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Innovative Visitor Attraction Products and Services in a Digital World and Tourists' Satisfaction in the Hospitality/Tourism Industry

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Abstract:

Despite the abundance of technology in this current dispensation, there is still inadequate knowledge of certain visitor attraction products or services in the tourism industry which often results into low patronage owing to tourist dis-satisfaction, and this therefore calls the attention of researchers. This study hereby examines the effect of implementing visitor attraction innovative products and services in a digitalized world to enhance tourist satisfaction in the hospitality and tourism industry. The dimensions of the predictor variable include; AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours, while the outcome variable is tourist satisfaction. The objectives of this study are to determine the effect of AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours on tourist satisfaction. To achieve these objectives, the researcher employed a descriptive cross-sectional approach, and regression model to test the research hypotheses. The statistical results revealed that AI-enhanced cultural tours and eco-friendly experiences has significant effect on tourist satisfaction; astute travel planning and virtual reality tours haveno significant effect on tourist satisfaction.Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended that both staff and guests/tourist in the tourism industry should be educated continuously using digital mechanism about the trending new products and services in the tourist industry just like other developed nations.

Keywords:

Innovative Products and Services, Digitalization, Tourist/customer satisfaction., Hotel and Tourism Industry.

Introduction

A tourist attraction is a site of interest that draws tourists, usually because it offers entertainment options, historical importance, natural or man-made beauty, or inherent or shown cultural worth. In general, tourist attractions do not include arts and crafts stores, nurseries, garden centres, and the majority of retail shops unless they are quite large and offer a valuable experience(Jarick, Laidlaw, Nasiopoulos, & Kingstone, 2023). This might involve hosting a renowned or established artist in residence or offering guided tours of the property. Wineries need to offer cellar door sales and wine tastings in order to be classified as tourist attractions, and wineries that are only accessible by appointment are not regarded as tourist destinations(Reynaud, Churchill, Guzman, Amin, & Zeringue, 2019).

According to Olorunniwo, Hsu and Udo (2020), Nigeria is endowed with an abundance of both natural and human resources. Nigeria is among the world's most naturally gorgeous countries because of the wonderful design that nature has bestowed onto the country. To put it simply, Nigeria is an adventure. There are many different types of tourist attractions in Nigeria. These include man-made attractions like resorts, parks, game reserves, ranches, etc.; natural attractions like hills, waterfalls, springs, lakes, mountains, rocks, beaches, etc.; and cultural attractions like festivals and carnivals. Other natural attractions include Olumo Rock in Abeokuta and ObuduMountain Resort. Nigeria's tourism destinations are dispersed among the many states that comprise the confederation. Nigeria's scenic cities, some of which are natural wonders, its artistic treasures, its gorgeous beaches, resorts, parks, festivals, and cuisine are what draw tourists to the country(Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 2019).

Agarwal (2023) opined that to bring these attractions to fortunes, there is need to introduce innovative products and services using digital mechanism. There is need for hospitality industry to create innovative products and servicesthat can enhance the tourism business in Nigeria. According to Sundaram and Cynthia (2019), there is need tocreate natural language processing guides using Artificial Intelligence (AI) that can provide tailored suggestions depending on the preferences of the guests. Meijerink, Bondarouk, and Lepak (2023) also suggested that hospitality industry can create an innovative products and services such as Astute Travel Planning (ATP); Virtual Reality Tours and Adventure Tourism that can make use of predictive analytics and data to assist travellers in organizing their travel schedules at the destination. Another innovative products and services that can be created by hospitality industry is to create environmentally friendly travel goods that prioritize sustainability and encourage ethical travel. These experiences might range from eating at sustainable farms to having zero-emission vehicles like electric bikes and scooters for mobility.

According to Paul (2023), having all these innovative products and services is stock is not sufficient if not properly advertised to create more awareness about the innovative products and services. The ability to create value for the customer is part of the market-orientation scales Crotti and Misrahi (2022), suggesting implicitly that value is part of a market-orientation scale. But is this the best manner of incorporating value in the orientation-to-performance model? Izard (2022) argue that the objective of Astute Travel Planning is to create offerings that deliver value for customers, which in turn would suggest that value is a mediating variable between Astute Travel Planning and firm performance. Therefore, rather

than including value in the orientation scale, it may be preferable to think of value as a separate construct that provides a necessary link between orientation and performance.

Different scholars (Kline, 2022; Kuo, Chen, & Lu, 2022; Marcel & Escoffier, 2022) have shown that lack of innovative products have made Nigeria's hospitality industry unattractive to local and foreign tourists. Hospitality industry in Nigeria is not operating at their peak (Mindtools, 2022), has there are still lacuna to be filled regarding the employment of technology in meeting the dear need (attraction) of tourist. Some of the innovative products that is missing includes lack of AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours; Astute Travel Planning;Eco-Friendly Experiences; Virtual Reality Tours and contemporary adventure tourism. This study hereby seeks to establish the effect of visitor attraction innovative products and services in a digital world on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Visitor Attraction

Tourist attraction is places of natural beauty including beaches, tropical island getaways, national parks, mountains, deserts, and woods (Gilakjani, 2021). Historic sites, monuments, ancient temples, zoos, aquariums, museums, art galleries, botanical gardens, buildings and structures (like forts, castles, former prisons, skyscrapers, bridges), living history museums, theme parks and carnivals, public art (like sculptures, statues, and murals), ethnic enclave communities, historic trains, and cultural events are examples of cultural tourist attractions(Jung & Yoon, 2021). Cultural niches like industrial tourism and creative tourism focus on factory tours, industrial history, and creative art and craft classes. A lot of tourist destinations double as landmarks.

Legends like the claimed Loch Ness monster sightings in Scotland and the purported UFO crash site near Roswell, New Mexico, are also used as sources of revenue for tourism destinations. Ethnic enclaves, like Chinatowns in the United States and Brixton, a mostly black area in London, England, have the potential to develop into popular tourist destinations. Additionally,Khurana (2021)revealed that travellers search for unique local gastronomic experiences, such as the Central European coffeehouse culture or the street kitchens of Asian metropolises. Specifically, sites that are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and cultural property have become tourist destinations. Particular locations, like Barcelona or Venice, may experience environmental degradation and local opposition if an excessive number of visitors visit them(Sastry & Ramsingh, 2021).

Innovative Products and Services in Hospitality industry

Never before has the travel and tourism sector been in such continual motion of creating innovative products and services in hospitality industry as it has been in the last few years. Tour operators have the chance to offer their clients, both old and new, what they want as well as new trips and experiences they may not even be aware they want with every shift and new trend (Meijerink,et.al.,2023). In contrast to 2020 and 2021, the tourism sector recovered in 2022 as nations started to relax regulations. The most significant trend of all is that individuals still desire to travel and are even setting aside money for more trips if innovative products and services can be experienced.

Some of the innovative products and services include:

AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours: Seijts (2021) opined that hospitality industry should develop an AI-enhanced cultural tour experience that uses natural language processing and computer vision to lead visitors through museums, local landmarks, and tourist destinations. In addition to answering inquiries and offering more in-depth explanations of the history and culture of the location, the AI tour guide may provide tailored suggestions depending on the preferences of theguests.

Astute Travel Planning: Srivastava, Guglielmo and Beer (2021) opined that hospitality industry should make use of predictive analytics and big data to assist travellers in organizing their travel schedules at the destination. Travelers may choose where to go and when to avoid busy locations by using real-time data on the weather, traffic, and tourist attractions.

Eco-Friendly Experiences: Vrij, Leal, Mann and Granhag (2021) opined that hospitality industry should create environmentally friendly travel goods that prioritize sustainability and encourage ethical travel. These experiences might range from eating at sustainable farms to having zero-emission vehicles like electric bikes and scooters for mobility.

Virtual Reality Tours: Ekinci, Dawes and Massey (2020) opined that hospitality industry should provide virtual reality experiences that let visitors discover the natural beauty and cultural legacy of a place without physically being there. Virtual reality tours offer a secure and captivating means for tourists to investigate inaccessible locations, such distant natural reserves and wildlife sanctuaries.

Adventure Tourism: Hai-yan and Baum (2020) opined that hospitality industry should provide distinctive adventure tourism experiences, such as zip line, rock climbing, hiking and camping excursions, that highlight the natural beauty of the region. Adventure travellers may have even more exciting experiences by utilizing digital technology. These technologies include wearables that monitor heart rate and activity, drone video of their travels, and more.
Kuo (2020) argued that creating culinary tourist experiences that highlight the region's distinctive flavour and spice combination. This might range from taking cooking lessons with neighbourhood cooks to attending food and wine festivals honouring the region's many culinary traditions. According to Mast (2020), using AI-powered technology, travellers may create customized menus and meal preparations depending on the regional cuisine of their travel location. A grocery list of goods and instructions for preparing each meal are included in the plan.

Health and Wellness Retreats: Pandit and Parks (2020) opined that hospitality industry should create health and wellness retreats that include holistic wellness techniques like yoga, meditation, and spa treatments with the best of the natural beauty of the region. Visitors may monitor their progress and personalize their health experiences by incorporating modern technology such as wearable activity trackers.AI-powered technology may be used to construct customised exercise and wellness programmes.

Promote voluntourism: Achrol and Etzel (2019) opined that hospitality industry should establish initiatives that let travellers contribute to the betterment of their host towns. These experiences might range from working as volunteers at animal conservation centres and marine reserves to constructing homes and schools. Volunteers may monitor their influence

and establish connections with like-minded people worldwide by leveraging modern technology.

Music and Entertainment Tourism: Anderson and Gerbing (2019) opined that hospitality industry should create experiences for music and entertainment tourism that highlight the bustling nightlife and rich cultural legacy of the region. This might range from live performances by local musicians and dancers to music festivals.

Luxury Tourism: Ajzen (2019) opined that hospitality industry should provide high-end guests with individualized services and exclusive experiences by creating luxury tourism experiences. Through the utilization of digital technology such as virtual concierges and AI-driven personal assistants, high-end travellers may have a smooth and customized travel experience(Barnum & Wolniansky, 2019).

For this current study, AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours were studied.

Tourist Satisfaction: Tourists' satisfaction describes the psychological status of tourists which originate from the experience(s) which they gain through the participation in touristic activities in a particular destination. (Jeong, &Shin, 2020; Akhoondnejad, 2016). Yoo, et al (2017) argues that tourist satisfaction goes a long way in determining the likelihood that tourists will return to a particular destination for touristic purposes. Therefore, Tourists will likely revisit a particular destination only when they are satisfied with touristic experiences gained (Sthapit, et al 2020). It is therefore expected that in order to enhance tourist satisfaction, tourism service providers in a destination should endeavour to develop and deliver satisfying experiences for tourists since tourist satisfaction engenders long term relationships between destinations and tourists. Drawing from data obtained from tourists in 5 US smart cities, Jeong and Shin (2020), found that tourists' satisfaction acts as a predictor of revisit intentions in a smart destination.

Theoretical Review

This research work is anchored on Leiper's tourism system theory. This theory is one of the theories of tourism attraction that looks at how tourist attraction systems affect travel(Nunnaly, 2023). Another theory examines ways to study and assess the quality of tourist attractions and emphasizes their significance as a part of the tourism system. Furthermore, a theory that examines the interaction between tourists and the land and service contexts as well as spatially-based tourism behaviour exists. In order to comprehend patterns of tourist movements and their underlying network structures, this theory puts forth a model for tourism attraction systems and integrates travel network notions. These theories offer frameworks for researching and overseeing tourist attractions and advance our understanding of attraction in the tourism industry.

Based on the principles of systems theory, Leiper (1979) (as cited by Nunnaly, 2023) developed the entire tourism system and distinguished five fundamental elements: travellers, generating regions, transit routes, destination regions, and a tourism industry functioning in physical, cultural, social, political, technological, and economic contexts.The question of what the Leiper model for tourism is and who the Leiper was probably comes to mind first. In

February 2010, Australian tourism scholar Neil Leiper passed away. His work had a huge impact and is still frequently referenced in travel literature. Leipers's study was mostly concentrated in four areas: tourism systems, partial industrialization, tourist attraction systems, and strategy.
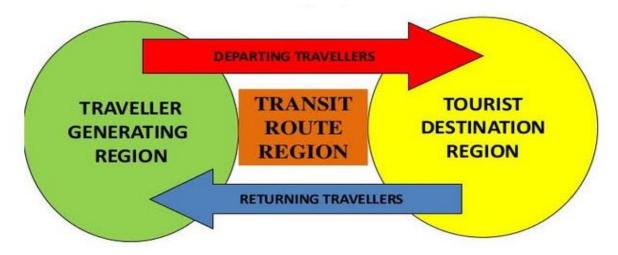

Figure 1:   **Leiper's tourism system theory**
Source: (Nunnaly, 2023)

It was determined that Leipers' study had a major impact on the conceptualization of tourism as well as the academic literature on travel and tourism. How it functions, Leiper wants people to understand that the tourist business is not made up of discrete, autonomous segments. Instead, each element of tourism is interconnected. This indicates that for the system to work correctly, every component is heavily dependent upon every other component.

Empirical Review

In a study by Baumeister (2019)on a self-presentational view of digital social phenomena, the researcher employed a quantiative researche technqies. Findings from the study revealed effective Artificial Intelligence (AI) can enhanced cultural heritage can enhance self-presentational view with the aid of digital social phenomena.

In the same light, a study conducted by Barsky (2023) on the effect of digital travel planning on customer turnover in the hotel and tourism industry: meaning and measurement. The researcher used non-parametric statistic model to explain the relationsip between digital travel planning and customer turnover in the hotel and tourism industry. Findings from the study revealed that digital travel planning has signifixant influence on customer turnover in the hotel and tourism industry.

D'Annunzio-Green (2021) conducted a study on the effect of ecosystem on organizational and cross-cultural challenges facing international hotel managers. The study employed systematic review of literature. The study revealed that ecosystem has significant impact on organizational and cross-cultural challenges facing international hotel managers.

Lastly, in a research work by Bergmann, Eyssel and Kopp (2022), researeched on asecond chance to make a first impression using virtual and adventures reality. The researchers employed qualitative research techniques, findings from the study revealed that using virtual and adventures reality can re-creat another impression in the mind of tourist.

Arisen from the literature, the following hypotheses were raised:
H1: AI-Enhanced cultural tours has significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu.

H2: Astute tour planning has significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu.

H3: Eco-friendly experienceshas significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu.

H4: Virtual Reality Tours (VRT)had nosignificant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu.

Methodology
Research Design: the researcher employed a descriptive cross-sectional approach which employed quantitative data.

Population of the Study: The population for this study consisted of hotel guests who lodged at two hotels at Ikorodu during the period of questionnaire administration. The two hotels were Giant Star Hotel (24 respondents), and Samelot Hotel (26 respondents).The population for this study therefore totals 50 respondents. Since the population of the study is relatively few, census was conducted among the respondents, hence, the entire population size falls within the census range.

Questionnaire Administration
The questionnaire was the research instrument used in generating the primary data. The hotel guests constituted the sample. The questionnaire was divided into two principal sections: demographics and the items for the dimensions of the independent variable and measures of the dependent variable. Permission was obtained from the managers of the hotels who assigned the administration to a staff in the hotel for the purpose of assisting in the administration of the research instrument. The questionnaires were retrieved after two weeks.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to test the internal consistency of the research instrument. The results were as follows; AI-Enhanced cultural tours (0.875), Astute travel planning (0.807), Eco-friendly experiences (0.819), virtual reality tours (0.885), and tourist satisfaction (.715). The values are above the threshold of 0.7(Nunnally (2023). The research instrument was validated by tourism experts for face and content validity.

Method of Data Analysis

This study examines a cross-sectional and quantitative approach adopted to achieve the study objectives. Therefore, Regression Model was employed using quantitative data. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive zero order correlations and Regression Modelling using SPSS version 25.

Model Specification

Regression model was employed for this study as stated below:

$$TS = \alpha + \beta_1 (AI) + \beta_2 (ATP) + \beta_3 (EFE) + e. \quad \ldots \quad 1$$

$$TS = \alpha + \beta_1 (VRT\text{-}A) + e. \quad \ldots \quad 2$$

Where:
TS = TouristSatisfaction
AI = AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours
ATP = Astute Travel Planning
EFE = Eco-Friendly Experiences
VRT-A = Virtual reality tours and contemporary adventure
α =   Intercept
β = Beta Value
e = error term

Data Presentation

Out of the targeted census of 50, those who responded to the administered questionnaire were 47. The high response rate (92.8%) is attributed to fact that a personal (self-administered) approach was employed in collecting data. More so, the researcher maintained useful contacts with the Hotel management staff, which were instrumental in identifying the relevant sampled respondents and maintaining good relationships with them, which yielded excellent response rates. Table 3 summarizes the response rate:

Table 3

Response Rate

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Questionnaires Issued	50	100
Responses Received	47	92.8%
Responses Discarded	1	1.9%
Responses Used	46	98.1%

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, 2024.

Table 4 Demographical Data Presentation

Gender	Percent	frequency
Male	25	6
Female	75	40
Educational level		
Secondary and below	28	13
Diploma	20	9
Bachelors	44	20
High Graduate	8	4

Table 2 shows that 75% percent of the respondents are female and therest are male. The educational level Table 4.2 shows that 44% of the study sample holders of bachelor's degree, 28% of them who have secondary or less. 20% of them from the Diploma and 8% of them high graduate.

Data Analyses
To ascertain the effect of innovative products and services on tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1, 2, 3 and 4.
Table 5-7 Multiple Regression analysis showing the effectof innovative products and services on tourist satisfaction.

Table 5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.912[a]	.832	.827	.22591

a. Predictors: (Constant), Virtual Reality Tours, AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours, Eco-Friendly Experiences, AstuteTravel Planning

Table 6 ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.690	4	7.922	155.232	.000[b]
	Residual	6.380	125	.051		
	Total	38.069	129			

a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Virtual Reality Tours, AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours, Eco-Friendly Experiences, AstuteTravel Planning

Table 7 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.038	.180		5.755	.000
	AI-Enhanced Cultural Tours	.471	.059	.575	7.954	.000
	AstuteTravel Planning	.011	.078	.015	.142	.887
	Eco-Friendly Experiences	.287	.075	.342	3.820	.000
	Virtual Reality Tours	.020	.076	.021	.264	.792

a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Satisfaction

Table 5 shows that R is .912, and represents the simple correlation between innovative products and services and tourist patronage in terms of tourist satisfaction in the tourism industry. in Nigeria   is very high. R^2 value ("R" Square) is .832 and adjusted R square is .827. This implication is that 83.2 % of the variance in tourism satisfaction can be explained by the changes in independent variables of innovative products and services in terms of AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours.As a general rule, this model is considered as a 'good fit' as this, linear regression model is able to explain above 60% (threshold) of variance in the dependent variable: tourist satisfaction.   (Moosa& Hassan, 2015).

The *p* value .000 is <0.05 in Table 6 is an indication that the regression model statistically significantly predicts tourist satisfaction which is the outcome variable.

Table 5 and 6 shows the multiple regression analysis which shows that un-standardized beta (β) of AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours   are: (β = 0.471),(β = 0.011), (β = 0.287), and (β = 0.020)respectively, while value of R square = 0.832, F = 155.232&*p*=.000< 0.05. This specifies that AI-Enhanced cultural tours, astute travel planning, eco-friendly experiences and virtual reality tours explains83.2 % variation in tourist satisfactionin the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu, Nigeria.

The result of the regression analysis shows that the two out of the fourinnovative products and services in influencing tourist satisfaction made significant contribution to explaining the dependent variable (see Table 7). The two significant factors are: AI-Enhanced cultural tours, β = 0.471, p=0.000 < 0.05), and eco-friendly experiences β = 0.287, p=0.000 < 0.05), considering their respective degrees of contribution.This implies that only two of the

innovative products and service variables made significant unique contribution to the equation.

Therefore the model can be written as:

Tourist Satisfaction = 0.471 (AEC) + .287 (EFE) +1.038

The model suggest that by associating any of the two innovative products and services in the tourism industry, the empirical model can increase the level of tourist satisfaction when other things remain constant. Accordingly therefore, changes in innovative products and services ofAI-Enhanced cultural toursin the tourism industry can have the biggest influence on level of tourist satisfaction as its beta co-efficient ($\beta = 0.471$, p=0.000 < 0.05) is the highest and significant, followed by eco-friendly experiences ($\beta = 0.287$, p=0.000 < 0.05).

Testing of hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4
Decision Rule

If	PV < 0.05	=	Hypothesis is supported
	PV > 0.05	=	Hypothesis is not supported

H1: The outcome of analysis show that AI-Enhanced cultural tours had significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu ($\beta = .471$, p=0.000 < 0.05).

H2: The outcome of analysis show that astute tour planning had no significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu ($\beta = .011$, p=0.887>0.05).

H3: The outcome of analysis show that eco-friendly experiences had significant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu ($\beta = .287$, p=0.000 < 0.05).

H4: The outcome of analysis show that Virtual Reality Tours (VRT) had nosignificant effect on tourist satisfaction in the hospitality/tourism industry at Ikorodu ($\beta = .020$, p=0.792>0.05).

Discussion of Findings

As shown in the statistical results above, H1 revealed that AI-Enhanced model cultural tours had significant effect on tourist satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Baumeister (2019). **H2** show that astute tour planning had no significant effect on tourist satisfaction. This is not consistent with Barsky (2023). **H3** show that eco-friendly experiences had significant effect on tourist satisfaction. Tourists will continue to show preference for initiatives that promote environmental preservation. **H4** show that Virtual Reality Tours (VRT) had nosignificant effect on tourist satisfaction. This result is not consistent with Bergmann, et al (2022).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the importance of digitalization to the tourism sector cannot be overstated. With more luxury and customisation, it has revolutionized the way people plan and travel for their vacations. It has also enabled businesses to operate more profitably, reduce costs, and improve customer happiness. As new technologies are created, we can expect the

digitalization of the tourist industry to continue growing in Lagos state and in Nigeria at large.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the study recommended that:

1. Both staff and guests/tourist should be educated continuously about using digital mechanism as it concerns the trending new products and services in the tourism industry just like other developed nations.
2. Tourism service provided should promote new products and services to the admiration of the target market through diverse marketing communication channels.

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