The Role of Attributes in the Promotion of a Tourist Destination, a Case of Sierra Leone.

Philip Samuel Kongoley- MIH

Department of Business Studies, Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, Freetown, Sierra Leone

DOI: 10.29322/JJSRP.11.09.2021.p11729 http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/JJSRP.11.09.2021.p11729

Abstract- This attempts to examine the role of attributes in the promotion of a tourist destination, a case study of Sierra Leone. This paper concentrates on the subject of promotion of a tourist destination with a specific focus on the destination attributes. It is quantitative in design and seek to find out the relationship between attributes contributions to the promotion of a tourist destination. The targeted population for this study was 250 from major sectors within the tourism and hospitality industry. The sample of 200 was drawn by a simple random sampling method. A structured questionnaire was administered and only 200 was received filled and used for analysis. The simple percentage method was used to describe the demographic information of respondents and attributes of destination followed by the Garrett ranking. It was concluded that destination attributes such as accessibility to destination, attractiveness of destination, accommodation, availability of information, interesting local tradition, hospitality, recreational places, history of places, fair prices and climate are all key players in ensuring tourist visit a destination like Sierra Leone. It was recommended that to ensure that accessibility to and from the country is easily accessible, affordable and efficient and tourist attractions whether natural, man- made or historical sites in the country should be made accessible to all irrespective of age and sex and properly management.

Index Terms- Accommodation, attractions, destination, hospitality, tourism and tourist

I. INTRODUCTION

The number of tourists visiting Sierra Leone has decreased due to lack of marketing and promotional tools, inadequate fund for marketing of tourism activities coupled with the outbreak of the Corona virus amongst other factors. These problems have been partially solved through the intervention of the private sector that has many establishments ranging from hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, travel agents and tour operator companies. Their intervention is being seeing in partnership or joint advertising campaign and attending international trade fairs as one group. This partnership is yet to adequately market the country to the outside world as a tourist destination. This decrease is directly affecting players in the tourism and hospitality sector and indirectly affecting the economy of the country and those businesses that have closed link with the tourism and hospitality sector. It has been an issue for the tourism and hospitality actors and country after the rebel war ended in 2002. Few researches have been done on the problems affecting the development of tourism and factors

inhibiting tourism development after the rebel war but no research has been under taken to address the current situation of the country not been attractive to tourists. The current tourism authorities are developing strategies to address the issue of marketing Sierra Leone as an attractive tourist destination. What is missing in all of the planning is the marketing strategies that inform the outside market about the tourism potentials in Sierra Leone. The consequences of this problem will result to the country not generating enough foreign exchange, unemployment will increase and it will have a negative multiplier effects on the economy of the country.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Soteriades M. (2012) paper titled tourism destination marketing approaches improving effectiveness and efficiency.He stated that within a global and much demanding tourism market, the aim of improving a destination's marketing effectiveness and efficiency involves adopting the appropriate approaches and using the adequate tools and techniques by destination marketing organizations. It is highly recommended that a strong focus on strategic marketing approach should be adopted and implemented. However, the model's pitfall and limitations must be taken into account. Tourism destinations today face a set of new challenges arising from changes in consumers and environment. It is estimated that only those destinations, which recognize the changes occurring in the marketplace and proactively respond to them, will continue to be successful in the future. Thus, strategies are necessary in order to address the more demanding competitive environment. Destination management organizations (DMOs) need to be more forward thinking than ever before. To be success in the tourism markets, DMOs must be able to interpret the needs of their visitors, identify appropriate ways of segmenting the markets in which they compete, develop and launch the appropriate products and effectively communicate with potential visitors. These issues are closely interrelated as they form the basis of the marketing interface between the DMO and its business and market environment.

According to Bunghez C.L (2012) The Importance of Tourism to a Destination's Economy, stated that destination is the place or geographical space where a visitor or a tourist stops either for a night or for a period of time, or the terminal point of a tourist's holiday, whether they are travelling for tourism or business purposes. The place or terminal point can be a country, region, an area or town and is an attraction where tourists can spend most of their time. The destination represents the catalyst link that unites, maintains and drives all sectors of the

namely transport, accommodation, food industry, entertainment, being a complex and specific item for tourism. Economically speaking, the tourist is a goods consumer and services beneficiary. From the expenditures which he performs, a part goes directly to economic units from the tourism industry, the other part goes into local budgets or state in the form of fees, taxes etc, and the third part goes to other sectors of the economy for the payment of the products delivered and services rendered by these sectors in order to meet the needs of the tourism industry. Thus, tourism can support the economic development of both local community and the economy of a country, through earnings from domestic or foreign visitors. A major benefit of tourism in stimulating economic growth is represented by the increase in the number of available jobs in that tourist destination, both directly and indirectly within the companies which provide services necessary for tourists. The process of serving tourists appeals to a large and diversified workforce, with a varied skill profile. One of the most visible benefits of tourist activities within a destination is represented by the jobs involved in the direct administration of hotels, restaurants, stores and transportation.

According to Aldevinge A. (2007) market your destination: An investigation of how destination marketing organizations can reach generation Y stated that internet and its information technology have come to be a crucial part of the communication between tourists and destination. It will help management and marketing process, and enhance and develop communication strategies for destinations. This has made destination management organizations able to reach their customers easier than before and in new ways. With the technological development. With the technological development increasing consumer's power however, new channels for tourism information has evolved. With tourists having a wide range of sources for travel information such as public and company websites, social media and blogs. DMOs have started to face challenge of reaching tourists with their marketing and information. There are different methods that DMOs use to reach customers with travel information. DMO Strategies does not only includes the own provided website but also those footprints taken by the organizations outside of their own website. Despite the above mentioned focused sources, tourist information centers are still seen as the most important of DMOs offline travel information sources.

According to Arionesei G. (2014) paper titled marketing of tourism destination from the public relations perspective. He stated that the role of presenting a touristic product to potential customers goes to promotion. Though creating various bridges between product and consumer presenting the consumer a certain travel destination, the final aim is to determine the latter to buy it. By promoting tourism is a complex links between tourism and its potential beneficiaries, process which using specific tools such as advertising, public relations and sales promotion, stands to determine the potential customer to purchase the specific tourism product. Promoting tourism aims to create all necessary conditions to sell the product. Therefore, whatever the instruments are and their specific mode of action, its purpose is unique. The purpose of this uniqueness is derived from the need to coordinate promotion efforts, coordination which will need to combine all promotional tools namely, advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling and public relations. In tourism, public relations aim at maintaining a favourable image of a destination and at establishing connections with different types of audience able to develop and improve the tourist offer.

According to Iamsoo, M.S. et al (2013) in their paper titled the role of marketing on tourism industry. They are of the view that tourism industry is considered as one of the largest and most diverse industries in the world. Today, marketing efforts are far more important than production and sales, so if a country has enough facilities and possess potential of tourism but does not consider the marketing techniques and the introduction of this attraction in its programmes, doubtlessly that country won't be successful in growing and developing its tourism industry. They further stated that in order to remain in the tourism marketing competition, organizations in both public and private sectors should know their customers and beware of their demands. They should also be able to make their potential customers aware of their product and services, convince them and suggest to them that they will benefit if they turn into rare customer, mainly to travel to the same location and desired destination that has been prepared with the purpose to travel.

According to Koto,J (2013) in his paper titled issues in adopting the marketing strategy for tourism development in Africa, the case of Ghana. The aim of the paper was to identify and discuss key challenges in engaging small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in sub- Saharan Africa's tourism marketing strategies, as part of the broader guest and need by the regions countries to market themselves globally, in order to capture a fair share of the global tourism market.

According to Victor, A.D. et al (2018) in their paper marketing communications and tourism paradigm for sustainable development in Ekiti, state Nigeria. They were of the view that marketing communications focus on the selection of appropriate marketing messages for an organization to communicate. Fundamentally, it rests upon the management of key tools and media which can be used to deliver marketing messages in an effective and integrated way while achieving communications and higher order objectives. Marketing communications must be targeted to define audience largely because of the information rich nature of contemporary society, consumers are both inundated media and marketing communication and extremely aware of their own conscious ability to screen out unwanted or relevant information, marketing communication can be executed through traditional mass media and digital media (social network). If marketing communication is knitted into tourism industry of a country most of the world tourism will recognize the area as one of the tourism zone among developing countries in the world.

According to Sofronor, B. (2019) in the paper titled the development of marketing in tourism industry. He further stated that marketing in the tourism industry is defined as the policy promoted by a tourism enterprise which, by constantly exploring the conditions of the tourism market, both present and future, aims to determine the continuous adoption of its own offer to their conditions in order to optimally satisfy requirements and the realization on the basis of a cost – effective economic activity. Marketing in tourism requires a good knowledge of the exigencies and trends of the market, the orientation of the supply of tourism products according to the size and structure of the demand, establishment of a price and pricing strategy, a distribution platform, use of effective tools for promoting the tourism destinations estimating sales opportunities by seasonality. The

reasons why a good marketing strategy is vital to the tourism business are it identifies the develop loyalty, understand the consumer journey, stand out from competitors and have in on the most effective.

According to Sadq,Z.M (2019) titled the impact of tourism marketing in enhancing competitive capabilities. As the tourism industry continues to develop, the marketing of tourism institutions is becoming increasingly crucial globally. Tourism and hospitality, whether it will be a service or product, can differ from many other types of existing services and products. This is done to the role played in this positioning phase by the expanded marketing services mix components. The tourism marketing mix is a set of marketing activities, which work with consistency and complement each other. Firstly, the product offered to the market is analysed. Then the appropriate and competitive price is determined which leads to the promotion of the product. The next step, is the distribution and delivery of the product to the place at the right time in order to satisfy the consumers.

According to Molina A et al (2010) paper titled tourism marketing information and destination image management. They stated that understanding how customers acquire information is important for marketing management decisions. This is especially true for service, travel and tourism products. Destination image is accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism management and destination marketing. The information about a specific destination is an important means of promotion for the tourism industry and influences destination image. The value of the promotion channel depends on its capacity to reach consumers and satisfy their interest and needs. In the tourism sector, the means of promotion (internet, brochures, guides and tourist offices amongst them) constitute an active and open way of getting information for tourists. Most of the consumers and tourist behaviour models incorporated the search of external information as an important component

According to Mwinuka, O.H (2017) paper titled reviewing the role of tourism marketing in successful sustainable tourist destination. He further stated that tourism marketing is a concept comprises of two terms, namely tourism and marketing. Given that tourism is growing greenhouse gas emission and making a negative contribution to environmental, social and economic changes at destination, the positive potential role of tourism marketing on how it contributes towards sustainable tourist destination has become an important consideration. Thus, tourism destination marketers and managers have a significant role to facilitate sustainability actions and behaviours in tourist development at the destination in their marketing process. However, sustainability increase only when there is provision of quality only when there is provision of quality tourism services and environments at the same time increasing the opportunities for residents to improve the quality of life at the destination. According to Soteriades M. (2012) paper titled tourism destination marketing approaches improving effectiveness and efficiency. He stated that within a global and much demanding tourism market, the aim of improving a destination's marketing effectiveness and efficiency involves adopting the appropriate approaches and using the adequate tools and techniques by destination marketing organizations. It is highly recommended that a strong focus on strategic marketing approach should be adopted and implemented. However, the model's pitfall and limitations must be taken into account. Tourism destinations today face a set of new challenges arising from changes in consumers and environment. It is estimated that only those destinations, which recognize the changes occurring in the marketplace and proactively respond to them, will continue to be successful in the future. Thus, strategies are necessary in order to address the more demanding competitive environment. Destination management organizations (DMOs) need to be more forward thinking than ever before. To be success in the tourism markets, DMOs must be able to interpret the needs of their visitors, identify appropriate ways of segmenting the markets in which they compete, develop and launch the appropriate products and effectively communicate with potential visitors. These issues are closely interrelated as they form the basis of the marketing interface between the DMO and its business and market environment.

According to Bunghez C.L (2012) The Importance of Tourism to a Destination's Economy, stated that destination is the place or geographical space where a visitor or a tourist stops either for a night or for a period of time, or the terminal point of a tourist's holiday, whether they are travelling for tourism or business purposes. The place or terminal point can be a country, region, an area or town and is an attraction where tourists can spend most of their time. The destination represents the catalyst link that unites, maintains and drives all sectors of the tourism industry, namely transport, accommodation, food entertainment, being a complex and specific item for tourism. Economically speaking, the tourist is a goods consumer and services beneficiary. From the expenditures which he performs, a part goes directly to economic units from the tourism industry, the other part goes into local budgets or state in the form of fees, taxes etc, and the third part goes to other sectors of the economy for the payment of the products delivered and services rendered by these sectors in order to meet the needs of the tourism industry. Thus, tourism can support the economic development of both local community and the economy of a country, through earnings from domestic or foreign visitors. A major benefit of tourism in stimulating economic growth is represented by the increase in the number of available jobs in that tourist destination, both directly and indirectly within the companies which provide services necessary for tourists. The process of serving tourists appeals to a large and diversified workforce, with a varied skill profile. One of the most visible benefits of tourist activities within a destination is represented by the jobs involved in the direct administration of hotels, restaurants, stores and transportation.

According to Aldevinge A. (2007) market your destination: An investigation of how destination marketing organizations can reach generation Y stated that internet and its information technology have come to be a crucial part of the communication between tourists and destination. It will help management and marketing process, and enhance and develop communication strategies for destinations. This has made destination management organizations able to reach their customers easier than before and in new ways. With the technological development. With the technological development increasing consumer's power however, new channels for tourism information has evolved. With tourists having a wide range of sources for travel information such as public and company websites, social media and blogs. DMOs have started to face challenge of reaching tourists with their marketing and information. There are different methods that

DMOs use to reach customers with travel information. DMO Strategies does not only includes the own provided website but also those footprints taken by the organizations outside of their own website. Despite the above mentioned focused sources, tourist information centers are still seen as the most important of DMOs offline travel information sources.

According to Arionesei G. (2014) paper titled marketing of tourism destination from the public relations perspective. He stated that the role of presenting a touristic product to potential customers goes to promotion. Though creating various bridges between product and consumer presenting the consumer a certain travel destination, the final aim is to determine the latter to buy it. By promoting tourism is a complex links between tourism and its potential beneficiaries, process which using specific tools such as advertising, public relations and sales promotion, stands to determine the potential customer to purchase the specific tourism product. Promoting tourism aims to create all necessary conditions to sell the product. Therefore, whatever the instruments are and their specific mode of action, its purpose is unique. The purpose of this uniqueness is derived from the need to coordinate promotion efforts, coordination which will need to combine all promotional tools namely, advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling and public relations. In tourism, public relations aim at maintaining a favourable image of a destination and at establishing connections with different types of audience able to develop and improve the tourist offer.

According to Iamsoo, M.S. et al (2013) in their paper titled the role of marketing on tourism industry. They are of the view that tourism industry is considered as one of the largest and most diverse industries in the world. Today, marketing efforts are far more important than production and sales, so if a country has enough facilities and possess potential of tourism but does not consider the marketing techniques and the introduction of this attraction in its programmes, doubtlessly that country won't be successful in growing and developing its tourism industry. They further stated that in order to remain in the tourism marketing competition, organizations in both public and private sectors should know their customers and beware of their demands. They should also be able to make their potential customers aware of their product and services, convince them and suggest to them that they will benefit if they turn into rare customer, mainly to travel to the same location and desired destination that has been prepared with the purpose to travel.

According to Koto,J (2013) in his paper titled issues in adopting the marketing strategy for tourism development in Africa, the case of Ghana. The aim of the paper was to identify and discuss key challenges in engaging small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in sub- Saharan Africa's tourism marketing strategies, as part of the broader guest and need by the regions countries to market themselves globally, in order to capture a fair share of the global tourism market.

According to Victor, A.D. et al (2018) in their paper marketing communications and tourism paradigm for sustainable development in Ekiti, state Nigeria. They were of the view that marketing communications focus on the selection of appropriate marketing messages for an organization to communicate. Fundamentally, it rests upon the management of key tools and media which can be used to deliver marketing messages in an effective and integrated way while achieving communications and

higher order objectives. Marketing communications must be targeted to define audience largely because of the information rich nature of contemporary society, consumers are both inundated media and marketing communication and extremely aware of their own conscious ability to screen out unwanted or relevant information, marketing communication can be executed through traditional mass media and digital media (social network).If marketing communication is knitted into tourism industry of a country most of the world tourism will recognize the area as one of the tourism zone among developing countries in the world. According to Sofronor, B. (2019) in the paper titled the development of marketing in tourism industry. He further stated that marketing in the tourism industry is defined as the policy promoted by a tourism enterprise which, by constantly exploring the conditions of the tourism market, both present and future, aims to determine the continuous adoption of its own offer to their conditions in order to optimally satisfy requirements and the realization on the basis of a cost - effective economic activity. Marketing in tourism requires a good knowledge of the exigencies and trends of the market, the orientation of the supply of tourism products according to the size and structure of the demand, establishment of a price and pricing strategy, a distribution platform, use of effective tools for promoting the tourism destinations estimating sales opportunities by seasonality. The reasons why a good marketing strategy is vital to the tourism business are it identifies the develop loyalty, understand the consumer journey, stand out from competitors and have in on the most effective.

According to Sadq,Z.M (2019) titled the impact of tourism marketing in enhancing competitive capabilities. As the tourism industry continues to develop, the marketing of tourism institutions is becoming increasingly crucial globally. Tourism and hospitality, whether it will be a service or product, can differ from many other types of existing services and products. This is done to the role played in this positioning phase by the expanded marketing services mix components. The tourism marketing mix is a set of marketing activities, which work with consistency and complement each other. Firstly, the product offered to the market is analysed. Then the appropriate and competitive price is determined which leads to the promotion of the product. The next step, is the distribution and delivery of the product to the place at the right time in order to satisfy the consumers.

According to Molina A et al (2010) paper titled tourism marketing information and destination image management. They stated that understanding how customers acquire information is important for marketing management decisions. This is especially true for service, travel and tourism products. Destination image is accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism management and destination marketing. The information about a specific destination is an important means of promotion for the tourism industry and influences destination image. The value of the promotion channel depends on its capacity to reach consumers and satisfy their interest and needs. In the tourism sector, the means of promotion (internet, brochures, guides and tourist offices amongst them) constitute an active and open way of getting information for tourists. Most of the consumers and tourist behaviour models incorporated the search of external information as an important component

According to Mwinuka, O.H (2017) paper titled reviewing the role of tourism marketing in successful sustainable tourist destination. He further stated that tourism marketing is a concept comprises of two terms, namely tourism and marketing. Given that tourism is growing greenhouse gas emission and making a negative contribution to environmental, social and economic changes at destination, the positive potential role of tourism marketing on how it contributes towards sustainable tourist destination has become an important consideration. Thus, tourism destination marketers and managers have a significant role to facilitate sustainability actions and behaviours in tourist development at the destination in their marketing process. However, sustainability increase only when there is provision of quality only when there is provision of quality tourism services and environments at the same time increasing the opportunities for residents to improve the quality of life at the destination

III. METHODOLOGY

The study is the role of attributes in the promotion of a tourist destination, a case of Sierra Leone. For the purpose of this paper, the researcher has decided to make use of a quantitative research strategy in the sense that there will be numeric data or quantitative data to be produced. A structured questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument which consisted of both open and closed ended questions. The collected data was analysed with aid of the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences and Garrett ranking. The rationale for the selection of this method is that quantitative is applicable as it shows the connection between several different variables that has to be established through interpretations. The researcher used the simple random sampling method. So many limitations are envisaged to occur during the collection of the data such as access to information, participants' willingness to take part in the exercise etc. These were addressed as the researcher has verse knowledge of tourism activities in Sierra Leone and also member of many tourism organizations in and out of the country. The researcher takes an explanatory research design since it seeks to examine the role of attributes in the promotion of a tourist destination, a case of Sierra Leone. This is a case study work that

used Sierra Leone to get empirical data on the role of attributes. The researcher used a survey approach in order to collect quantitative data which was analysed using descriptive statistical tools. The use of a survey enables generalization to be conducted using findings generated from a sample size which is representative of the whole population. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the quantitative research design since it was geared toward the process of collecting and analyzing numerical. It was used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, test causal relationships and generalize results to wider populations.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher targeted 250 respondents comprising players within the tourism and hospitality industry such as owners of hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, travel agencies, carriers, tour operators and key ministries like the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and National Tourist Board. 200 respondents will be selected which is 80 per cent of the targeted population. The respondents were selected using the simple random sampling technique since all the participants were having an equal chance to be selected hence 200 will be the sample size.

The main data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire which was administered among the selected respondents by the researcher.

After the collection of the data, the analysis started by describing the characteristics of the responses. The frequency distribution method was adopted. The data was made of a distribution of values, or scores. Tables or graphs were used to summarize the frequency of every possible value of a variable in numbers or percentages.

IV. RESULTS

The collected data was analysed using the simple percentage method as shown below. The table below comprise of gender, age bracket, educational length of service, educational background, ownership and sector.

		Frequency	Percent
Gender of respondents	a) Male	120	60%
	b) Female	80	40%
Age bracket	a) 18 – 30 years	10	5%
	b) 31 – 43 years	100	50%
	c) 44 – 56 years	70	35%
	d) 57 and above years	20	10%
Length of service	a) 1 – 5 years	10	5%
	b) 6 – 10 years	30	15%
	c) 11 – 15 years	40	20%
	d) 16 – 20 years	70	35%
	e) 21 and above years	50	25%

Educational background	a) Below first degree b) First degree c) Master d) Doctorate	30 110 50 10	15% 55% 25% 5%
Sector	a) Ministry of Tourism Cultural Affairs b) National Tourist Board c) Accommodation d) Airline e) Travel agency/Tour operator f) Restaurant g) Tourist handling agent	20 60 40 10 10 40 20	10% 30% 20% 5% 5% 20% 10%
Ownership of sector	a) Private b) Company c) Government	150 20 30	75% 10% 15%

Source: Primary Data 2021

The table above shows that 60% of the respondents contacted for this is males and 40% are females. Meaning majority of the respondents contacted are female1.5% are within the age bracket of 18-30 years,50% between 31-43 years,35% between 44-56 and 10% between 57 and above years. Meaning majority of the respondents contacted for this study are aged above 30 years.5% had worked with the sector between 1-5 years,15% between 6-10 years, 20% between 11-15 years, 35% between 16-20 years and 25% between 21 and above years. Meaning majority of the respondents had worked for 15 years.15% are holders of qualifications below first degree, 55% are holders of first degree, 25% are holders of master degree and 5% are doctorate holders. Meaning majority are holders of first degree.10% are staff from

the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs,30% from the National Tourist Board,20% from the accommodation sector,5% from the airlines,5% from travel agents and tour operators,20% from the restaurant sector and 10% from the tourist handing agents. Meaning majority of the respondents are from the National Tourist Board.75% of the respondents are from the private sector, 10% from companies and 15% from the public sector. Meaning majority of the respondents is from the private sector.

Below are responses from respondents in relations to the various statements in terms of 1 = Not Satisfactory, 2 = Highly not Satisfactory, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Satisfactory and 5 = Highly Satisfaction

Table 2. Attributes of Destination

No	Statement	NS	HNS	N	S	HS	TOTAL
1	Attractiveness of destination	20	15	5	60	100	200
		(10%)	(7.5%)	(2.5%)	(30%)	(50%)	(100%)
2	Accessibility to destination	10	20	15	120	35	200
		(5%)	(10%)	(7.5%)	(60%)	(17.5%)	(100%)
3	Availability of information	15	25	10	100	50	200
		(7.5%)	(12.5%)	(5%)	(50%)	(25%)	(100%)
4	Recreational places	25	15	15	115	30	200
		(12.5%)	(7.5%)	(7.5%)	(57.5%)	(15%)	(100%)
5	Fair prices	20	25	100	20	35	200
		(10%)	(12.5%)	(50%)	(10%)	(17.5%)	(100%)
6	Climate	15	25	20	50	100	200
		(7.5%)	(12.5%)	(10%)	(25%)	(50%)	(100%)

7	Hospitality	10	15	20	70	85	200
		(5%)	(7.5%)	(10%)	(35%)	(42.5%)	(100%)
8	History of the place	5	10	15	80	90	200
		(2.5%)	(5%)	(7.5%)	(40%)	(45%)	(100%)
9	Interesting local tradition	10	15	25	60	90	200
	_	(5%)	(7.5%)	(12.5%)	(30%)	(45%)	(100%)
10	Accommodation	5	15	25	120	35	200
		(2.5%)	(7.5%)	(12.5%)	(60%)	(17.5%)	(100%)

Source: Primary Data 2021

The table above reveals that 10% of the respondents contacted for this study indicated not satisfactory with attractiveness of destination as one of the destination attributes, 7.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 2.5% indicated neutral, 30% indicated satisfactory and 50% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents indicated that they are highly satisfactory with attractiveness of destination as one of the major factors that can increase the inflow of tourists into the destination.10% indicated not satisfactory with accessibility to destination, 10% indicated highly not satisfactory, 7.5% indicated neutral, 60% indicated satisfactory and 17.5% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents indicated satisfactory with accessibility to destination as it plays a pivotal role in the development of a destination. 7.5% of the respondents indicated not satisfactory with regards to availability of information, 12.5% indicated highly not satisfactory,5% indicated neutral, 50% indicated satisfactory and 25% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning availability of information at the destination is highly satisfactory as tourists and other visitors are made aware about the destination by making information available in and out of the country.12.5% indicated not satisfactory with recreational places, 7.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 7.5% indicated neutral, 57.5% indicated satisfactory and 15% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning recreational places always make tourists and other visitor to feel like home as indicated by 57.5%. 10% indicated not satisfactory in terms of fair prices as one of the attributes of destination, 12.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 50% indicated satisfactory and 10% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents indicated satisfactory with the level of fair prices. 7.5% of the respondents contacted for this study indicated not satisfactory with regards to

climate as one of the attributes of destination, 12.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 10% indicated neutral, 25% indicated satisfactory and 50% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents are highly satisfactory with the climatic condition of the destination.5% indicated not satisfactory with regards to hospitality as attributes to the destination, 7.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 10% indicated neutral, 35% indicated satisfactory and 42.5% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents are of the views that hospitality plays a major role in attracting tourists and visitors to visit the destination. 2.5% of the respondents contacted for this study indicated not satisfactory with regards to history of the place, 5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 7.5% indicated neutral, 40% indicated satisfactory and 45% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning history of the place is rated as highly satisfactory as the result of the country's rich history tourists is always visiting the country. 5% of the respondent contacted for this study indicated not satisfactory with regards to interesting local tradition, 7.5% indicated highly not satisfactory..12.5% indicated neutral.30% indicated satisfactory and 45% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning respondents are of the view that interesting local tradition is rated by 45% as highly satisfactory. 2.5% of the respondents contacted for the study indicated not satisfactory with regard to accommodation, 7.5% indicated highly not satisfactory, 12.5% indicated neutral, 60% indicated satisfactory and 17.5% indicated highly satisfactory. Meaning major of the respondents are highly satisfactory with accommodation being one of the attributes of destination.

Below are the Garrett Ranking tables on the following factors: destination attributes.

Table 4.20: Garrett Ranking of Destination Attribute

FACTOR	MEAN	RANK				
1	48.895	7	Recreational places			
2	62.01	1	Accessibility to destination			
3	45.04	10	Climate			
4	49.705	6	Hospitality			
5	50.175	4	Availability of information			
6	50	5	Interesting local tradition			
7	50.46	3	Accommodation			
8	51.295	2	Attractiveness of destination			
9	47.61	8	History of places			
10	46.81	9	Fair prices			
Source: Pr	Source: Primary Data 2021					

The table above reveals how the factors were ranked by the respondents contacted for this study under destination attributes. Accessibility to destination was ranked first with the Garrett mean score of 62.01. Followed by attractiveness of destination with the Garrett mean score of 51.295, accommodation with Garrett score of 50.46, availability of information with Garrett mean score of 50.175, interesting local tradition with Garrett mean score of 50.0, hospitality with Garrett mean score of 49.705, recreational places with Garrett mean score of 48.895, history of places with Garrett mean score of 47.61, fair prices with Garrett mean score of 45.04. Meaning accessibility to destination was ranked first due to its vital role in the promotion of a destination. Tourists need to have easy access by means of different forms of transportation

V. FINDINGS

It was found out that 60% of the respondents contacted for the study are males, 50% are between the age of 31 - 43 years, 35% had worked for over 15 years, 55% are holders of first degree, 30% are from the National Tourist Board and 75% from the private sector.it was further found out that Meaning respondents indicated that they are highly satisfactory with attractiveness of destination as one of the major factors that can increase the inflow of tourists into the destination by 50%, 60% indicated satisfactory with accessibility to destination as it plays a pivotal role in the development of a destination,50% indicated satisfactory with availability of information at the destination is highly satisfactory as tourists and other visitors are made aware about the destination by making information available in and out of the country, 57.5% indicated satisfactory with recreational places always make tourists and other visitors to feel like home, 50% indicated satisfactory with the level of fair prices, 50% indicated highly satisfactory with the climatic condition of the destination, 42.5% indicated highly satisfactory with hospitality as it plays a major role in attracting tourists and visitors to visit the destination, 45% indicated highly satisfactory with history of the place is rated as highly satisfactory as the result of the country's rich history tourists are always visiting the country, 45% indicated highly satisfactory with interesting local tradition and 60% indicated satisfactory and 17.5% indicated highly satisfactory with accommodation being one of the attributes of destination. From the Garrett ranking analysis, it was found that accessibility to destination was ranked 1st with Garrett mean score of 62.01 followed by attractiveness of destination 51.295, accommodation 50.46, availability of information 50.175, interesting local tradition 50, hospitality 49.705, recreational places 48.895, history of places 47.61, fair prices 46.81 and climate 45.04

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that destination attributes such as accessibility to destination, attractiveness of destination, accommodation, availability of information, interesting local tradition, hospitality, recreational places, history of places, fair prices and climate are all key players in ensuring tourist visit a destination like Sierra Leone. Amongst all the attributes, accessibility to the destination came out clearly as a major factor in promoting a destination. The reason being that tourists are interested in visiting destinations with easy means of

different modes of transport by air, land and sea to get to the destination and within the destination. Sierra Leone is challenged in this area as the country lacked a direct flight from major tourist markets in Europe, America and other places. The international airport is located out of the city and both local and tourist find it difficult to get on both sides of river as many a time there is no ferry.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

For Sierra Leone to be able to attract tourists year round, it is recommended that the government should ensure the following:

- 1. To ensure that accessibility to and from the country is easily accessible, affordable and efficient;
- 2. Tourist attractions whether natural, man- made or historical sites in the country should be made accessible to all irrespective of age and sex and properly management;
- 3. The accommodation sector to ensure that in their pricing strategies, they should consider catering for guests at every level not only targeting the expensive visitors visiting the country;
- 4. To ensure that the National Tourist Board to be updating the website with current data on tourism activities in the country and market the country aggressively;
- 5. The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs to create the awareness among the local people in Sierra Leone of their roles and responsibilities in developing tourism and benefits the country and then will derive from tourism to maintain their local traditions;
- 6. Establishments within the tourism and hospitality industry in Sierra Leone to orient their employees on the idea of care, honesty and delivering quality services to make tourist to do a repeat visit to the country;
- 7. To build quality and standard recreational facilities within the country to make tourists and other visitors to feel at home when they visit the country;
- 8. The National Museum to ensure that history of all tourist attractions in the country are provided in a form of brochure to be distributed freely to visitors at the Museum and equally to all the embassies of Sierra Leone;
- 9. To ensure that the taxes on tourism and hospitality industry is moderate to encourage more investors in the sector as the tax rate will affect the price of goods and services and
- 10. To ensure that activities are organized during the raining season that can attract tourist to visit the country.

REFERENCES

- [1] 1. Arionesei, G.(2012).Marketing of Tourism Destination from the Public Relations Perspective. www.researchgate.net/publication/236201756.
- [2] 2.Iamsoo,M.S.(2013) The role of marketing on tourism industry, International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences, ISSN 2251 – 838X/vol,4(1) 73 - 80
- [3] 3. Kolo,J.(2013) Issues in Adopting the Marketing Strategy for Tourism Development in Africa. The Case of Ghana. www.researchgate.net/publication.330797688
- [4] 4. Victor, O.A. (2018) Marketing communication and Tourism: Paradigm for Sustainable Development in Ekiti State Nigeria. Journal of Good Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa vol, 4. No. 1. ISSN 2346-724X
- [5] 5.Sadq,Z.M.(2019) The impact of tourism marketing in enhancing competitive capabilities. www.researchgate.net/publication/335813396.
- [6] 6.Nouri,B.A & Soltani, M.(2015) Evaluating the effect of tourism marketing mix on buying Holiday Homes in Cyprus. International Journal of Business Administration, 6(5) 63 – 74.

- [7] 7.Pomering, A.Gary, N.& Lester, W.J. (2011) Conceptualising a Contemporary Marketing Mix for Sustainable Tourism . Journal of Sustainable Tourism 19(8) 953-969.
- [8] 8.SOFRONOV, B.(2019) The Development of Marketing in Tourism Industry .Annals of Spiru Haret University. Economic series, 19(1),115 – 125
- [9] 9.Arturo Molina, Mar Gomez & David Martin Consuegra (2010) Tourism marketing information and destination image management. African Journal of Business Management. vol.4(5) pp,722-728
- [10] Kotler, P.; Keller, K.L. Marketing Management, 13th ed.; Pearson Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA, 2009
- [11] Morrison, A.M. Hospitality and Travel Marketing, 4th ed.; Delmar Cengage Learning: Clifton Park, NY, USA, 2010.

AUTHORS

First Author – Philip Samuel Kongoley- MIH, Department of Business Studies, Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, Freetown, Sierra Leone, Email:prkongoley@gmail.com