

VISITOR SATISFACTION AS KEY TO SUSTAINABLE LINKAGES IN RWANDA'S TOURISM VALUE CHAINS

Odunga Pius

*Professor, School of Business and Economics, Kirinyaga
University*

Manyara Geoffrey

*Lecturer, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
Technical University of Kenya*

Atieno, Lucy

Independent Researcher, Nairobi, Kenya

Satisfaction scores could be predictors of visitor expenditure patterns, and updated data on this is meaningful for destination policy and planning in view of sustainable linkages of the local economy to tourism value chains. Visitors' views, attitudes and needs should be monitored continually in destinations. Visitor satisfaction is key for sustainable tourism development in a destination, and also a significant factor affecting visitor expenditure patterns. Tourism research acknowledges that visitor satisfaction often times translates to a loyal client who brings in repeat business. As such, satisfaction can be a variable for enhancing sustainable linkages in tourism value chains. Focussing on Rwanda, we use survey data from a random sample of 3,138 visitors leaving the country through the land borders and the airport, to present a quantitative analysis on visitor satisfaction as a variable for possible sustainable linkages in tourism value chains.

© University of the Aegean. Print ISSN: 1790-8418, Online ISSN: 1792-6521



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

Keywords: *Visitor satisfaction, Tourism Value chain, Sustainable linkages, Rwanda*

INTRODUCTION

This paper examines visitor satisfaction in Rwanda, captured through visitor motivations, expectations, experiences and choice behaviour, and our analysis recommends opportunities for using visitor satisfaction to enhance sustainable linkages of tourism value chains in Rwanda.

Tourism Value chains in Rwanda

Product offerings for tourism destinations require input from sequential and multiple industry players to create the visitor experience, which is gauged in terms of satisfaction levels. Tourist satisfaction is a post – purchase construct that evaluates how much a consumer likes or dislikes a service or product after purchasing it (Woodside et al, 1989; Kotler, 2001), and this construct is primarily a function of pre – travel expectations (Mountiho, 1987; Kotler, 2001). Industry players form the supply side of tourism in a destination, and are in position to facilitate a balance between visitor’s pre – travel expectations and post purchase experiences in their daily operations. Industry players are integral to the tourism value chain, which basically entails the general steps and the suppliers whom a tourist interacts with from commencement of a trip to the end. In this interaction, a satisfactory visitor experience implies repeat visit and additional economic benefit to a destination. Multiplier effects of such benefits are extensive, given the fact that significant components of tourism’s indirect contribution is the supply chains created in the economy as a result of visitor expenditure. Limitations abound in Rwanda’s local linkages to tourism value chains, where the

sector linkage to the rest of the local economy is weak (Spray and Agarwal, 2016). Thus supply chains should be identified, strengthened and enhanced by involving the local communities and enterprises so as to reduce on leakages in terms of input imports. Generally in Rwanda, tourism suppliers like accommodation providers, tour operators, destinations and tourism communities have notable levels of commitment to satisfaction levels for visitors during the course of their stay in the country.

As an emerging destination in the greater East Africa region, Rwanda's tourism stakeholders have successfully managed to package the destination as a high end ecotourism destination. This strategy gives it a competitive edge, against popular and seasoned safari destinations in East Africa, additionally attracts high expenditure per visitor, and has sustainability focus to safeguard the destinations evolution. Known for its mountain gorillas, Rwanda has diverse other tourism product offerings carefully tailored to appeal to targeted consumer preferences in heterogeneous market segments. These include boating holiday packages, birding and cultural tourism. Rwanda is yet to establish itself fully as a stand-alone destination. Most visitors international extend their visit to the country transiting through neighbouring destinations like Kenya Uganda and Tanzania, all competing for international markets. However, weakened competition from leading attractions in the East Africa nations, gives Rwanda an edge in the region in its appeal for international markets.

Kenya, and Tanzania are known for their beaches, as well as inland wildlife tourism activities. As tourism continued to evolve in these regions, an unstable demand pattern for tourism product offerings was embraced as business as usual. For example, international tourist arrivals at the Kenyan coast is seasonal, with peak and off peak seasons. Such destinations have witnessed sharp decline in visitor arrivals, implying a weakening tourism demand for consumption of product offerings. Among the reasons cited for the decline, is visitor preference for product offerings from other

competitive destinations. In providing a historical analysis of evolution of tourism development in Kenya, Akama (1999) uses the product life cycle (PLC) model to show that up to 1980s, Kenya was an important tourism destination receiving up to 6% of total tourist arrivals in Africa. This was later to be followed by a surprise decline of visitor numbers in the 1990s (ibid). The decline in tourist arrivals is attributed to violation of carrying capacity limits for safari resources (Ikiara and Okech, 2002). According to Ikiara and Okech (2002), the period 1990 to 2000 recorded a stagnation in visitor numbers to national parks and game reserves, at a stagnant figure of 1,500,000 per annum. For both Ikiara and Okech (2002), and Akama (1999), analysis hints at compromised product aspects that repulsed visitors. Product quality, and consequently visitor satisfaction levels is a factor that shapes demand patterns in destinations. However, there is little research on the issue, (Zhang et al, 2010), and this papers examination of visitor satisfaction in Rwanda, adds to the existing body of knowledge on the topic.

Visitor satisfaction impacts on destinations

Studies of visitor satisfaction in tourism illustrate that satisfaction scores impact economies in profitable and competitive measures; and secondly satisfaction scores are influenced by identified variables. Researchers who evaluate impact of satisfaction levels on destination economies, agree that there is a positive correlation between visitor satisfaction loyalty (see Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Nowacki, 2009), and that satisfaction is a significant factor in determining expenditure patterns (Kim et al, 2010; Disegna and Osti, 2016).

Tourism research on visitor satisfaction supports the idea of strong connections between satisfaction and loyalty (Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Nowacki, 2009; Wang et al., 2009; Zabkar et al., 2009). Improved service quality and satisfaction results in repeat visitation and positive word of mouth

recommendations (Tian-Cole et al., 2002, Lee et al., 2004), implying a boost to consumption of tourism goods which can positively impact on multiple tourism businesses in a destination.

Satisfaction is considered among the variables influencing expenditure by visitors in a destination (Anderson et al, 1994, cited in Zhang, 2010). Client satisfaction assures higher profitability as it often results to loyalty and positive recommendations (Munier & Camelis, 2013), and maximizing satisfaction is crucial for success of tourism businesses in destinations (Sukiman, et al, 2013) .

According to Zhang et al, (2010), there is little research done on visitor satisfaction with destination attributes and expenditure patterns. An analysis between tourist satisfaction and related expenditure categories is essential (Kim et al, 2010), as a key step in planning for strategies to increase visitor expenditure in a destination (Disegna & Osti, 2016). Certainly, study findings by Cardenas et al (2016) find a positive correlation between tourist satisfaction and expenditure at a destination. The authors use these findings to guide the implementation of specific policies by stakeholders in these destinations, in order to increase the economic impact of tourism in the host community. Also, a satisfactory visitor experience also guarantees willingness to pay more by the visitors. Homburg et al, (2005) note that ... *'when customer experience elevated states of satisfaction, they perceive a high outcome of an exchange and therefore are willing to pay more, (p 85).*

Research findings by Disagna & Osti (2016) show that satisfaction with specific characteristics of the destination is significant in affecting visitor expenditure behavior in the willingness to spend, in the amount of money spent within the different visitor expenditure categories, and finally in the total budget spent. In their analysis, one unit increase in satisfaction resulted to 7.6% increase in total visitor spending, and produced about 7% increase in total expenditure in studied destination. The authors however warn that overall satisfaction with a destination *"exerts only a negative effect*

on the amount of money spent on transportation (very likely the more tourists are satisfied with the destination, the less they will travel around in search of new places), satisfaction with the different aspects of the destination exerts an influence on both the willingness to pay and the amount of money spent in the different expenditure categories” (p. 22). Worth noting also, is that “satisfaction with certain characteristics of the trip, like friendliness with local inhabitants, can negatively affect visitor propensity to spend on accommodation and transportation, while satisfaction with prices negatively affects visitor tendency to spend on food and beverage. (ibid, p 16)”.

Of importance is satisfaction and dissatisfaction with tourism product categories in destinations (Disagna & Osti, 2016). Satisfaction with different characteristics of the destination exerts a positive influence on visitor willingness to incur expenditure within different spending categories like accommodation, shopping and tours (Disagna & Osti, 2016). In their study, satisfaction variables that would positively impact on spending categories are safety, landscape, food and beverage, friendliness and price. Here findings reveal that satisfaction with landscape positively affects tourist expenditure with accommodation and transportation, whereas satisfaction in food and beverage positively affects expenditure on transportation. In ranking destination service impact on visitor satisfaction, Chan et al, (2015) show that tour guiding has greatest impact with tour services, whereas leisure activities have the greatest impact on satisfaction with the tour experience. The link between satisfaction and expenditure on product categories is an important factor to be considered in bid to enhance value chain benefits from tourism in a destination.

While in the destination country, tourist expenditure can be apportioned to local transportation (air or ground), lodging, and excursions as key product categories. Previous studies note a direct variation in visitor satisfaction levels and expenditure on these categories (see Chan et al. 2015; Disagna & Osti, 2016).

Accommodation options range across different scales and sizes (boarding and lodging facilities, caravan/camp sites, cottages/villas, eco-lodges, farm stays, guest houses, home stays, hostels, lodges, motels, tented camps, serviced apartments, town hotels, vacation hotels among others). Excursions, on the other hand, are the local activities which are representative of the tourism product and the natural assets of the destination. Many excursion activities are sold by operators and executed by local guides who take on the role of area experts. Retail may also be considered as part of excursions.

Value chains in a destination are significantly sustained by economic aspects, of which visitor expenditure in a destination contributes to. With a positive correlation between visitor satisfaction and expenditure patterns along product categories shown from reviewed literature, satisfaction of tourists in Rwanda is likely to impact positively on tourism service providers along the value chain, where according to National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR, 2011), Hotels and Hospitality was the highest contributor with 45.5%, followed by Restaurant and Mobile food services with 29.1%, and other sub categories include tours and travel, operation of sports, curio, national park management and entertainment. 85% of the establishments are fully owned locally, a guarantee to fortified multiplier effects to the local economy in scenarios of increased visitor expenditure at the destination. This paper therefore links visitor satisfaction in Rwanda, to enhanced multiplier effects to the local economy through quality expenditure at value chain nodes.

METHODOLOGY

A sample survey was used to collect data. An exit survey questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 3,138 visitors leaving the country through the land borders and the airport. A total of 815 visitors, representing 26%, exited the country through the airport while a total of 2323 visitors representing 74% exited through

the land borders. Data was collected on visitor expenditure, as well as visitor satisfaction. 67% of the visitors (exiting through the airport) fell between US\$25,000 and 200,000 income brackets indicating a significant purchasing power. Satisfaction was evaluated based on destination product attributes, as well as individual tourist characteristics. These included satisfaction by gender, length of stay, trip planning period, age group, level of education, and average household income. SPSS application was then used to analyse the data, whose results are presented in tables, graphs and pie charts in subsequent section.

RESULTS

A total of 815 visitors, representing 26%, exited the country through the airport while a total of 2323 visitors representing 74% exited through the land borders. 67% of the visitors (exiting through the airport) fell between US\$25,000 and 200,000 income brackets indicating a significant purchasing power. Taking tourism as a normal good, the anticipated relationship between expenditure and budget covariates is positive (Engstrom & Kipperberg, 2015). Visitors who reported being on business were 837 in total, representing 26.7%, those in transit were 979 representing 31.2% while 626 representing 19.9% were those visiting friends and relatives (VFR). Those visiting for leisure, a total of 322 representing 10.3%, were the least reported. A significant number of visitors engaged in other activities (11.9%) such as faith-based tourism were reported. Over 50% of the visitors were making repeat visits implying the significance of those visiting friends and relatives and on business or transit. In terms of nationality of origin, East Africa Community region accounts for 38.3 %, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for 26.7%, followed by the rest of Africa 5.3%, Europe 15.9%, America 8.3% and Middle East/Asia 5.4%.

With regard to the mode of travel arrangement chosen by visitors, about 1.9% travelled under inclusive tour package arrangements while the rest (98.1%) made their own independent travel arrangements. This trip characteristic is an important determinant of visitor expenditure, (Brida & Scuderi, 2013), though the extent of expenditure varies across multiple studies, and package purchase has minimal impact on local economy. The results further revealed that the visitors' durations of stay were diverse ranging from one day visits to several weeks. About 63.7% of all the visitors stayed for four or less days. On group size, it was established that 67% of the visitors to Rwanda travelled alone. This indicates the magnitude of business and transit visitors (see Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of Visitors

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mode of Transport		
Air	815	26.0
Land	2323	74.0
Mode of Travel Arrangement		
Package	60	01.9
Free Independent	3078	98.1
Length of Stay (Days)		
0	426	13.6
1	635	20.2
2-4	937	29.9
Over 5	1140	36.3
Purpose of Visit		
Business	837	26.7
VFR	626	19.9
Leisure	322	10.3
Transit	979	31.2

Other	374	11.9
Region of Origin		
EAC	1202	38.3
DRC	838	26.7
Rest of Africa	167	05.3
America	259	08.3
Europe	501	15.9
Middle East/Asia	171	05.4
Group size		
Alone	2059	65.6
2 people	541	17.2
Over 3 people	538	17.1
Income per annum (US \$)		
< 25, 000	122	14.9
25, 000 – 99,999	354	43.4
100, 000 – 199, 000	180	22.1
>200, 000	159	19.5
Frequency of visits		
1	387	47.5
2-4	243	29.8
Over 5	185	22.7

Source: Calculations from Sample Survey

Trip planning

Data reveals that 67% of visitors took three to five months to plan for their trips to Rwanda. This indicates an intensive information search possibly because the destination is relatively unknown to the visitors (see Figure 1). Rwanda’s tourism sector needs to leverage on other regional destinations in shortening the information search process and hence reducing the decision making period.

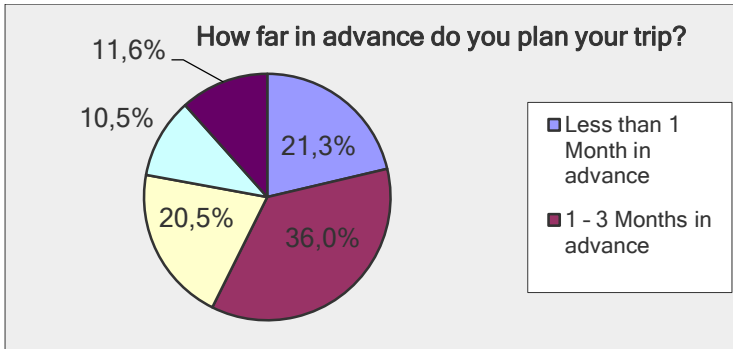


Figure 1: Duration of Trip Planning

According to the sample survey, word of mouth, travel agents and the internet were reported to be the visitors' important sources of information in making travel-related decisions while some third-party sources such as guidebooks, printed media and television were reported to be less useful (Figure 2). This paper, therefore, recommends that travel representatives in the countries or regions of visitors' origin would thus be more effective in marketing Rwanda than sources such as print and sound media.

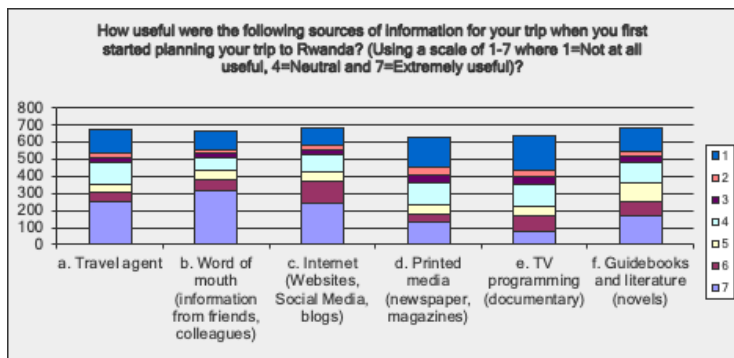


Figure 2: Sources of information

With regard to the factors that visitors considered when selecting trip destinations in the region, safety and security, natural attractions (gorillas, birds etc) and learning experiences were the most highly reported factors by the sample surveyed (Figure 3). The least reported factors were the sun and sand, local cuisine, community events, and local communication/transport.

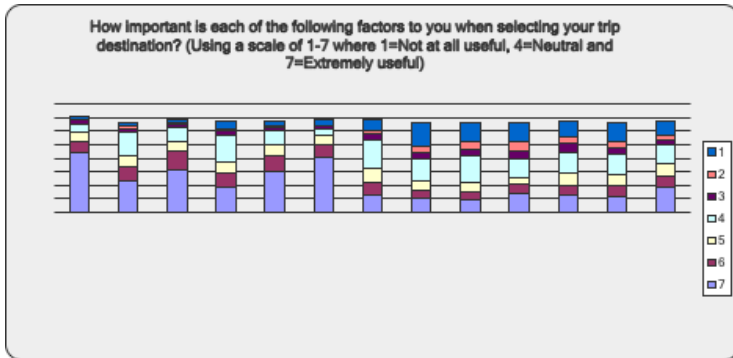


Figure 3: Factors Determining Trip Selection

KEY

- a. Safety & Security
- b. Quality standard (Accommodations, Customer service)
- c. Learning experiences
- d. Value for money
- e. Historical and cultural explorations
- f. Nature explorations (Gorillas, Birds, Flowers)
- g. Local cuisine (Restaurant)
- h. Sun and sand
- i. Community events
- j. Shopping
- k. Convenience and access to local transport
- l. Diversity of outdoor activities (hiking, canoeing, bicycling etc.)
- m. Weather

With regard to the visitors' satisfaction, the knowledge of guides, safety and security, customer service and availability of tourism information was highly rated (Figure 4) while that of hotel quality, service quality and quality of cuisine and language skills was moderately rated. Several studies have found quality to be a critical factor in visitors' expectations and satisfaction. Satisfaction dimensions related to diversity of facilities is a significant predictor of tourist expenditure in a destination (Jurdana and Frleta, 2017). Standardization and accreditation processes across East African Community (EAC) countries should be given a greater priority and more in-depth studies on quality are necessary in the case of Rwanda.

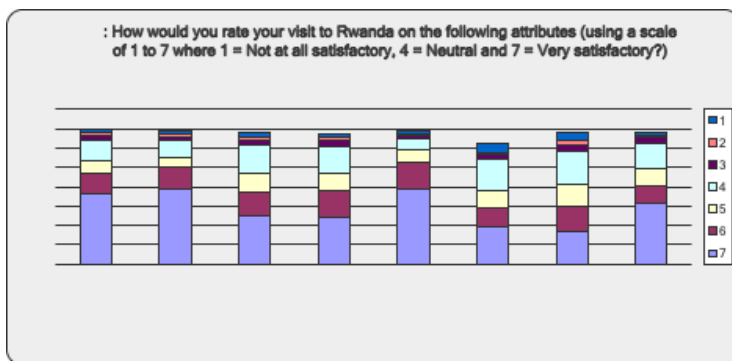


Figure 4: Rating of Destination Various Attributes

Generally, visitors registered satisfaction with their stay in Rwanda. This shows that their experiences exceeded the expectations they had before/during their travelling to the destination (Figure 5). Despite this rating, the quality of service and of cuisine has to be addressed urgently.

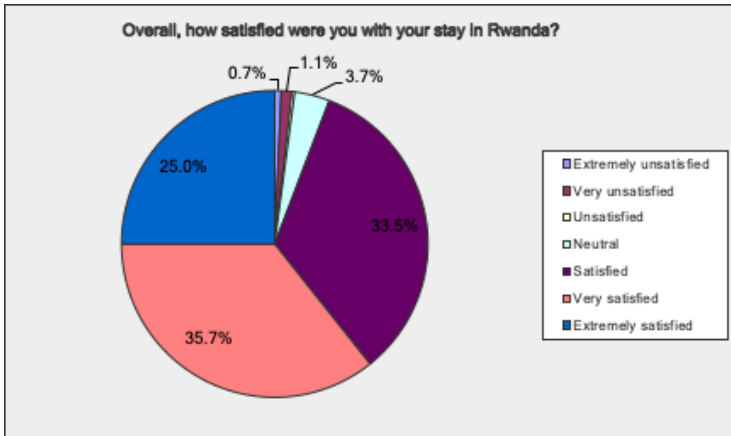


Figure 5: Overall Satisfaction Levels

When the respondents were asked about the activities they would most likely undertake upon return to their countries of origin, they reported that they would share trip experiences with friends and relatives and recommend the destination to networks of friends and relatives. It was also reported that writing trip reports on blogs or advisors with respect to their experiences was unlikely and so the possibilities of visiting again were minimal. However, it was noted that greater satisfaction would result in positive word of mouth/recommendation and so the greater the possibilities of making return visits.

Visitors' satisfaction with regard to the gender variable, shows that the male and female visitors alike were very satisfied with their stay in Rwanda (see Figure 6). However, an analysis of previous research on tourism economics by Brida & Scuderi, (2013) shows that gender as a variable has a non-significant relationship with tourist expenditure.

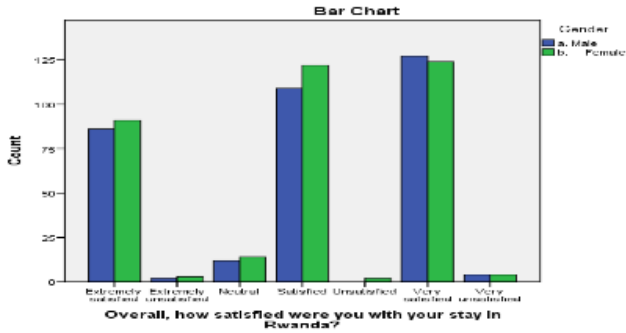


Figure 6: Visitor satisfaction by gender

Most of the visitors who reported staying for more than four days were very satisfied with the destination while those who reported staying for fewer days were averagely satisfied (see Figure 7). Whilst most studies post a significant and positive relation between length of stay and visitor expenditure (Brida & Scuderi, 2013), Roehl & Fesenmaier (1995) provide evidence to approximate the relationship by an inverted *U* curve, increasing up to a determined number of nights and decreasing in later days. Also, Thrane & Farstad (2011) emphasize that the positive effect in the relationship tends to decline as the length of stay increases. For Rwanda, satisfaction scores were highest for visitor category of those spending 1- 3 days, and declined thereafter.

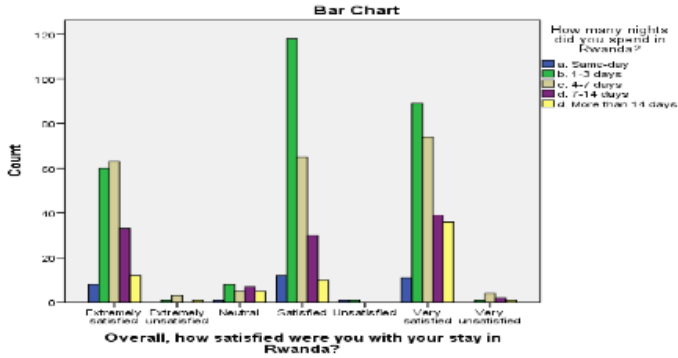


Figure 7: Satisfaction by length of stay

Also noted was the fact that the visitors’ satisfaction with the destination seemed to increase with the period taken in planning for the trip. In other words, the more time the visitors took to plan for the tour, the more satisfied they were with the destination (see Figure 8). Taking planning horizon as a study variable, Thrane, (2002), shows a significant and positive relationship between times spend on trip planning and tourist expenditure at destination. While Thrane (2002) uses metric variables, Aguilo et al, (2000), Chhabra et al, (2002) use categorical variables in their analysis, posting similar observations of direct and significant relationship of trip planning to visitor expenditure in a destination. With planning horizon as a common denominator relating to both satisfaction and expenditure, the impression is that satisfaction could be a predictor of expenditure patterns, with a direct variation in this context. Bookings closest to the travelling time are inversely related to tourist spending at the destination (Aguilo et al, 2000), and a similar pattern for our study is highlighted on figure 8 where satisfaction scores for those with a trip planning period of less than one month trail as compared to that of those taking 1- 3 months.

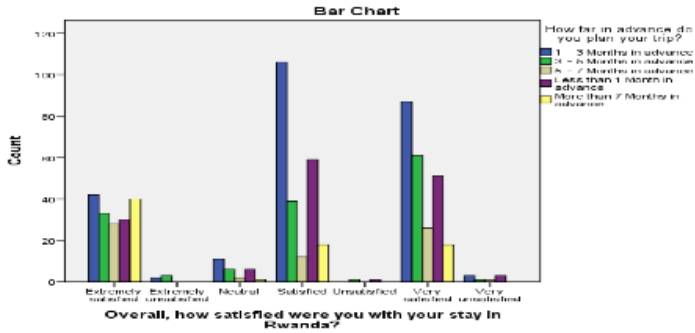


Figure 8: Satisfaction by trip planning period

Visitor’s age vis-a-vis their satisfaction level was also investigated. The results of the survey showed that satisfaction by age-group was not distinctive, although the majority of the visitors between 36 and 45 years reported being just satisfied with the destination (Figure 9). Most of those in the age groups below 36 and above 45 years of age showed greater satisfaction.

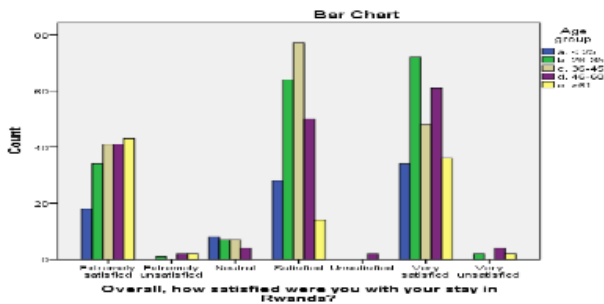


Figure 9: Satisfaction by age group

With regard to the visitors’ level of education, it was noted that the visitors with diploma/degree qualifications reported greater satisfaction with the destination than those with lower ones (Figure

10). Findings by Olya & Mehran, (2017) show that education as an indicator did not have significant effect on tourism expenditure, whereas Brida & Scuderi (2013) posit that education repressors were marginally significant in the group of heavy spenders tourists.

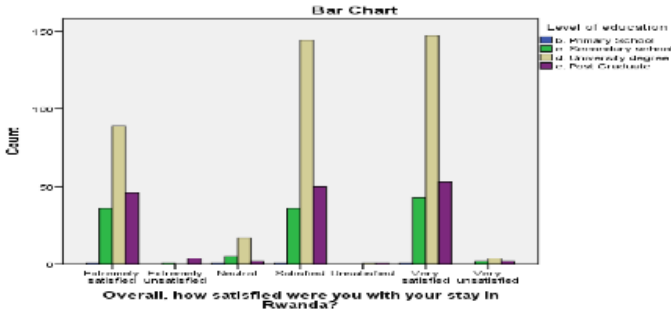


Figure 10: Satisfaction by level of education

In respect to the satisfaction level by average annual household income, the results in this study indicated that the visitors in the middle income bracket were generally less satisfied than those in the lower and higher income brackets (Figure 11). This may imply that the destination meets the expectation of low and high income visitors in contrast to the middle class visitors. Middle class visitors may have had very high expectations to be met. This calls for more realistic marketing and advertisement of the destination. Previous research revelations on relationships between income and expenditure on tourism goods (*see* Downward & Lumsdon, 2000, on the direct relationship between income and expenditure; Brida & Scuderi, 2013, on centrality of economic theory in conditioning purchasing behaviour). In both studies, expenditure on tourism goods is restricted within budgetary confines of individual income. Visitors in a higher income bracket would spend more on tourism goods, and our field data shows that this category also posts higher satisfaction scores as relates to their visitor experience at a destination.

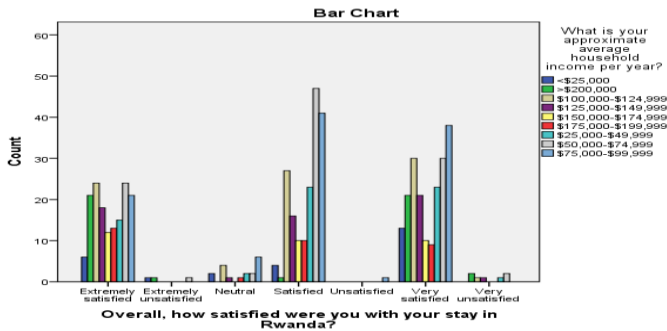


Figure 11: Satisfaction by average household income

Visitor expenditure on tourism goods covered accommodation, food and beverage, shopping, transportation and culture. This spending contributed to Rwanda’s tourism earnings, which is meaningful for the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment and investment opportunities. In 2013, Rwanda’s Travel and Tourism sector attracted capital investment of Rwandese Francs (RWF) 95.9billion (i.e. 8.5% of all total investments at 1128.2 billion) in the country. The sector also directly supported 66,500 jobs (3.1% of total economy employment of 2,145,161) while the total contribution to employment was 8.1% i.e. about 174,500 jobs. Tourism’s indirect contribution to employment was about 69,000 jobs while the induced contribution was 39,000 jobs. Rwanda’s Travel & Tourism contribution to GDP could be broken down into direct (39.5%), induced (19.6%) and indirect (40.9%) components (WTTC, 2014). Indirect contribution is the sum of supply chain (23%), investment (15.5%) and government collective spending (2.3%).

DISCUSSION

Akin to Disagna & Osti, (2016), important variables for tourism satisfaction in Rwanda as a destination were found to include landscape, safety and product attributes at destination. Visitor satisfaction levels from the survey data are average, implying a room

for improvement in enhancing satisfaction indicators at the destination.

Tourism workforce development is an area for improvement that can enhance visitor satisfaction in Rwanda. Being able to meet international customer's standards is key. Skills preparation for work force can be through short training for low skill position, as well as formal education. Workers can additionally be trained for technical and safety requirements of excursions and tour guides should have training in natural asset knowledge.

Visitor preferences also motivate product improvement. Visitors constantly demand tourism products that provide a deeper and more meaningful experience. Rwanda thus needs to develop niche tourism products, and brand key tourism products like wildlife, adventure, resort, and Meetings Incentives Conference and Exhibition (MICE).

Study findings show that 67% of visitors to Rwanda spend three to five months to plan for their trip, and this intensive information search is occasioned by the fact that the destination is relatively unknown to visitors. This paper recommends the digitalization of the processes in tourism, travel, hospitality and catering industries. This would help in developing, managing and marketing tourism products. Adoption of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) will not only enable quick and accurate identification of visitors' needs but will also reach visitors with comprehensive, personalized and up-to-date products that satisfy their needs.

Visitors in Rwanda were generally satisfied with tourism, except for its value for money. Current priority area for Rwanda's tourism development is adding value to tourism products. Adding value is driven by the need to augment the current tourism products so as to enrich the visitor's experiences. Potential avenues to be explored in this bid would include, interpretive tour guiding, and development of alternative tourism activities e.g. initiate agri tourism and agro tourism. As a result, the destinations tourism products will be more competitive, and visitors will be guaranteed greater satisfaction. Thus, with regard to the upgrading of tourism products, this paper suggests the need to improve the quality of tourism products through the following initiatives:

i) Addressing negative impacts

Policies should be strengthened to curb any negative impacts on tourism such as environmental degradation. Visitor-carrying capacity

of national parks and other nature-based attractions should continue to be monitored and the number of visitors regulated to avoid overcrowding and degradation of the natural beauty of the resources and the capacity of attractions should also be tabulated from time to time using empirical ecological data (such as temporal and spatial distribution and density of flora and fauna in the parks, territorial size of the parks and physical terrain) and social indicators (such as visitor attitudes and behaviour).

ii) Variety of tourism products

Since the tourism sector can still offer a wider variety of products, there is a need to expand the products by incorporating new attractions and augmenting the existing ones. This would ensure the development of high-value products that yield a diverse and distinct visitor experience. To achieve this, more emphasis should be put on the establishment of niche products such as cultural home-stays, water based sports on Lake Kivu and on some of the large rivers traversing the country, cable cars and mountain hiking, agro-tourism, avi-culture etc.

iii) Product development

The main goal of diversifying tourism products is to increase revenue. Diversification is also necessary for the following reasons: a) Over reliance on gorilla tourism is creating environmental conservation concerns, b) Length of stay for international visitors is brief, generally four to eight days for most visitors, c) There is relatively low share of visitors visiting for leisure as compared to those for business

iv) Development of high quality tourism and hospitality management skills

Studies in the past indicate that visitors perceive service to be of low quality, excessively overcharged and of low value for money. In a bid to remedy this situation, Work Force Development Authority (WDA) is offering courses in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to promote artisan or technical skills in the sector. These include culinary art, housekeeping, front desk operations, and waiters' service related course. University courses on offer include: Bachelors of Hotel and Restaurant management, Bachelors of Travel and Tourism Management and certificates in House Keeping, Front Office/Reception Techniques, Kitchen Operations,

Restaurant Services/ Food and beverage services, Tour Guiding and Administration, Tour and Travel Operations, Airline Cabin Crew/ Air Hostesses, Exhibition and Event Management and Customer Care.

CONCLUSION

Satisfaction was a crucial variable in the present study. Satisfied visitors help in sustainable marketing of a destination through positive word of mouth and post-trip engagement. Generally, most visitors were satisfied with Rwanda's tourism product except its value for money. There is need, therefore, to promote value for money rather than price as the measure of visitor satisfaction and to encourage interpretive tour guiding. Further branding of tour products is necessary in order to differentiate them from those of alternative destinations in the region. Therefore, adding value is driven by the need to augment current tourism products so as to enrich the experiences of visitors. In turn improved experiences would exceed expectations and consequently guarantee satisfaction. Visitors' views, attitudes and needs should be monitored continually.

Visitor expenditure in Rwanda was on tourism goods, and this generated tourism earning that contributed both directly and indirectly to GDP, employment and investments. Satisfaction was a crucial variable in the present study, and exhibited a relationship with visitor expenditure. Satisfied visitors help in sustainable marketing of a destination through positive word of mouth and post-trip engagement. Generally, most visitors were satisfied with Rwanda's tourism product except its value for money. There is need, therefore, to promote value for money rather than price as the measure of visitor satisfaction and to encourage interpretive tour guiding. Further branding of tour products is necessary in order to differentiate them from those of alternative destinations in the region. Therefore, adding value is driven by the need to augment current tourism products so as to enrich the experiences of visitors. In turn improved experiences would exceed expectations and consequently guarantee satisfaction, which has direct and significant relations with expenditure patterns.

Trip satisfaction scores could be predictors of visitor expenditure patterns, and updated data on this is meaningful for

destination policy and planning in view of sustainable linkages of the local economy to tourism value chains. Visitors' views, attitudes and needs should be monitored continually in destinations.

REFERENCES

- Aguiló Perez, E., & Juaneda Sampol, C. (2000). Tourist expenditure for mass tourism markets. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(3), 624–637.
- Akama, J. (1999). The Evolution of Tourism in Kenya. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, Vol 7, (1), pp 6 – 25.
- Anderson, E.W., Formell, C., and Lehmann, D.R. (1994), 'Customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability: findings from Sweden', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 58, No 3, pp 53–66.
- Brida, J.G. & Scuderi, R. (2013). Determinants of tourist expenditure: A review of micro econometric models. *Tourism management perspectives*, 6, pp 28-40
- Cardenas, P.J., Pulido, J.I., and Pulido, M. (2016). The influence of tourist satisfaction on tourism expenditure in emerging urban cultural destinations. *Journal of travel and tourism marketing*. Vol33(4), pp 497 - 512
- Chan, A., Hsu, C., and Baum, T. (2015). The impact of tour service performance on tourist Satisfaction and behavioral intentions: A study of Chinese tourists in Hong Kong. *Journal of travel and tourism marketing*. Vol 32, issue 1 – 2, pp 18 - 33
- Chhabra, D., Sills, E., & Rea, P. (2002). Tourist expenditures at heritage festivals. *Event Management*, 7(4), 221–230
- Disegna, M. and Osti, L. (2016). Tourists expenditure behavior: the influence of satisfaction and the dependence on spending categories. *Tourism economics*, 22(1), pp 5 – 30.
- Downward, P., & Lumsdon, L. (2000). The demand for day-visits: An analysis of visitor spending. *Tourism Economics*, 6(3), 251–261.
- Engstrom, T. & Kipperberg, G. (2015). Decomposing the heterogenous discretionary spending of International Visitors to Fjord Norway. *Tourism management*, 51, pp 131 – 141.
- Homburg, C., Koschate, N., and Hoyer, W.D. (2005), 'Do satisfied customers really pay more? A study of the relationship between customers satisfaction and willingness to pay', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 69, pp 84–96.
- Ikiara, M., and Okech, C. (2002). Impact of tourism on environment in Kenya: status and policy. KIPPRA Discussion paper Number 19

- Jurdana, D., and Frleta, D. (2017). Satisfaction as a determinant of tourist expenditure. *Current issues in tourism*, 20(7), pp 691 – 704.
- Kim, S.S., Prindeaux, B., and Chon, K. (2010), 'A comparison of results of three statistical methods to understand the determinants of festival participants' expenditures', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol 29, pp 297–307.
- Kotler, P. (2001). A framework for marketing management. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.
- Lee, J., Graefe, A. R., & Burns, R. C. (2004). Service quality, satisfaction, and behavioural intention among forest visitors. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 17(1), 73-82.
- Mountho, L. (1987). Consumer behavior in tourism. *European journal of marketing*. , 21(10), 1 – 44.
- Munier, C., and Camelis, C. (2013), 'Toward an identification of elements contributing to satisfaction with the tourism experience', *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol 19, No 1, pp 19–39.
- NISR (2011). Establishment census.
- Nowacki, M. M. (2009). Quality of visitor attractions, satisfaction, benefits and behavioural intentions of visitors: verification of a model. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11, 297-309.
- Olya, H.G.T., and Mehran, C. (2017). Modelling Tourism Expenditure Using Complexity Theory. *Journal of Business Research*, 75, pp 147 – 158
- Roehl, W. S., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (1995). Modelling the influence of information obtained at state welcome centers on visitor expenditures. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 4(3), pp19- 28.
- Spray, J., and Agarwal, V. (2016). Enterprise Mapping in Rwanda Dairy, Maize and Tourism. IGC Working paper. London: The International Growth Centre.
- Sukiman, M.F., Omar, S.I., Muhibudin, M., Yussof, I., and Mohamed, B. (2013). Tourist satisfaction as the key to destination survival in Pahang. *Procedia, social and behavioural sciences*, Vol 91, pp 78 – 87.
- Thrane, C. (2002). Jazz festival visitors and their expenditures: Linking spending patterns to musical interest. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40(3), 281–286.
- Thrane, C., & Farstad, E. (2011). Domestic tourism expenditures: the non-linear effects of length of stay and travel party size. *Tourism Management*, 32(1), pp 46 - 52.
- Tian-Cole, S., & Crompton, J. L. (2003). A conceptualization of the relationships between service quality and visitor satisfaction, and their links to destination selection. *Leisure Studies*, 22(1), 65-80.
- Tian-Cole, S., Crompton, J. L., & Wilson, V. L. (2002). An empirical investigation of the relationships between service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions among visitors to a wildlife refuge. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 34(1),1-24

- Wang, X., Zhang, J., Gu, C., & Shen, F. (2009). Examining antecedents and consequences of tourist satisfaction: a structural modeling approach. *Tsinghua Science and Technology*, 14(3), 397-406.
- Woodside, A.G., Frey, L.L., and Daly, R.T. (1989). Linking service quality, customer satisfaction and behavioural intention. *Journal of health care marketing*. 9(4), 5 – 17.
- WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council), 2014. *Economic Impacts 2014*
- Zabkar, V., Brencic, M., & Dmitrovic, T. (2009). Modelling perceived quality, visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions at the destination level. *Tourism Management*, 1-10.
- Zhang, (2010).
- Zhang, L., Qu, H., and Ma, J.(E.) (2010), 'Examining the relationship of exhibition attendees' satisfaction and expenditure: the case of two major exhibitions in China', *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, Vol 11, No 2, pp 100–118.

Odunga Pius (podunga@yahoo.com) Professor, School of Business and Economics, Kirinyaga University

Manyara, Geoffrey (manyaramasaki@hotmail.com) Lecturer, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Technical University of Kenya.

Atieno, Lucy (lucyobare@yahoo.com) ndependent Researcher, Nairobi, Kenya