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EVENT PLANNING AND TOURISTS REVISIT INTENTION TO CALABAR CARNIVAL

*OSUOHA, IFEANYI JUDE¹, NNAMDI STANLEY CHIBUEZE² & AKOLOH-ISAAC JOSEPHINE TIMIPRE³

¹Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Faculty of Agriculture, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

^{2&3}Department of Leisure and Tourism Management, International Institute of Tourism and Hospitality, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author: *OSUOHA, IFEANYI JUDE
Email: Rotr.Jude@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of event planning on tourists' revisit intention to Calabar Carnival. The study adopted a survey descriptive research design with the use of a questionnaire as the main instrument for primary data collection. The population of the study was very large and unknown. The sample size of 158 was determined using Cochran's formula for sample size determination from an infinite population. The questionnaire was administered to the tourists who attended the Calabar carnival. The questionnaire was validated through the face and, content validity. The internal consistency of the instrument was excellent (.812) using Chronbach Alpha. The statistical tool for data analyses was Pearson Correlation. Major findings showed that event planning had a positive and significant relationship with tourists' revisit intentions towards Calabar Carnival. The study concluded that proper event planning is crucial in promoting tourists' revisit intentions. It was therefore recommended that stakeholders should embrace tourism destination marketing planning techniques to enhance tourists' revisit intentions.

KEYWORDS

Event Planning, Tourism, Tourists Revisit Intentio, Calabar Carnival, Destination Marketing Planning.



Introduction

Event planning as a means of promoting culture and tourism is a means of attracting and enhancing visitors/tourists' experience. This is so because event planning is being used as a tool to boost local economy to and has the potential to aid in the seasonal and geographical spread of tourism (Long & Perdue, 1990). Event planning can be said to be an organized public or social occasion, often important, interesting and memorable. Event planning is also described as the process of organizing a festival, ceremony or competition in order to showcase what the event is all about.

“Event constitutes one of the most exciting and fastest growing forms of leisure, business and tourism related phenomena (Goldblatt 2002) introduces events as a “kaleidoscope of planned culture, sports, political and business occasions from mega-events like Olympics and world fairs to community festivals; from programs of events at parts and attractions to visits by dignitaries and intergovernmental assemblies; from small meetings and parties to huge conventions and competition of any sort”. The revolution in festivals has been stimulated through commercial aspect to meet the changing demand of the local community groups and increasing business opportunities for the events organization and local business.

Some aspects of this role include, events as image makers, economic impact generators, tourists attractions, overcoming seasonality, contributing to the development of local communities and business and supporting key industrial sectors. The government now support and promote events as part of their strategies for economic development, nation building and cultural tourism. The events in turn are seen as important tool for and building image within different communities.

As far as events planning and tourism is concerned, roles and responsibilities of government as well as private sector and society in general have significantly changed over the last decade. The situation have been changed where the state have the key responsibility for tourism development and promotion to a world where the public sector is obliged to re-invent itself by relinquishing power of it traditional responsibilities and activities in favour of both state and local authorities.

To the best of our knowledge no study seems to have examined the effect of event planning on tourists' behavioural intentions towards destinations. Based on the foregoing, the focus of this current study was to appraise events planning as a means of promoting the rich cultural heritage of Calabar. The specific objective was to ascertain how proper planning can be used to attract large tourists to Cross River State during Calabar carnival in terms of revisit intentions.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Literature

The concepts relating to event planning as a means of promoting culture and tourism are the major concepts that were reviewed in this work.

The Concepts of Planning and Management Initiatives of Events

Events are wide in nature, scale and size and every event is unique and demand requirement, Van der Wagen (2005). Managing major events is complex and involves many role players, resources and technical support facilities. Van der Wagen (2005) states that the planning and management of an event well depend on the size and the type of the events.

An event manager is generally supported by a planning team, some of the activities are contracted out to sub-contractors to enhance smooth operation of the events. Some of the activities that can be contracted to other managers include venue, stage, lighting, audio and video companies, decorations and florist, entertainers, employments agencies, rental companies, security and catering, Van der Wagen (2005). Van der Wagen (2005) suggested that for some events, the manager is also required to liaise with the government. Local council deals with event planning and approval, state government provides approvals for traffic and policing and the federal government gives advice on protocol for international dignitaries. According to Van der Wagen (2005), environmental scanning of the competition is very essential at the initial planning stage coupled with others

aspect such as regulations, marketing, community impacts, risk management, revenue and experience as thus can severely limit creativity.

Turco et al (2002) mention that, there are many reasons cities and nations need and want to host tourism events. Hosting a sport event could be developmental for the community, which means that hosting a sport tourism event of providing sport facilities that are developed in the communities. Van der Wagen (2005) states that many issues should be taken into consideration when organizing any event of festivals to ensure the smooth success of the event. She further indicates that the event manager should ensure that certain requirements are in place before the actual time of the event. Such facilities include safety and security, adequate infrastructure and capacity of the event venue, as well as proper marketing at different levels (local, regional, national and international). Communication prior, during and even after the event is crucial to avoid unnecessary inconvenience and misunderstanding. Sufficient resources and staff training in event management are important to service quality.

Well programmed cultural events will impress customers and affect the events' success, some of which may face resources sponsorship problem. Therefore, it is essential to arrange them accordingly before the events are actually held. For the event to be successful, it requires good planning and design decision. These might include space for exhibition and pavilion, supply of essential services from parking to sanitation facilities, modification of the transport system to handle the traffic created by the event, anticipated revenue from admissions and sales, human resources requirement and the capital and operational budget of the event (Mules & McDonald, 1994).

The Concepts of Planning of Events in Promoting Culture and Tourism

According to Watt (1992), he cited in Turco et al (2002) and he said planning is the process that identifies aims and objectives and establishes the methods to be utilized to achieve those objectives. The formal approval process starts with undertaking a feasibility study and specifying the aims and objectives of the events. A business plan is required to include key points such as background of the organization if the event, plans for developing and improving the event, as well as marketing and communication strategies and financial management plans, which is useful in strategic planning and budgeting (Turco et al, 2002). The feasibility will consist of a number of questions and positive answers that will lead to more detailed planning of the event. The factors include the following:

Weather: Weather can strongly influence the timing and success of the event, even if the event is staged indoors. Bowdin et al (2006) indicate that weather can influence attendance of event that is why carnivals especially the Calabar carnival is held during the summer months of December.

Competition: Careful consideration should be given to all events occurring around the proposed time, even if the activities planned are not in direct competition.

This is important because most events rely heavily on media for publicity (Turco et al., 2002).

Population: It is important to establish whether there will be enough people interested in the proposed event. The event radius varies depending the city or region. Factors such as income, age strata, unemployment, percentages, minority grouping and predicated growth and decline patterns should be considered (Turco et al 2002).

Attitude: It is important to know those targeted to participate or attend the actually feel about the proposed event (Turco et al: 2002) note that focus groups or personal interviews as opposed to questionnaires should be used as a measure to attitude.

Security: It is mandatory to provide adequate security and around the event's arena (Okoli 2007) cited that the security committee must liaise with the law enforcement agents for maintenance of law and order as well to ensure security of lives and property of guests and investors/tourists during the events.

All these and more will sum up when planned and organized well towards any objective be it an event or a festival to bring out the best from it. Cross River state carnival has always lived up to its status because of good

planning and management teams working hard to ensure that they come out first in all carnivals celebrated in the country.

Calabar carnival as a means of attracting large tourists

The revolution in events has been stimulated through commercial aspect to meet the changing demand of the local community groups and increasing business opportunities for the events organizations and local business, event play a major part in a city or a local community.

Festivals are attractive to host communities because it helps to develop local pride and identity for the local people. In addition, festivals have an important role in the national and host community in context of destruction and commerce. Some aspect of this role include: events as image makers, economic impact generators, tourist attractions, overcoming seasonality, contributing to the development of local communities and business and supporting key industrial sectors. The festival organizers are now using the historical and cultural themes to develop the annual events to attract visitors and creating cultural image in the cities by holding festivals in the community settings.

Festival provides an opportunity for the local communities to develop and share their culture which create a sense of values and beliefs held by the individuals in a local community and provide opportunity for members of the local community to exchange experience and information.

Festival provides the tourist the opportunity to see how the local communities celebrate their culture and how this effects the community development, it also helps the visitors to interact with the host community and help people to enjoy and meet their leisure needs. The people and communities that host the festivals provide the visitors with a vibrant and valuable culture.

Culture is the personal expression of community heritage, community perspective, it provides cultural opportunities for the visitors to enjoy and experience local illumination and culture.

Tourists' Revisit Intentions: In marketing, Ibazan, Balarabe and Jakada (2016), describes repurchase intention as a real action of customer in buying or using the product or services again. In tourism marketing, revisit intention is described as a situation whereby tourists repeatedly visit a destination and /or a visitor attraction after the first visit. Several factors such as tourist satisfaction and destination image could engender revisit intention of tourists/visitors towards a destination.

Theoretical Foundations

Destination Marketing Planning Theory: the composite nature of the tourism product makes it imperative for the tourism service providers and the other stakeholders including the government to collaborate and develop an effective destination marketing planning. This will help the destination to jointly plan with a view to achieving pre-determined destination marketing goals one of which is tourists' satisfaction. When tourists are satisfied it will engender positive tourists' behavioural intentions such as positive word of mouth communication, destination loyalty and revisit intentions.

Empirical Review and Hypothesis Development

Attracting large number of tourist is a determinant of so many factors and variables. Proper planning is paramount to attracting large number of tourist. Factors like infrastructures need to be put in place for any meaningful planning. Gearing et al (2004) studied the case of Turkey as a tourist destination and find that infrastructure (comprising roads, water, electricity, safety services, health services, communications and public transportation) is a key determinant explaining tourist arrivals. The second type of studies is based on the estimation of an international tourism demand equation. Witt and Witt (1995) and Lim (1997) provide a comprehensive overview of the regression analysis, model specification, attributes and proxies. Income in country of origin, the cost of travel, relative prices, exchange rate, tourism infrastructure and the level of development in the destination country are among the most common determinants of tourist arrivals in the literature.

The study findings indicated that infrastructure capital had a positive effect on total tourist arrivals as well as on arrivals from the three regions considered. The coefficient of 0.32 for the case of total tourist arrivals implies that a 10% increase in the stock of infrastructure capital yields a 3.2% increase in tourist arrivals in the island. European and American tourists attach sizeable importance (coefficient of 0.40) to such capital. This is consistent with the idea that inhabitants of developed countries are accustomed to modern high-quality infrastructure and they prefer to find similar infrastructure in tourism destinations. However Asian and African (coefficients of 0.11 and 0.13 respectively) tourists tend to be less demanding on the infrastructure available in the island.

H1: Event planning has significant effect on tourists' revisit intentions to Calabar carnival.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Saunders et al (2007), defines research design as the general plan of how the research questions would be answered. It is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes a blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. A survey is a method of collecting data in which people are asked to answer a number of questions (usually in the form of a questionnaire). The research design for this study was the survey descriptive research design. The choice of survey design is appropriate since the number of element (population) under study is unknown.

Population of the Study: The population for this study consists of the tourists who attended the Calabar carnival. This population was very large and unknown. Accordingly, therefore, a sample size formular for unknown population was used.

Sampling Plan: Anyanwu (2003) defined sample plan as that part taken from a whole to show how the rest look like. It is also ideal to differentiate sample from Sampling. Sampling is the process of selecting a portion of a population considered to be adequate to represent all the characteristics of that population for the purpose of generating the findings from the sample itself, and target population. The sampling technique adopted for Hence, the sites taken are believed to be representative of all other sites in Cross Rivers State. Furthermore, Anyanwu (2000) noted that sample answer these questions under the following headings:

- i. Sample unit (who is to be surveyed?)
- ii. Sample size (How many are to be surveyed?).

The convenience sampling technique was utilised sampling the respondents.

Sample Size Determination

The calculation of the sample size (n) required for the estimation of an event in an infinite population is based on the following formula according to Egbulonu (2007), which is given by;

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

Where

n= sample size sought

Z= level of confidence

p= probability or percentage of positive response

q= probability or percentage of negative response

if

Z= 1.96

e= level of significance 5%= 0.05

P is assumed prevalence of the event in the population under study.

Z is the critical value obtained from a standard normal distribution. For each level of confidence there is a corresponding value of z. The level of confidence frequently used in most studies is 90%, 95% and 99%. The corresponding z values are 1.64, 1.96, and 2.58 respectively.

e is the maximum absolute error that the user is willing to accept. In general, the relative error should be ≤ 0.20 in this study, we shall use 7.8% level error tolerance.

$$n = \frac{p(1-p)z^2}{e^2} = \frac{0.5 \times (0.5) \times (1.96)^2}{(0.078)^2} = \frac{0.9604}{0.006084}$$

=157.85

=158.

Data Collection Instrument: Primary data was collected and used for data analysis. The instrument had two sections: section A had items on respondents’ demographic profile, while section B had items on the independent and dependent variables (event planning and tourists’ revisit intentions) with 6 items for event planning and 5 items for tourists’ revisit intentions each with 5-point likert scale. The internal consistency of the instrument was good (.812) using Chronbach Alpha.

Statistical Method for Data Analysis: The data gathered was to test the hypothesis using simple regression analytical technique. Data analysis was conducted with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Discussion of Findings

In this section, the researchers present and analysed the data used for this study. The statistical technique used for the study is simple regression analysis. The p-value was used as the basis for decision.

Testing of hypothesis one

Decision Rule

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

H1: Event planning has significant effect on tourists’ revisit intentions to Calabar carnival..

Table 1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.919 ^a	.844	.842	.36379

a. Predictors: (Constant), Event Planning

Table 2 ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	62.127	1	62.127	469.446	.000 ^b
1 Residual	11.514	87	.132		
Total	73.640	88			

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Event Planning

Table 3 Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.209	.185		1.134	.260
	Event Planning	.965	.045	.919	21.667	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Revisit Intention

From the Table 1,2 and3, the following results are obtained; un-standardized beta (β) of event planning ($\beta = 0.965$), adjusted R square = 0.844, $F = 469.446$ & $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. This specifies that event planning explains 84% variation in revisit intentions in Calabar Festival.

The outcome of analysis show that event planning had significant effect on tourists' revisit intentions to the Calabar festival ($\beta = 0.965$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore hypothesis one is supported.

Discussion of Results

Hypothesis 1 showed a significant effect of event planning on tourists' revisit intentions towards Calabar festival in South-South, Nigeria ($\beta = 0.965$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, H1 is supported. This finding is consistent with the findings of Witt and Witt (1995), and Lim (1997).

Conclusion and Recommendation

The research effort investigated the effect of event planning on tourists' revisit intentions towards Calabar festivals in South-South, Nigeria. The empirical findings supported the research hypothesis significantly. A very important finding of the study is the fact that statistical analysis of the effect of event planning at the Calabar festival explain up to 84% variation in tourists' revisit intentions. The reasons are not far far-fetched, as it could be ascribed to the fact that tourism event planning involves all the components of tourism which are expected to collaborate and ensure that their respective and destination set marketing goals which includes the achievement of the overall tourist's satisfaction. This is in support of the destination marketing planning theory

It can therefore be concluded that event planning is critical to the positive behavioural intentions of tourists which translates to large number of tourists with its socio-economic implications. It is therefore recommended that stakeholders should embrace tourism destination marketing planning techniques to enhance tourists revisit intentions. .

Implications of the Study

The relationship dynamics between tourists and service delivery at destinations which exemplifies the role of event planning aimed at enhancing overall tourists satisfaction and postulated by the theory of tourism marketing planning have been confirmed through this study. Thus, effective planning at tourism destinations will enhance tourists' satisfaction and thus engender positive behavioural intentions towards the destination concerned. To a large extent, the findings of this current study provide good implications to both practitioners and academics.

On the academic side, this current study contributes significantly to the tourism marketing planning literature by systematically exploring the effect of event planning on tourists' revisit intentions in Nigeria in the context of Calabar festival. Therefore, the findings of this study provide tentative support to the proposition that event

planning should be recognized as significant antecedent for gaining tourists' revisit intentions during Calabar festivals.

On the practitioners' side, the significant influence of event planning in Nigeria is highlighted. Certainly, tourism event marketers can benefit from the implications of statistical results. For instance, given the robust relationship (adjusted R squared) between event planning and tourists' revisit intentions (0.842), tourism event marketers ought to pay attention to event planning in order to build tourists' revisit intentions. For example, by collaborating with other tourism destination stakeholders appropriate tourism products including infrastructure which is provided by the government will be made available for the consumption of the tourists.

Limitations and Future Research

The research effort has its limitations despite its high degree of usefulness as discussed above. First and most significantly, the data was collected from one event (Calabar festival). Thus, the generalizability of the findings can be improved upon if future research replicates this research model in other destinations across the country.

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