

TOURIST BEHAVIOUR AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM RESOURCES AT LAKE BOSOMTWE IN THE ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA

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Abstract

Tourism resources need to be developed with careful consideration of tourist behaviour in order to engender desirable behavioural responses from tourist experiences to achieve optimal tourist satisfaction. The study sought to examine tourist behaviour and the development of tourism resources at Lake Bosomtwe in the Ashanti region of Ghana. A total of 100 respondents were used for the survey from January to March, 2012.

The study showed that majority of tourists were not satisfied with the current supply of facilities provided at the site. Tourists perceived that there were some facilities that were absent from the site which could have enhanced the attractiveness of the Lake. Again most developers did not consider the interest of tourists as well as the sustainability of their resources when developing projects for tourists. However, some managers borrowed ideas from other similar attraction sites to develop resources at the site. Management and tourist should work hand-in-hand to provide and produce products that are of utmost benefits to tourist for maximum satisfaction.

Keywords: Behaviour, Development, Resources, Satisfaction, Tourist.

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Introduction

Tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and has become one of the largest industries in the world. The impact of tourism is extremely varied. On one hand, it plays an important role in the socio-economic and political development in destination countries by, for instance, offering new employment opportunities. On the other hand, as a tool to create jobs, it has not fulfilled its expectations. At the same time, complaints from tourist destinations concerning massive negative impacts upon environment, culture and residents' ways of life have given rise to a demand for a more sustainable development in tourism. Different parties would have to be involved in the process of developing sustainable tourism. Tourist behaviour has been a major topic for decades under academic scrutiny in tourism research literature. Contributions have been made from various aspects to the understanding of tourist behaviour. Tourists' spatial and temporal behaviour was empirically investigated in a number of studies (Pearce, 1988; Fennell, 1996; Huang and Wu, 1997). Additionally, researches on segmentation differences in tourist behaviour are often found in cross-cultural studies with a tourism context (Pizam and Jeong, 1996). Furthermore it is also not uncommon for tourist behaviour to be examined in comparison to residents' leisure behaviour (Xiao, 1997).

Despite the many research endeavours and multidimensional findings in tourist behaviour, destination-based comprehensive investigations into tourist behaviour need to be further conducted in order to come to an overall understanding of tourist behaviour in relation to development of tourism resources. Researches to this end are theoretically as well as practically significant in that they may extend the breadth of knowledge of tourism behaviour on the one hand and contribute to destination management and planning on the other.

Destination management is one of the major concerns of any country. This consists of studying the nature of the destination, resources available, hosts, the visitor's behaviour and management of tourism resources. The potential of learning organization approach for improving the sustainability of tourism destination will help the management of tourist destinations (Schiantez and Kavanagh, 2007). For the tourism industry to be profitable and sustainable in the long term, its development and management should be according to a new competitiveness paradigm

(Ritchie and Crouch, 1993). In spite of the awareness of the numerous benefits derived from the sector by nations the world over, developing countries such as Ghana has paid little attention to the proper development of tourism resources to that effect.

Destination-based comprehensive investigations into tourist behaviour need to be further conducted. This would help to come to an overall understanding of tourist behaviour in relation to development of tourism resources. One way to maximize the benefits of tourism developments is to develop tourism resources with respect to tourist behaviour. Lake Bosomtwe in the Ashanti region of Ghana is endowed with very beautiful natural resources which could be developed into a very attractive resort. The Lake has been rendered unattractive, under utilised, and unable to generate the required revenue that is supposed to accrue from the attraction. This could be as a result of ineffective development plans and project that will enhance tourist satisfaction at the lake. This paper therefore seeks to examine the relationship between tourist behaviour and development of tourist resources at Lake Bosomtwe in the Ashanti region of Ghana.

Tourist behaviour and satisfaction

Tourist behaviour has been a major topic for decades under academic scrutiny in tourism research literature. Contributions have been made from various aspects to the understanding of tourist behaviour. Tourists' spatial and temporal behaviour was empirically investigated in a number of studies (Pearce, 1988; Fennell, 1996; Huang and Wu, 1997). Behaviour frameworks were also developed to account for the differences between tourists' home-based behaviour and their vacation behaviour (Graburn, 1983; Nash, 1996; Turner, 1969; Pearce, 1982). Conceptualizing such differentiations as the compensatory, the spill-over or familiarity, the 'liminal' and the 'liminoid'.

Additionally researches on segmentation differences in tourist behaviour are often found in cross-cultural studies with a tourism context (Pizam and Jeong, 1996). Furthermore it is also not uncommon for tourist behaviour to be examined in comparison to residents' leisure behaviour (Xiao, 1997). Despite the many research endeavors and multidimensional findings in tourist behaviour, destination-based comprehensive investigations into tourist behaviour need to be further conducted in order to come to an overall understanding of tourist behaviour in distinct socio-cultural contexts. Researches to this end are theoretically as well as practically significant

in that they may extend the breadth of knowledge of tourist behaviour on the one hand and contribute to destination management, development, and planning on the other.

Tourist satisfaction is an important topic in the tourism industry because of the important role it plays in repeat visit to a destination and the development of tourism in general. Tourist satisfaction is mostly based on some attributes. Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) identified four key classes of attributes that influences tourists satisfaction. These include what they referred to as satisfiers, that is factors that generate satisfaction when present but do not generate dissatisfaction when not present; dissatisfiers or factors that can generate dissatisfaction if they do not work properly, yet which do not generate praise when they work well or above a certain standard level; critical attributes, which can generate both complaints and praise; and neutral attributes, which do not receive either many complaints or much praise. It can be induced from this study that not all factors or attributes affect tourist satisfaction in the same manner.

Customer value has also been identified as an important factor in customer satisfaction (Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann 1994; Cronin et al 2000). Williams and Soutar (2009) in their study on value, satisfaction and behavioural intentions in an adventure tourism context identified value-for-money, emotional value and novelty value as significant predictors of tourist satisfaction with value for money been the most prominent. This survey however was conducted using only one type of activity (four-wheel drive tours) from two operators in only one location at one time of the year thus the applicability and generalisation of the findings to other tourism context limits the finding.

Tourism planning and development

In the tourism planning and development context, tourism is defined as an interdisciplinary, multi-faceted phenomenon that involves the interrelated components of tourism products, activities, and services provided by the public and private sectors (Gunn, 1994; Pearce, 1989, 1995). These tourism components are considered as fundamental factors in tourism planning and development, and a basic knowledge of these components is required for successful tourism planning and management (Inkeep, 1991). Consequently, a discussion of comprehensive tourism planning is needed to provide a basic structure and guidelines for developing more competitive tourism products and services.

Tourism services evolve continuously as processes and tourism businesses have to adjust to changing demand. Generally speaking, “tourism” indicates a composite and heterogeneous good demanded by different classes of individuals, whose needs and perceptions may differ substantially. For some people, tourism is mainly perceived as time devoted to leisure activities, for others it provides an opportunity to meet people, take part in unusual activities, visit new places, friends and relatives, etc. Accordingly, each tourist destination, with its unique natural and built resources, attractions and policies, is more suited to a particular kind of tourist than to others. Nonetheless, the same destination may not necessarily cater simply to niche markets but can host several categories of tourists in the same season. For this reason, destinations should identify the type of tourists that are better served and which segment of potential tourists could be optimally targeted, so as to enhance the ability to maximize their main goals in terms of arrivals and profits. Moreover, to increase their competitiveness in tourism markets, destinations usually diversify their product and launch new attractions, providing tourists with ever larger choice sets among which to choose what best satisfies their preferences.

These developments require flexible and well-planned tourist policies, able to capture future changes. In this respect, the analysis of tourism characteristics, market perspectives and tourism policies would be attractive to local communities and policymakers for three reasons. First, understanding the evolution in tourists’ needs enables destinations to improve supply. Second, acknowledge of the relative importance of the key features characterizing local tourist goods improves the effectiveness of tourism policies. Third, information on tourist and local community preferences is an important component of sustainable development and may enhance economic growth.

All these can be expressed in a series of simple questions. First, does the current supply for a given destination fully satisfy demand or is there some mismatch as a result of a distorted perception by the local stakeholders? What kind of characteristics of tourism services and available infrastructures can make a destination more attractive for tourists? In an event some specific projects have been identified as the preferred candidate for implementing a tourism revitalization policy.

Concept of tourism planning

Planning, in general, is the process of decision-making that relates to the future of destination regions, attractions, and services (Gunn, 1988; Inkeep, 1991; Mill & Morrison, 1985). It is a dynamic and vital process of identifying objectives as well as defining alternative methods and actions to achieve the objectives that are already in place. Additionally, it includes an evaluation of selected methods and actions (Hudman & Hawkin, 1989). Planning therefore is a complex process involving a consideration of diverse economic, social, and environmental structures.

Similarly, tourism planning is a process of comprehensive evaluation and analysis of related issues, including not only the determination of goals, but also the development of alternative methods and actions to further decision-making. Particularly, Gunn (1988, p.22) said that “tourism planning as a concept of viewing the future and dealing with anticipated consequences is the only way that tourism’s advantages can be obtained.

Tourism planning must be strategic and integrative.” Murphy (1985) also pointed out that tourism planning should fit within existing systems and should be used in urban and regional development strategies. In particular, there should be community involvement in the planning process. Mathieson and Wall (1982) suggest that tourism planning is related to not only the components of tourism, but also the interrelationships among these components. Thus, due to the sophisticated and varied nature of tourism planning and its processes, it is required of tourism planning to incorporate numerous concepts and disciplines drawn from different fields. It also needs to conduct a variety of planning activities such as feasibility studies, product development, promotion, forecasting, marketing planning, and strategic marketing programmes.

In order to have comprehensive tourism planning, all of the existing components and resources that include tourism attractions, destination management organizations (DMO), markets, and local related businesses and services within a given region or destination, should be considered. Since the goals and objectives that tourism addresses through development depend upon how important and sensitive tourism development is to the community, such goals should correspond with community or regional planning in a given destination.

Socio-demographics and tourist behaviour

Profiling of consumers in academic research is important for marketing purposes which may help to identify what is driving consumer behaviour. Practitioners and researchers in marketing efforts have worked to develop more accurately to identify potential visitors (Chandler & Costello, 2002). According to Woodside and Pitts (1976) as cited by Sarigollu and Huang (2005), the profiling of segments are complements to the benefits sought and helping travel suppliers to form travel packages that are more compatible with views, motivations and attitudes of the travellers. Additionally, profile of visitors provides a better understanding to forecast travel behaviour.

Generally socio-demographic variables such as age, income, nationality and education have been considered as relatively usable, since they are easy to measure (Lawson, 1994) and they are identified as appropriate determinants of tourist behaviour (Kastenholz, 2002; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gitelson & Kerstetter, 1990). Marketers are developing ever more complicated techniques to identify and assess differences among segments of their visitor populations (Chandler & Costello, 2002). According to Weinstein (1987), as cited by Loker & Perdue, 1992) clarifies that "Good market segmentation research provides operational data that are practical, usable, and readily translatable into strategy". The selection of a suitable segmentation basis for example; the characteristic according to which segments are distinguished is necessary for a valuable structuring of the market.

Approaches to innovation in tourism

Although innovation is often characterized as a critical factor for success in tourism (Hall and Williams 2008), the effectiveness and importance of innovation in tourism is difficult to quantify and has seldom been analyzed. Tourism and innovation is now emerging as a topic of interest for academic researchers (Hall and Williams 2008), although literature constantly refers to change or growth in tourism. Considerable progress has been made in recent years (Hjalager 1997, 2002; Sundbo et al. 2007; Stamboulis and Skayannis 2003; Orfila-Sintes et al. 2005; Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson 2009; Pikkemaat and Keller 2005), but in general, there is, as Hall and Williams (2008, 4) point it out, "surprisingly little research in this field".

Tourism as an industry has low innovation activities. General complaints about a lack of innovation in the tourism industry have been found to be justified by empirical studies (Hjalager 2002). Weiermair and Peters (2002, 163) mention the following reasons for the slow and inertial innovation behaviour in the tourism industry:

Demand side: conservative (mass) tourists search for simple mass products that feature high publicity and guaranteed quality. Absence of competition: the size relations in the market neither provide market entry barriers nor allow the punishment of competitors that imitate innovations.

High costs and risks: in case of innovativeness, SMEs would be confronted with these inconveniences in a market in which the danger of imitation is almost constant.

Firm size: traditional SMEs limit their growth to the sheer accumulation of hardware, to increase capacities.

Slow adoption of new technology: Tschurtschenthaler (2005, 9.) adds that tourism especially lacks process innovations to increase productivity, because it is normally much more difficult to rationalize services than manufacturing processes.

Supplier-driven innovation in tourism

Orfila-Sintes et al. (2005) consider decisions about innovations with respect to tourism activities are supplier-driven. It has been thought that tourism firms are not themselves involved in innovation research, because suppliers are responsible for research and their activities facilitate the subsequent innovation processes in tourism firms. Hjalager, (2002) characterizes the hotel industry as a supplier dominated sector that innovates throughout the incorporation of technological elements that are developed by its suppliers. This hypothesis is in line with empirical findings on technological innovation in the service industry, which show that most companies innovate by purchasing equipment, components, and materials from their suppliers (Barras 1986). It could be concluded that most technological innovations that are used in tourism come from outside of the industry and can be labelled as innovations in tourism, while organizational changes are explicitly tourism innovations.

Visitors' perceptions of agents of change and the resulting impacts on a site

In examining recreationists' perceptions of environmental impacts at outdoor recreation sites, past research has suggested that visitors are more aware of direct impacts and have greater

difficulty identifying indirect impacts (Hillery, Nancarrow, Griffin, & Syme, 2001; Marion & Lime, 1986). The terms direct and indirect have been used to describe environmental impacts resulting directly and indirectly from human use (Farrell, Hall & White, 2001). For example, recreationists can impact wildlife directly through interaction and indirectly by damaging their habitat (Cole & Landres, 1995).

Although not previously applied to ecotourism, this research suggests that visitors will be more likely to recognize a direct relationship between their actions as agents of change and the resulting impact, while they will have difficulty recognizing indirect relationships. Specifically, when asked about the impacts that result from physical agents of change, visitors are more likely to identify physical impacts, but not social or economic impacts. It is expected that this pattern will also pertain to social and economic agents of change and the resulting impacts.

The self-serving bias theory, an extension of attribution theory, reinforces the importance of understanding the direct and indirect relationships between agents of change and the resulting impacts. The self-serving bias theory suggests that visitors will accept responsibility for positive impacts and deny responsibility for negative impacts when evaluating their own behaviour (Myers, 1990). However, the theory also suggests that individuals may accept responsibility for negative impacts if it is easy to verify that the individual's behaviour results in a negative outcome. (Myers, 1990). It seems reasonable to expect that when the relationship between an individual's behaviour and the resulting impact is direct, the relationship is more easily verified. As a result, visitors may be more likely to accept responsibility for their behaviour resulting in a negative impact when the relationship between the individual's behaviour and the resulting impact is direct. However, when the relationship is indirect, it is less easily verified and so visitors may not accept responsibility for a negative outcome.

This insight into how visitors' may perceive their own impacts is important when managing visitors. For example, if visitors accept responsibility for their role in contributing to both positive and negative outcomes they can be educated to change their behaviour to positively contribute to the site. Conversely, if visitors do not take responsibility for their contributions to

changes in a site, they will first need to be educated about their role prior to being provided with information about how they can modify their behaviour.

Hydrology and biogeochemistry of Lake Bosomtwe

The lake currently has no outlet, although it has apparently overflowed in the recent geologic past (e.g., Turner et al. 1996a). The most important controls on the water balance of the lake are rainfall directly onto, and water evaporating directly from, the surface of the lake (Turner et al. 1996a). Of lesser importance is the runoff contributed by the lake's surrounding watershed. It is reasonable to assume, when considering the hydrogeological conditions that little or no groundwater enters or leaves the basin. According to Turner et al. (1996a, 1996b), the lake level is very sensitive to small changes in rainfall and other climatic parameters, such as annual mean temperature and evaporation.

Although the lake is homogeneous with respect to major ion composition, it is stratified into an upper oxygenated layer and a lower anoxic layer, and there is an abrupt change in the concentration profiles of pH, NH_4^+ , PO_4^{3-} , NO_3^- , and Mn at a depth of 16 m (Turner et al. 1996b; and also in the data of a new study by Hecky and co-workers as cited in Koeberl et al. 2007). Previous studies of the chemistry of waters within the basin, according to Turner et al. (1996b, and references therein), included chemical analyses of lake-water samples taken in 1934 (McGregor, 1937) which indicated a sodium bicarbonate water of low salinity and high pH; and chemical data from some of the streams running into the basin (Whyte, 1975). It should be noted that owing to decomposition of organic matter in lake sediments, the lake water has "turned over" in the past, leading to anoxic conditions throughout the water column and, thus, to mass death of the fish population (Rattray, 1923). Studies of Lake Bosomtwe sediments have included chemical analyses of two lake-mud samples (McGregor 1937) that gave the following results calculated on a water-free basis: 0.76 and 0.35 wt% total sulfur and 8.36 and 3.82 wt% organic carbon, respectively. These values indicate a high input of detrital organic matter. This is also supported by variations in carbon and nitrogen isotopic compositions of bulk organic matter in sediments (Talbot and Johannessen, 1992) that reflect climatically induced changes to the lake and the catchment flora. Organic pollution may present a problem in lakes such as Bosomtwe (Ansa-Asare et al., 1999).

Methodology

Two different procedures were employed in the study. Non-probability sampling techniques were used to select both tourist to the site and managers of facilities at Lake Bosomtwe. On the part of the managers, purposive sampling technique was used to select managers of some of the facilities at the Lake. Five managers were purposively selected to be part of the study. These respondents were selected based on their usefulness in terms of the valuable information they had to offer concerning the study of tourist behaviour and the development of tourism resources at Lake Bosomtwe.

Convenience sampling technique was used to select tourist to the site. This technique was used because a higher response rate was needed to make generalization of the results and findings. Again there were many visitors who did not want to take part in the research due to lack of interest. For this reason, convenience sampling method helped the researchers to select only those who were willing and were interested to partake in the study.

In general, there is no correct sample size in the absolute sense, and larger samples are always preferable. The sample size for the quantitative aspect was calculated from the average of the total number of visitors who visited the Lake in three months of a similar season in which the data was collected. Data was collected from October to December, 2012. The total number of tourists who visited the Lake in the months of October (87), November (91) and December (144) as at 2011 were 322 tourists. An average number of tourists to the site for the three months was taken to be the sample size of the study. An average of 107 respondents were targeted for the study and a total sample size of 100 tourists were used for the study. This procedure was used to calculate the sample size because it was difficult to come by a database that captures the total population of tourists who have visited or visits the Lake. Again the number of tourists who visited the lake differs from time to time and occasion to occasion so it was difficult to get a fixed number of visitors who would come there at a particular point in time. Most visitors who visited the Lake do not book neither do they make any reservation ahead of time and so it became difficult to speculate the number of visitors who would be at the site at any point in time.

Sex and age distribution of respondents

Traditionally, sex and age are found to influence individuals' attitudes, perception, and enjoyment of tourism resources. Age is perceived to shape people's view about things including their appreciation of tourism resources. Age therefore becomes an important variable when examining resources to develop for tourist use. Males are often associated with adventurous or risky forms of recreation while their female counterparts enjoy less risky and passive forms of recreation. Table 1 presents the sex and age distribution of the respondents. The respondents comprised of 54 males and 46 females with majority of 26 males falling within the ages of 20 to 29 and 22 of females being less than 20 years respectively. Only three males and a female were above 50 years of age.

Table 1: Sex and Age of respondents

Sex of respondents	Age of respondents					Total
	<20	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 and above	
Males	13	26	8	4	3	54
Females	22	17	3	3	1	46
Total	35	43	11	7	4	100

The disparity between the total number of males and females who visited the Lake however, is in contrast with the national statistics of the population of Ghana in terms of total number of males and females. A critical consideration of this statistics indicated that Lake Bosomtwe was visited by a lot of young men and women within the ages of 18 and 30 years. This could however be attributed to the fact that the younger people are attracted to the lake due to its main activity of swimming which is not well enjoyed by the aged. Again, judging from the culture of the Ashantes, it was difficult for adults to dress in swimming suits such as bikini and mingle with the youth. For this reason the older folks who may want to swim might feel intimidated. Another reason that could possibly account for the low patronage of adults is the water phobic nature of most Ashantes since they do not have many large water bodies in their region neither are they close to the sea.

Tourist behaviour and the development of tourism resources

There has been a number of studies on tourist behaviour and the development of tourism resources at different places. However, the two concepts have mostly been studied separately from each other. In order to develop tourism resources for tourist use at Lake Bosomtwe, there was the need to find out first whether the current supply of resources at the site satisfied tourist demand.

Adequacy of resources at Lake Bosomtwe

Tourist visit attraction sites that offer variety of resources and activities. This however, affects the revenues of such attraction sites because tourists do not only feel satisfied with the resources but also provide an opportunity for them to stay longer and spend more. Table 2 presents information on the current tourism resources at Lake Bosomtwe.

Table 2: Adequacy of resources

Resources are adequate	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	46	48.9
No	48	51.1
Total	94	100.0

From the study, over half of the respondents (51.1%) were not satisfied with the current supply of tourism resources at Lake Bosomtwe. The remaining 48.9 percent however said that they were satisfied. Tourists who visited the lake had varying levels of expectations which also reflected in their levels of satisfaction. There is a possibility that the extent of exposure of the respondents to other tourist attractions contributed to their different expectations at the lake. In this regard those who have not travelled to other tourist sites apart from the lake are likely to be the ones who were satisfied while those who had more exposure were not due to the range of facilities and resources they had been exposed to elsewhere. This calls for the development of wide array of resources that would appeal to the different category of visitors who come to the lake in order to engender notions of satisfaction from their experiences. This should not however lead to the duplication of resources at other tourist attraction sites since tourists look out for quality, uniqueness, and authenticity of tourism resources.

Developers' consideration of tourist satisfaction

Developers and managers who develop tourism resources with ample consideration of tourist satisfaction tend to receive more revenues than their counterparts who do not. Optimal tourist satisfaction should therefore be the prime objective of every developer. Table 3 presents the responses of tourists concerning this issue.

Table 3: Developers consideration of tourist satisfaction

Do developers consider your satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	34	45.3
No	41	54.7
Total	75	100.0

Out of the total 75 respondents who responded to this question 54.7 percent responded no, while the remaining 45.3 percent responded yes. This statistics somehow supports the reason why majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the current supply of resources. Visitors tend to enjoy themselves better at places where they can identify themselves with the facilities provided for their use. This calls for developers to develop more customer oriented attractions that would meet the individual needs of visitors rather than the general type of resources that caters for everybody without any differentiation. From the in-depth interviews conducted with the managers and owners of facilities around the lake, an owner of a facility had this to say when he was asked what informed the beginning of the facility.

R: "I am a cook by profession and so I felt that I could make use of my abilities while at the same time earn an income with my skills."

-Owner, bar and restaurant

From this response it is not surprising that majority of the visitors think that facilities provided at the lake were made without their satisfaction in mind. It is also evident that most of the resources provided at the lake are supply driven and not demand driven. This means that they are provided not for tourist satisfaction per se but rather for profit. It would be beneficial for resources to be

given due consideration of visitor satisfaction before they are developed in order to solicit the desired behavioural responses from them.

Factors that developers consider before developing resources for tourist use at Lake Bosomtwe

There are several sources or outlets available to developers to consult for information and ideas when developing resources for visitor use.

Table 4: Influence of tourists on development

Does tourist behaviour influence managers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	46	56.8
No	35	43.2
Total	81	100.0

Over half of the respondents (56.8%) affirmed that tourists' behaviour influence managers' decision on development and this indicate that some managers were influenced by tourists behaviour while the remaining 43.2 percent responded in the negative way. This indicates that majority of visitors thought that managers were influenced by their behaviour so far as the development of resources for their use are concerned. However one manager had this to say from the in-depth interviews conducted when asked whether tourist behaviour is considered in relation to the development of facilities. He said *"yes, I sometimes consider that because after all they are the reason why I am doing all this."* This also confirmed why majority perceived that their behaviour affected management decision in the development of resources. However, realities on the ground tend to differ a bit since there are some essential facilities that are still lacking regardless of their potential contribution to the satisfaction of tourists.

Tourism services evolve continuously as processes and tourism businesses have to adjust to changing demand. Generally speaking, "tourism" indicates a composite and heterogeneous good demanded by different classes of individuals, whose needs and perceptions may differ substantially. For some people, tourism is mainly perceived as time devoted to leisure activities, for others it provides an opportunity to meet people, take part in unusual activities, visit new places, friends and relatives, etc. Accordingly, each tourist destination, with its unique natural and built resources, attractions and policies, is more suited to a particular kind of tourist than to

others. Nonetheless, the same destination may not necessarily cater simply to niche markets but can host several categories of tourists in the same season (Brau et al, 2007).

Several factors need to be considered when developing resources for tourist use. Developers would have to identify the type of tourists they are developing the resources for since different categories of tourists require different mix of attractions and facilities for their satisfaction. For instance, adventure tourists may demand facilities and activities which are daring and thrilling and requires some level of risk to be satisfied while passive recreationists require the kind of resources that will enhance their relaxation. This calls for developers to study tourist behaviour in order to examine their needs and preference of facilities. This could be achieved through observation, survey, and feedback from frontline personnel. Developers may also take cues from how other similar attractions have been developed elsewhere and make the necessary modifications to suit their destination or attraction site in order to solicit the desired behavioural responses from visitors. The developments of tourism resources require flexible and well-planned tourist policies that would capture future changes. Some developers take cues and ideas from tourist behaviour while others do not. These are some of the responses that emerged.

I: Does the behaviour of tourists inform you about particular facilities that need to be introduced or developed to improve tourist satisfaction?

R: Not really. My facility for instance, is a bar and a restaurant and so I prepare the usual meals that I think visitors will request for. However, I do take special orders like vegetarian cuisines, pepper free, salt free or fat free meals when the order is made ahead of time. In spite of this I am not compelled to always get the ingredients for the special requests available since they don't come very frequently. As for the drinks, it is what I have that I sell so if you come and ask of something and I don't have I just have to tell you I don't have it. I don't usually bother myself to bring in those expensive and exotic drinks since only a few visitors demand them. I don't want to run at a loss or lock my money where I can't make any profits.

-Manager, Restaurant

There were a few managers who took advantage of the behaviour of tourists in terms of their requests and the attitudes they exhibit when they come here. According to them, they have benefited from the ideas they got from tourists. One manager expressed this:

I: Do you consider tourist behaviour and relate them to the development of your facilities?

R: Yes I usually do that. I introduced the speed boat as a result of the demands made by tourists. I realized that not all visitors were interested in swimming but rather wanted to have a different experience from the Lake. Many of the visitors wondered how it would feel like to be on the water itself and that is why I bought them to be used by tourists. I have not regretting buying it at all since there is no single day that people don't use the boat. This has also helped me in terms of income.

-Manager, Recreational facility

R: Yes I do. I built this accommodation facility here because I realized that many of the tourists wanted to enjoy the night life here but there was nothing for them to sleep in. Again when the tourists come and they want to swim they didn't get anywhere to change or take their bath after swimming and so I provided changing rooms and bathrooms for them to use. I think that because I identified what they were looking for the level of patronage is very high.

-Owner, Guest House

R: "Yes some people pay for the room but will still come to sleep outside. Even though they are not many, it has informed me to develop a camping site bicycles and scooters. Ghanaian tourists complain that they get bored and so need television to make a change.

Manager, Guest House

There were other managers who imported their ideas from other tourist attraction sites. One manager had this to say:

R: I had seen horse riding activities in many of the beaches in Accra and so I was convinced that the visitors will enjoy it here too. Even though people patronize it, it is not as much as I expected but all the same I hope that with time they will come to appreciate the horse ride activity at the Lake side

Managers and owners of facilities who relied on information from tourists have benefited from high patronage since they serve the direct interest of tourists. Others have also benefited from ideas from different places. Those who did not consider either of the above options also benefit from their facilities and this may be assigned to the reason that there are not enough facilities to satisfy tourists' needs and preferences and so they patronize those facilities for convenience sake.

Sources of information available to tourists

It is important for managers of attraction sites to know the various sources where they can gather information about tourists from. This would enable managers to develop effective marketing and advertising plans that would be targeted to their potential customers to increase patronage. Table 5 presents the responses of tourists concerning the sources of information they consulted about the Lake and for other arrangements they made for the journey.

Table 5 Sources of information available to tourists

Sources of information	Frequency	Percentage
Guide books	18	18.8
Friends and family	47	49.0
Internet	1	1.0
Previous visit	11	11.5
Tourism Authority	6	6.2
Travel agency	1	1.0
Tour operator's brochure	2	2.1
TV and radio	5	5.2
Other	5	5.2
Total	96	100.0

According to Table 5 presented in the table above, the major source of information for visitors of Lake Bosomtwe is family and friends which constitutes 49.0 percent, followed by guide books which constitutes 18.8 percent, then previous visits of tourists constitute 11.5 percent, the Tourist Authority constitutes 6.2 percent, TV and Radio and other sources constituted 5.2 percent each, tour operator's brochure constituted 2.1 percent, and the least source of information being travel

agencies with only one percent. From the above information, word of mouth advertisement from family and friend is the most important source of information to visitors. This also has a very positive implication for the management of the Lake since it is the most reliable and cheapest form of advertisements in the tourism and hospitality industry. Attention should be focused on providing quality services and facilities to strengthen this channel of advertisement. It also means that there is very little publicity on the internet which should not be the case because it is one of the few means by which a product could be marketed to the entire world. This however calls for the development of an effective and attractive website to attract visitors from all over the world.

Socio-demographic characteristics that influence tourist behaviour

An important source of information for managers to learn more about tourist behaviour is to examine tourist socio-demographic characteristics that might influence their behaviour at attraction sites. Some of the characteristics that were taken into consideration that might exert changes in tourist behavioural pattern include gender, occupation of the tourist, position at workplace, educational level and social status of the tourist. Table 6 presents tourist perceptions of some of the characteristics that may influence their behaviour at attraction sites.

In terms of gender, 65 percent of the respondents were of the view that, the gender of the tourist might influence the tourist behaviour at the attraction site. This calls for the development of resources that are gender sensitive and not gender biased since not all recreational activities can comfortably be enjoyed by both males and females. Care should be taken to ensure that there is a proper blend of attraction mix that will be convenient for both males and females in order not to sideline a particular gender.

Occupation of tourist was found to be one of the major sources of influence on tourist behaviour at attraction sites. Certain occupations are accorded some level of respect and prestige and for that reason people who find themselves in such occupations are expected to behave in a particular manner that goes along with them. For this reason some people may not be able mingle freely or even take part in certain activities when they visit tourist attraction sites. Over 70 percent of the respondents were of the view that occupation of a person can influence his or her behaviour pattern and activities at an attraction site while the remaining 29.5 percent thinks otherwise.

Table 6: Socio-demographic characteristics that influence tourist behaviour

Characteristic	Yes	No	Total
Gender	64.9	53.1	100.0
Occupation	70.5	29.5	100.0
Position at workplace	61.7	38.3	100.0
Educational level	81.9	18.1	100.0
Social status	74.2	25.8	100.0

What this means is that there is the likelihood that certain occupations of visitors may not allow them to partake in certain activities. Schedule programmes could be planned and marketed to certain categories of people in the society at different times to cater for disparities in occupations of tourists that patronize the attractions.

Positions people hold at workplaces influence their behaviours and activities at tourist sites. In most instances, lower positions give people more freedom to behave natural than the top positions and as such influence their decisions pertaining to their choice of activities at attraction sites. Over 60 percent of the respondents were of the view that, the position of a visitor at work can influence the range of activities he or she can participate in as well as his or her behaviour at the place. Management of tourist attraction sites must know the caliber of visitors who are attracted to the Lake in order to provide resources or facilities that would cater for the different categories of people that patronize that attraction. The issue of segmentation should be taken into consideration for those who might be interested in it.

The educational level of a visitor can influence his or her behaviour and activities at a site. Education is noted to shape ideas and perception about objects, projects and systems (Amuquandoh and Brown, 2008). This was supported by 81.9 percent of the respondents with 18.1 percent refuting it. There is the need for managers to consider the educational levels of tourists who visit the lake in order to develop resources to suit their needs accordingly

Conclusion and recommendations

There are several factors that developers can consider before developing resources for tourist. One of the most important factors is through the study of tourist behaviour to identify the kind of facilities that will appeal to them most by way of satisfying their needs and meeting their expectations.

The introduction of new facilities and resources would help improve the Lake's attractiveness. A proper mix of both outdoor in indoor recreational facilities will also enhance the attractiveness of the site thereby improve its drawing power. Facilities that can enhance the attractiveness of the site include water sporting crafts such as boats and scooters and entertainment facilities such as casinos and snookers.

Sources of information on tourist behaviour that could be used by management to develop resources are not being utilized effectively. The information centre should be equipped with the necessary logistics in order to provide the necessary information about tourists for use by management. Managers must also learn to communicate with tourists in order to identify their needs in order to meet their expectations.

Tourists are ignorant of their influence on the development of tourism resources. The influence of tourists may be either positive or negative. Negative influences must be curbed as much as possible while positive ones should be encouraged to safeguard the long term sustainability and prosperity of the Lake.

The study therefore recommends that there should be an effective development plan and implementation committee that would guide developers throughout the various phases of the development. Consultations and collaboration should be made with the opinion leaders as well as traditional leaders in Abono and the surrounding villages to establish a mutual understanding. This would help win the support of the local community for the developments that would take place. The collaboration would not only help to increase acceptance by the community but also outline the kind of resources that cannot be accepted in the community due to the local traditions and the cultural practices of the land for the smooth implementation of the development plans.

The Ghana Tourism Authority should also strengthen its channels of advertisement to make the Lake known to the general public. Management of the lake should also work hard to feature in guide books to have the site advertised. There should also be attractive packages for visitors to

ensure that they repeat their visits and even tell others of the Lake. The information centre should be well equipped with the appropriate logistics such as computers to keep information about tourists. The centre could also provide site guides for tourists who want to have an escorted tour of the Lake.

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