dependent variable: Level of participation in tourism

### Influence of Residents' Level of Awareness on Domestic Tourism

The Pearson correlation analysis in Table 2 showed that there was a strong, positive correlation between residents' level of awareness and domestic tourism activities, which was statistically significant ( $r = 0.966$ ,  $n = 371$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Since correlation coefficient had positive value which indicated that increase in one variable corresponds to increase in the other.

**Table 2: Relationship between the Residents' Level of Awareness and Tourism Activities.**

		Residents level of awareness	Domestic tourism
Residents' level of awareness	Pearson	1	0.966*
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	371	371
Domestic tourism	Pearson	0.966*	1
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	371	371

### Relationship between Accessibility of Tourist Destinations and Domestic Tourism Patronage

As revealed in Table 3, there was a strong, positive correlation between level of accessibility of tourist destinations and domestic tourism patronage, which was statistically significant ( $r = 0.706$ ,  $n = 371$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ). When  $p < 0.05$  that is,  $0.005 < 0.05$ , we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative which stated that there was a significant relationship between the level of accessibility of tourist destinations and domestic tourism patronage.

**Table 3: Relationship between Level of Accessibility of Tourist Destinations and Domestic Tourism Patronage.**

		Accessibility	Domestic tourism patronage
<b>Accessibility</b>	Pearson	1	0.706*
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.005
	N	371	371
<b>Domestic tourism patronage</b>	Pearson	0.706*	1
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0.000
	N	371	371

## DISCUSSION

### Socio-Economic Characteristics of Tourists

From the results on occupation distribution of respondents, there appeared to be no much difference in participation in domestic tourism across the various strata of workers. According to Ibimilua (2009), factors that affect participation in tourism among other things include occupation. Age distribution of respondents showed that 50.70% of the population falls in the age bracket of 20-39 years. This was followed by 40-59 years (40.40%), and 10-19 (6.70%), while the least was recorded for 60 years and above (2.20%). In terms of age distribution, domestic tourism in Osun State appeared to attract middle-age tourists. This is in agreement with the finding of Morrison (2013) that the age level of 30 to 44 years is very adventurous who travel a lot to please themselves.

### Travel Characteristics of Domestic Tourists

Based on the results of the travel characteristics of domestic tourists, it can be concluded that respondents were more involved in domestic tourism activities for pleasure/leisure purpose as five (civil servants, artisans, health workers, academics, students, and private employees) out of eight categories of tourists took it as their first choice of travelling. This is in tandem with the finding of Webster and Rennie (2011) which illustrated the multi-dimensional nature of pleasure for exploring and enhancing pleasurable consumption. Visiting friends and relatives, as well as travelling for other purposes accounted for the second reason why visitors involved in domestic tourism. Four of the categories viz, traders, academics, students, and private employees travelled to visit friends and relatives,

while civil servants, artisans, health workers, and road transport workers travelled for other purposes. Griffin (2013) in his finding acknowledged the importance of visiting friends and relatives tourism in worldwide travel which offers destinations a viable strategy for sustainable tourism development. Travelling for other purposes in this study as reason for embarking on domestic tourism is also in line with the finding of Loon and Rouwendal (2017) in which it was asserted that the activities undertaken by tourists are not limited to their (initial) trip purposes. The result of this study also indicated that three subgroups comprising of artisans, academics, and private employees travelled for business purpose. In the analyses of Nicula and Elena (2014), business tourism has reached an impressive level the world over as it has contributed substantially to tourist revenues. The findings of Morrison (2013) also characterised tourists into four travel characteristics namely- pleasure/leisure, visiting friends and relations, business and other personal purposes.

### **Influence of Socio-Economic Characteristics of Residents on Participation in Domestic Tourism**

The result on influence of socio-economic characteristics of residents on participation in domestic tourism shows that there were relationships between the proposed factors in the hypothesis. The independent variables (Education, Income, Occupation, and Age) had a positive influence on patronage or participation of the residents of the state in tourism related activities. It can therefore be stated that there is an element of causal relationship between socio-economic attributes of respondents and their willingness to participate or patronize tourism products and services as this was in tandem with the findings of Zimmer *et al.* (1995), Kwan *et al.* (2007), Ibimilua (2009) and Morrison (2013), Mitev *et al.* (2015) Irimias *et al.* (2016).

### **Influence of Residents' Level of Awareness on Domestic Tourism**

Based on the analysed result for influence of residents' level of awareness on domestic tourism, it can be concluded that the level of awareness given by the authorities in charge of various tourist sites and products available in the state facilitated increment in their patronages. This result is not different from similar findings (Essner, 2003; Page and Connell, 2006; Ajayi, 2012) which affirmed that positive dissemination of information about tourist destinations and products had positive influence on their patronage. Hence, there is a strong relationship between the residents' level of awareness and domestic tourism activities.

### **Relationship between Accessibility of Tourist Destinations and Domestic Tourism Patronage**

From the result on relationship between accessibility of tourist destinations and domestic tourism patronage, it can be inferred that when there is poor accessibility like bad road, non availability of signage for direction, etc., there will be low patronage of tourist destinations. When there is good accessibility to tourist destinations, there is bound to be increase in patronage. Accessibility is a key factor in domestic tourism patronage. This agrees with the work of Omisore and Akande (2009) which analysed the accessibility constraints of patronage of tourist sites in Ondo and Ekiti States.

## CONCLUSION

Finding of the study on the occupation distribution of respondents shows that there is no much difference in participation in domestic tourism across the various strata of workers.

Result of the study also shows that respondents were more involved in domestic tourism activities for pleasure/leisure purpose.

Socio-economic characteristics of residents such as Education, Income, Occupation, and Age had a positive influence on patronage or participation of the residents of the state in tourism related activities.

The level of awareness given by the authorities in charge of various tourist sites and products available in the state facilitated increment in their patronages.

Finding of the study also shows that when there is poor accessibility like bad road, non availability of signage for direction, etc., there will be low patronage of tourist destinations.

## RECOMMENDATION

This study recommends that good roads, signage for direction, and other accessibility factors should be put in place to facilitate increased access to tourist destinations.

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