

FACTORS ACCOUNTING FOR LOW PATRONAGE OF HANDICRAFTS, AMONG TOURISTS IN OSOGBO, OSUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the low patronage of handcraft among tourists in Osogbo with a view to know the4 problems they are encountering as well as suggest appropriate strategies to improve the level of patronage- participatory approach entail interview, discussion and focus group discussion were used to collect data on the subject of study. Data's were collected from both the handcraft producers and the tourists it was discovered that the major problems accounting for low patronage of handicrafts are low quality of product, poor design, and expensiveness of the product, communication gap, and lack of usefulness of the product among others. It was recommended that the government should undertake major investment in handcraft sector and strengthen capacity building in the sector overcome critical problems associated with quality, design and usefulness of the product.

Key words: *Handicraft, Factors, Demand, and Tourist*

INTRODUCTION

Handcraft has been described as making something manually, a craft or occupation in which manual skill is needed e.g. weaving, carving and painting (Encarta Dictionary, 2005). The production of handcrafts has been practiced in Nigeria long time before the era of colonialism. The art has gone through many stages and different techniques have been introduced to meet the demands of individuals (Aluko, 2006). Handcraft in the traditional Nigeria society were seen as dynamic social activities and the end products were often unique, beautiful and of high quality (Odunduyila, 2006).

According to Sani (1990), Nigerian handcraft have been one of the ignored art of the people which were neglected for so long, until the exhibition of 1974 organized by the National Gallery in the museum of modern Arts, Lagos.

Various empirical surveys and studies on the relations between crafts, tourism and economic development in African countries attest to the positive role it play in generating employment opportunities, empowerment of the local population and the elimination of poverty, such as (Aluko, 2006; Ngo, 2005). Handcraft also contribute to the stabilization of both Urban and Rural Communities in addition to supporting, encouraging and developing local tradition, arts, and skill that facilitate the grater expression and development of local cultures (Bello, 2006).

Crafts are the second to agriculture in the creation of Jobs in the various local African economics. It also accounts for about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the GDP of most African Countries. It is equally the major support based for local agriculture and provides additional sources of income to those engaged in seasonal agricultural activities. In this regard, it greatly helps to assuage the problems of under-employment and poverty. It is furthermore the major indigenous industrial, technological and vocational activity that is most readily sustainable and available to most African Countries (Tijani, 2006).

Inspite of immense potential contribution of crafts to socio-economic development UNWTO (2006) observed that most people

involved in the production and sales of handicrafts in African Countries live under poverty condition, especially women. The tourists do appreciate the raw materials, the Craftsmanship and the techniques used by local people to work out the wood, the stone, the leather, the wool or other local resources. But at the same time they find it difficult to purchase the resulting goods. This is the main reason why UNWTO in 2006, between 3rd – 4th November convened conference at Ouagadougou with the purpose of examining the current situation, the opportunities for increasing these linkages and identifying the ways and means to do it, as well as the roles to be played by different stakeholders in this effort.

Since low level of patronage is the major problem facing the handcraft producer in Nigeria according to (Dickson, 2007), which is also in line with UNWO 2006 observation. This study thereby set to examine the factors that account for low the patronage, using Osogbo as case study. The choice of the town is premised on the fact that the community is well known for her rich cultural heritage while people within the community has taken participation in different area as means of livelihood. Besides, Osogbo is one of the major tourism center in Nigeria.

This study has attempted to answer the following research questions:

- What are the handicrafts that are been produced in Osogbo and their location?
- What is the level of patronage of identified handicrafts in Osogbo?
- What are the determinants of handicrafts design that meets the needs and taste of tourists in Osogbo?
- Suggestions and Strategies to enhance the production of required handicrafts that meets tourist demand in the areas.

STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

This section is divided into two, the first centres on study area whereas the second part focuses on research design, research instruments, sampling technique, sample size, validation of instrument, method of data collection and data analysis.

Study Area

Osun State located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. It covers an area of approximately 14,875square kilometers. It is bounded by Ogun, Kwara, Oyo, Ondo and Ekiti States in the South, North, West and East respectively. The state lies within the tropical rain forest.

Population

According to National Population and Housing Census exercise conducted in 2006, Osun State has a population of 3,423,535.

People and Culture

The indigenes of the state belong to the Yourba tribe and are composed of the Ifes, Ijesas, Igbominas and Osun. However, non-indigenes from all parts of Nigeria and foreigners reside in the state and live together in harmony. Yourba and English are the language used for official and business transactions.

The people have a rich cultural heritage which is eloquently demonstrated in all spheres of lives. Their culture finds expression in their arts, literature, music and other social activities; it is marvelous being among the Osogbo people, savouring the beauty of their well acclaimed cultural inheritance.

Osun State is the citadel of the Yoruba cultural heritage. The State sent a 10-man performing team to Japan in 2005 at the AICHI International Trade Fair to showcase the vintage culture of the State. “Eegun Olaifa” was adjudged the best while the State troupe was acclaimed the best –behaved troupe from Nigeria.

Tourism

Tourist centres abound across the State. Some of the popular one are the Oranmiyan staff, Ife Museum, Obafemi Awolowo University Zoological Garden, Ile-Ase, Yeyemolu and Oduduwa

Shrines and Groove, all at Ile-Ife. Others include Osun Osogbo Shrine, which is the venue of the internationally recognized Osun-Osogbo Festival, the Mbari Mbayo Culture Heritage, Idi-Baba Cultural Centre, Adunni Susan Wengers' Centre and Nike Arts Gallery, all in Osogbo. There are also the Olumirin Waterfall at Erin-Ijesa, Igbo Sango, Ede and the Ayikunnugba Waterfall at Oke Ila-Orangun.

The State Government accords great importance to tourism. All issues pertaining to tourism are handled by the State Ministry of Tourism and Culture. This Ministry is charged with the responsibility of modernizing and developing tourism and culture in the state.

Osun Osogbo Grove has been recognized by UNESCO as the World Heritage Site, while the Osun Osogbo Festival has been listed as an International Festival. The UNESCO has endorsed the establishment of the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding in Osogbo, the State capital.

Research Design

The research design used in this study was survey research. The aim of the study was to investigate the factors that account for low patronage of handcrafts among tourists in Osogbo. The researcher used purposive design as suggested by Aluko (2006) that purposive can be used to represent the entire population.

Population of Study

The population of this research comprises of 36 sellers in Osogbo (see Table 1).

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The researcher purposively selected ten tourist centres in Osogbo. Ten tourist were interviewed at each centre making a total of one hundred (100) tourists.

Table 1: Handicraft producers/sellers in Osogbo

Names of sellers	Location	Product
Nike Art Gallery	Dada Estate, Old Ede Rd, Osogbo	Ornaments, painting, Beads, local textiles (aso oke), wood carving batik, calabash decoration
Genesis Art Gallery	Station Road, Osogbo	Wood carving, painting
African Heritage Gallery	Jimoh Buraimoh Street Osogbo	Wood carving, painting, tie-dye
Artist Kooperative Gallery	Wole-Ola Estate, Gbongan/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Wood carving, painting, batik, tie-dye
Aji-tos International Centre for Arts and Culture	No 1, Alh Kayode Ogunwale Str., behind DOF Supermarket, Kola Balogun Area, Osogbo	Batik, painting on canvas, rice paper, oil painting, sculpture, African quilt, appliqué
Sacred Art Movement	Ibokun Rd, Osogbo	Textiles, painting & stone sculpture
Gbadamosi Stone Sculpture Gallery	Ibokun Rd, Osogbo	Stone carvings
The African Myth Gallery	Iwo/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Textiles
Oduduwa Art Gallery	Iwo/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Textiles
Ibile Art Gallery	Onward Area, Gbongan/Ibadan Rd	Textiles, embroidery, quilts & appliqués
Osogbo Art Movement Gallery	Gbongan/Ibadan Rd.	Painting, Textiles, carvings.
Asa Cultural Ensemble & Centre for the Arts	No 26 Fagbewesa Str. Osogbo	Contemporary & traditional dance, paintings, Sculpture, textiles, graphic arts & designs, traditional poetry, folklore & cultural consultancy
African Creative Minds	Iwo/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Textiles, paintings, Sculptures
God Mercy art Gallery	LAUTECH Rd, Ajegunle Osogbo	Prints, Textiles, quilts & appliqués
Art-Alade Gallery	Odi-Olowo Rd, Osogbo	Textiles
Bode Ceramics Venture	Army Barrack, Testing Ground, Osogbo	Ceramic & Potter making

Iyabodetex Gallery	Olonkoro Area, Osogbo	Textiles
Lekan Oyeboode Gallery	Testing Ground, Osogbo	Textiles & Paintings
Ayo Batik Gallery	Omo-West Area, Osogbo	Textiles & batiks
Mao Art Gallery	Gbonga/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Paintings & prints
PEJA Art Studio	Fagbewesa Rd, Osogbo	Graphic Art & paintings
Bisi Textile & Cultural Ensemble	Akeju Str. Opp. Technical College, Osogbo	Textiles
Sangodare Mystic Gallery	Ibokun Rd, Osogbo	Painting & Textiles
Sunday Osevwe Gallery	Ofatedo, Osogbo	Painting & Textiles
Oyan Art Gallery	Olosan Area, Ogo-oluwa Osogbo	Beads & Paintings
G A Dada Art Gallery	Oke-Ayeye Area, Osogbo	Wood carving
Odo Alaro Art Centre	N0 2 Lawole Str. Kaka Area Osogbo	Textiles
Laurel Art Gallery	Opp. Old Governors' Office, Osogbo	Textiles
Segun Afonja Art Gallery	Kola Balogun Area, Osogbo	Textiles & paintings
Segun Abimbola Art Gallery	Sabo Area, Osogbo	Textiles & paintings
Adeoye Art & Craft Gallery	Station Rd, Osogbo	Drums, calabash carving, sekere & leather works
Osaka Art Gallery	Iwo/Ibadan Rd, Osogbo	Textiles, painting & pen ink
Ojogbona Drum Making Studio	Orita CMS, Osogbo	Drums, beads with bags
Peter Art Gallery	Oke-fia Area, Osogbo	Textiles
Olugbenle Art Gallery	Besides Osun Shrine, Osogbo	Drums & carvings
Wahab Adisa Art Gallery	Agunbelewo Area, Osogbo	Textiles & appliqués

Source: NTDC (2001) and OSTB (2003)

Data Collection Instrument

An interview schedule tagged “factors accounting for low patronage of handicraft among tourist in Osogbo” was designed by the researcher and used for collection of data for the study.

Validation of the Instrument

The drafted question was given to experts in the field of tourism. Their correction and observation were incorporated into the final draft.

Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher administered 10 interview schedules to tourist at different locations who were not part of the research. Their results were correlated and the correlation coefficient was 0.05, then the instrument was considered reliable.

Administration of Data Collection Instrument

The researcher interviewed the tourists patronizing these selected handicraft seller personally from the hours of 8.00a.m to 4.00p.m on the day of Osun Osogbo festival so as to get the necessary information needed for the study. Some of the respondent reluctant in their respond but with the persuasion of the researcher, the researcher was able to collect enough percentage for the study.

Data Analysis

The researcher employed the descriptive analysis involving simple percentage to analyze the data as this is one of the best methods in line with the objectives of the study.

The method used was $\frac{R}{Q} \times \frac{100}{1}$

Where R represents the response to a given question and Q represents total number of respondents.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Identification of Handicrafts that are being produced and their Locations in Osogbo

Data obtained on the identification of handicrafts that are being produced in Osogbo from the documentary source were easily verified and confirmed through the field survey and participatory research approach which the researcher did during the Osun Osogbo Festival where these handicrafts were displayed for sale. A lot of these handicraft producers were present, displaying what they have such as woodworks, drums, beads, fibre crafts, pottery, textiles, ceramics etc.

Handcraft production that was traditionally linked to ceremonial or functional purposes began to be produced commercially in the early 20th century when ships brought back to Europe handmade craft as colonial gifts. This momentum was said to have continued ever since and over the years (Johnson, 2006).

Level of Patronage of Handicrafts in Osogbo

To elucidate the level of handicraft patronage in Osogbo, the researchers in collaboration with NTDC and NIHOTOIR participated in the last edition of Osun Osogbo Festival which was celebrated in August 2010 to interview some tourists which were only admiring the handicrafts but were not purchasing those items. When the tourists were asked why they refused buying those handicrafts, there answers were as follows:

37% of the respondents complained that the products are of low quality, 20% mentioned that they were not pleased with the design, 20% of the respondents' said they like the product but it is too expensive, 15% stressed that they cannot understand the sellers' language which implies that artisans need to be educated at least to be able to speak another language apart from their mother tongue language, most especially English so that they can interact with foreign tourists coming into Osogbo. 10% of the respondents said it is not useful to them but sightseeing.

This finding is in line with Yunis (2006) assertion that “Tourist does appreciate the raw material, the craftsmanship and the techniques used by local people to work out the wood, the stone, the leather, the wool, or other local resources. But at the same time they find it difficult to purchase the resulting goods, either because of their inadequate design or size, lack of usefulness, poor quality, or in the case of clothing articles because they are unsuitable to wear in the countries of origin of the tourists.

Determine Handicrafts’ Design That Meets the Needs and Taste of Tourists

In determining the handicrafts’ design that would meets the needs and taste of tourists, the researcher was able to judge this from the answers given by the respondents. In response, 70 percent of the respondents said they were not satisfied with the designs of these products displayed while 30 percent as satisfied. To those that, were not satisfied the products according to them did not depicting the culture and tradition of Osogbo.

During the research/field work, Japanese in person of Shun yuwun said the existing and emerging handicraft producers’ needs to be supported by developing their indigenous design capacity so as to preserve the Osogbo culture and as well save the handicraft sector in years to come.

Another tourist Miss Edith Iroche, a Nigerian said their designs are acake and the only way to go about it is for the producer to outside their territory to see how other producers are designing their products which have different varieties and in traditional cloth (Aso oke, Adire) should be applied to home furnishings, hotel rooms (handmade products that can used in adoring the walls, floors and surfaces of hotel rooms) and as well used for beautifully designed cushion covers and bed throws. The respondents’ views were in line with Johnson (2006), who stated that “Most handicrafts producers however lack the design skills and market intelligence needed to elevate the perceived value and meaning behind handmade products that can translate into increasing sales”.

Constraints facing the Handicraft Producers in Osogbo

It was discovered that the handicraft sector is facing a lot of problems which is affecting sales in their respective specialization. During the field work, one of the producers said in bitterness that “if our government can give us the support we need, there will be development in the handicraft sector as well as the tourism industry as this will improve the sales. The main constraints mentioned by many respondents were, lack of financial support from Government, handicraft producers are mostly not financially buoyant to keep the business afloat and because of this, there is usually a fall in production volume. Handicraft are also not being patronized by local clientele thereby cutting short the production as many prefer to buy foreign handicrafts and even patronage from international visitors is not too encouraging. As a result of the restriction placed on the falling of trees by government as a means of curbing deforestation; about 10% of artisan specialize in wood carving complained of insufficient of raw materials, there are more adult than youth in the industry, this to causing a lot of problems as regards continuity in the line of business, instead of youth been actively involved in craftwork, they prefer to used their strength on unprofitable things. Other problems faced were:

- Poor business management.
- Inconvenient working premises.
- Lack of access to production centre (lack of linkage between handicraft producers and tourists).
- Short maturity of loan (i.e banks should give them longer repayment period).
- Disharmony within the sector.
- Low education of workers (difficult to approach new techniques, how to balance tradition preservation and handicraft development)

All these responses confirm the finding of Bello (2006) that “The incapacity of local craft sectors is compounded generally by most African governments, who do underrate and neglect the sector”.

Ngo (2005) also asserted that “Technical assistance, availability of raw materials, financial intermediation, accessibility and good education are necessities for handicraft development.

Strategies to enhance Production of Required Handicraft to meet Market Demand in Osogbo

Government Support: As handicraft producers are mostly not financially buoyant to keep the business afloat, the government should try and encourage these producers by finding as well as sponsoring them for trade fairs both locally and internationally. This will thereby increase their production volume as well as sales.

- **Publicity:** Adequate publicity should be made so as to encourage the inflow of tourists both local and foreign. From this, the local clientele who preferred to for foreign handicrafts will be convinced to buy the ones made in his/her locality.
- **Provision of Raw Materials:** Government should be lenient with the law guiding deforestation. They should give them access to falling of tress (deforestation) but make sure they engage in replanting (afforestation) so as not to destroy the scenic beauty of the place. This will help to increase the production volume and also cut down the price of the finished products when the material is sufficient.
- **Poor Tools:** Government should try and provide the handicraft producers with imported tools at a cheaper rate so as to upgrade the quality of their product.
- **Accessibility:** The production centres must be located in areas where it will be accessible to tourists so as to enhance sales.
- There should be harmony within the sector so that they can work hand in hand as well teach themselves new technique or design that are in vogue.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

In a nutshell, this research work was carried out to determine the factors accounting for low patronage of handicrafts among

tourists in Osogbo with a view to understand the needs and taste of tourist and strategies to enhance production of required handicraft that meet market demand in the areas. The finding revealed among other that if we give handicraft sector a place of being in the tourism industry, will enhance the growth of the economy, improve the living standard of handicraft producers, and keep the youth occupied among others.

Conclusion

The most significant conclusion arising from the study is that, there is a yawning gap between the production of handicrafts and tourists demand as the handicrafts producers find it difficult to understand the need and taste of tourist which in turn is affecting sales.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are hereby postulated:

1. Government should undertake major investment in handicraft sector and strengthen capacity building to overcome critical constraints associated with quality, design and usefulness of the product.
2. Government should also organize competition among craftspeople regularly (with high value prize), theory trade and stock exchange
3. Establish craft artisan fund for training young workers.
4. Promote cooperation among master artisans.
5. The Government should assist them in facilitating raw materials supply on credit.
6. Vocational training schools should be encourage to work closely with artisans to provide on –the-spot training for craftsmen, as well as courses on marketing and management.
7. The artisans should try and restore traditional techniques with food designs.

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