

Research Article

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Dimensions of Destination Attractiveness in Cape Coast

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Abstract: Destination attractiveness has received much attention in tourism literature and has been identified as crucial in terms of visitors' perceived value. The aim of this paper was to assess the attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. Focusing on the supply side perspective, the push and pull theory serves as the basis for the study. The study employed a cross-sectional survey and sampled 294 tourists with the help of a questionnaire using a convenience-sampling technique. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, in which means scores and standard deviations were used to measure the dimensions of destination attractiveness. The results showed that natural, cultural and man-made resources and amenities were the major attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. It is recommended that natural resources and cultural heritage should be well preserved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) together with Ghana Tourism Authority to ensure its sustainability. It is therefore of utmost importance that Ghana Tourism Authority will ensure that the attractions are constantly improved and expanded in accordance with the new trends and developments of tourism in the marketplace.

Keywords: Attributes, attractiveness, destination attractiveness, tourism destination, Cape Coast.

1 Introduction

In the new millennium, tourism has become one of the most important economic activities globally (Holloway & Humphreys, 2019). Given its economic and associated benefits, tourism has become an alternative model for developing a country's economic fortunes. Król, Ziernicka-Wojtaszek, and Zdonek (2020) consider *attractiveness* as the aggregated indicator of attributes that make a destination appealing to travelers. Destination attractiveness is vital in tourism, since people have the desire to travel based on their push motivation but need the pulling effect to bring them to any specific destination (Li, Dai, Tang, & Chen, 2020). Singh and Singh (2019) argue that the ability of a destination to deliver individual benefits is enhanced by its touristic attributes and the importance of these attributes help people to evaluate the attractiveness of a destination, influencing relevant choices.

A review of existing literature on attractiveness indicates its vital role in ensuring tourist satisfaction at the destination (Ragavan et al., 2014; Vareiro et al., 2017). Further, it has been highlighted that destination attractiveness may influence revisit intention and destination loyalty. Similarly, Ma et al. (2018) revealed that the choice of destination by means of its attractiveness is an influence on the travel intentions of tourists. Another study examined the effect of destination attractiveness variables on tourists' preference for a destination (Reitsamer et al., 2016). Their study showed that attractiveness has a key role in tourists' choice of accommodation at the destination.

Elements relating to attractiveness of a place can be classified into natural tourist resources, cultural and historical heritage in tourism, climatic conditions, infrastructure and tourist services and facilities (UNWTO 2005; McIntyre, Hetherington & Inskeep, 1993). Although widely accepted, this classification is often considered to be not detailed enough (Krešić & Prebežac, 2011). According to Swarbrooke (2002), four features define attractiveness of a destination. These include features within the natural environment and human-made buildings. Others include

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structures and sites that are designed for a purpose other than attracting visitors, such as religious worship, but which now attract substantial numbers of visitors who use them as leisure amenities. Structures and sites that are designed to attract visitors and are purpose-built to accommodate their needs, such as theme parks and special events, are also factors (Swarbrooke, 2002). Another frequently used typology is the basic differentiation between destination attractions that are based on natural features; man-made features; cultural features; or any combination of these three (Robinson, Lück, & Smith, 2013).

The Central Region of Ghana, whose capital is Cape Coast, holds and receives the highest number of tourists in Ghana according to a report by Ghana Statistical Service (2017). The destination is endowed with different kinds of attractions, including historical, ecological and cultural attractions. Therefore, Cape Coast as a destination needs to be monitored on a regular basis in order to ensure that corrective measures are put in place to sustain it for future generations. The Destination Life Cycle model (Butler, 1980) indicates that a destination goes through a cycle, and if management does not ensure its ongoing desirability, the popular destination may lose its fame and become a forgotten destination. Cape Coast as a tourist destination has been downplayed in light of this important exercise; perhaps this neglect is affecting its popularity. Ghana Museum and Monument Board's report (2015) indicates that the Cape Coast Castle, which is a major attraction in Cape Coast, has witnessed a decline in tourist arrivals for the past three years. In 2013 and 2014, the total arrival of tourists in Cape Coast Castle was 87,840 and 68,658 respectively. The destination continues to record a decline in tourist arrivals: 61,532 visited in 2015. The report indicates further low arrivals in the near future. Therefore, its attributes need to be identified and well developed to sustain the destination, and prevent it from reaching the stagnation or decline stage of the destination life cycle.

The paper is organized into five sections, including an introduction. Section 2 explores the literature on destination attractiveness, attributes of destination attractiveness, and classification of tourism attractiveness. The methodology of the study is described in section 3. Section 4 presents the results, discussion and conclusion. Recommendation, limitations and directions for future research are presented in Section 5.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Destination attractiveness

Within the tourism literature, there has been a growing interest in the concept of destination attractiveness and how destination attractiveness can be effectively measured. According to Gunn (1987), the word *attractiveness* emanates from the Latin verb *attrahere*, which means to attract. Hence, for a destination to be called an attraction, it must possess features that are attractive to potential tourists, that draw them to it. Attractiveness is mostly assessed based on the features and attributes of a specific destination (Ariya, Wishitemi & Sitati, 2017). While some research assesses destination attractiveness by evaluating the account of existing tourism destination resources and attractions, others assess the perceptions of tourists about the destination's resources and attractions (Kim & Perdue, 2011; Ariya, Wishitemi & Sitati, 2017).

Lee et al. (2010) opine that destination attractiveness has been measured from two main perspectives: that of demand and that of supply. The demand-side perspective suggests that destination attractiveness is dependent on the tourists' assessments of the attributes of a destination (Um, Chon & Ro., 2006; Kim & Perdue, 2011). Under this approach, attractiveness is viewed as a function of the tourist's perception of the destination's ability to satisfy their needs and provide individual benefits (Madina-Monoz, 2014). To Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin (2017), attractiveness is a subjective construct depending on tourists' perception of the attributes of a destination. Inversely, the supply-side view of destination attractiveness is as a pull factor, generated by destination attractions. In this view, a destination becomes a 'supplier' of spatial tourist services with different attractiveness attributes (Tardivo & Viassone, 2009; Reitsamer & Brunner-Sperdin, 2017). Consequently, these differences indicate that tourists attach varied importance to specific attributes within a destination which influence them to choose one destination over another (Uysal, Li, & Sirakaya-Turk, 2008; Madina-Monoz, 2014).

Destination attractiveness has been extensively defined in the tourism literature. Islam and Chaudhary (2020), for instance, conceptualised destination attractiveness as the feelings, beliefs and opinions a tourist constructs about what he/she is going to receive from a destination. They further argue that tourism destinations are therefore an amalgamation of destination features, typically facilities and services. This observation also corroborates the view of Vangesayi et al. (2009) who argue

that destination attractiveness consists of opinions of visitors about a destination's perceived ability to satisfy their needs and goals. According to Kresic (2007), attractiveness comprises 'those attributes of a tourism destination which, with their specific features, attract or motivate tourists to visit' (p. 1183). Similarly, it is defined as 'an aggregated indicator of attributes that make a specific location appealing as a potential destination to travellers' (Cho, 2008, p. 221). Buhalis (2000) and UNWTO (2003) also view destination attractiveness as a set of spatial attributes, and define it as a geographic region or a place that offers a combination of tourist products and services with physical and administrative restrictions that define its management and perception of market competitiveness.

Thus, it can be concluded that destination attractiveness can be measured differently based on the destination attribute that has the power to attract, the perception of tourists about the attribute that can best satisfy their needs and wants, or a combination of the two perspectives. The current study adopts the supply-side approach to examine features of Cape Coast in connection with tourism attractiveness. It is important to identify the attributes that prompt tourists to choose one destination over another. This information could help destinations to allocate resources and prioritize the investment and development of their tourism areas, and enable such destinations to fulfill and retain their potential. Determining and evaluating the attributes of a destination that play key roles in attracting and satisfying tourists is also integral to its management and marketing policies, particularly those oriented towards tourism strategies and plans to target markets (Buhalis, 2000, Kim & Perdue, 2011).

2.2 Attributes of Destination Attractiveness

Several studies have attempted to identify the attributes that make a tourist destination attractive. The attributes of an attractive destination could vary from destination to destination based on what appeals to tourists in a particular destination. Using a structured questionnaire to examine how and the extent to which these important attributes influence international tourists' decisions, Zhou (2005) found that ten destination attributes—landscape, culture, entertainment, service, accessibility, local people's attitude toward visitors, safety, relaxation, climate, and price—can be seen as Cape Coast's important attributes. Similarly, Stepchenkova and Morrison (2008) identified some important attributes such as sites/museums, agriculture, customs/culture, arts, and scenery as attrib-

utes that attract tourists to a destination. Chan and Baum (2007) found significance in destination attributes such as natural attractions, wildlife, local lifestyle and eco-activities in appealing to tourists to stay in a destination (diverse accommodation). Likewise, natural settings and authentic experience have been discussed as significant factors in attracting tourists to use alternative accommodation (Gunasekaran & Anandkumar, 2012). Banasree et al.'s (2020) study in India assessed the influence of attractiveness factors and travel motivation on rural homestay choice, which revealed that tourists will opt for diverse accommodation if the destination is attractive in terms of natural, rural or cultural attractions, to enable them to have a local feel and genuine experience of the place.

Another study that tried to determine attributes for specific destinations is the research by O'Leary and Deegan (2005), who found that attributes such as beautiful scenery, environment, tranquility, price-quality ratio, and litter-free locales attract tourists to a destination. Similarly, Naidoo and Ramseook-Munhurrin (2012) identified both functional and psychological attributes as important when selecting Mauritius as a holiday destination. Accordingly, the study identified historical sites, beaches and local cuisine as some strongly attractive attributes for Mauritius. On the contrary, Chang, Kivela, and Mak (2011) in their research, identified tourists' own food culture, contextual factors of the dining experience, variety and diversity of food, perception of the destination, service encounter, and tour guide's performance as attributes that make a place an attractive destination.

According to Gârbea (2014), the attractiveness of a region or place depends on the number of existing tourism resources, but also how these resources are evaluated and perceived by tourists. Simple inventory and grouping of existing resources in a territory may not help determine the degree of attractiveness of the area. Thus, attractiveness of some resources depends not only on their inherent value but also on the perceptions that tourists have about them. Not all destinations that have major attractions are seen as attractive by tourists. Several attributes related to specific types of tourist destinations encourage the motivation to visit Cape Coast as a destination and to enjoy it. The destination is regarded as a package of tourism facilities and services, including several multidimensional characteristics that together define its attractiveness to a particular individual in a given choice situation.

2.3 Classification of Tourism Attractiveness

Kresic and Prebezac (2011) are of the view that there is a lot of heterogeneity in the tourism attractiveness category, and the essence of attractive attributes can be very different. For instance, scenic beauty, night life, interesting historic sites, or market ties with the receptive destination (VFR, ‘visiting friends and relatives’) are all examples of tourism attractions, even though they do not have much in common. Formica (2000) argues that even those services that develop around the attraction often become attractions themselves. For example, a means of transportation could be an important attraction when it is a cruise ship or a historic train. Lodging facilities are perceived as important attractions if famous people have stayed there. Therefore, it is important to classify and consolidate numerous tourism attractions into fewer categories which have higher degrees of homogeneity in order to make the complex tourism system more transparent, and in order to study those attractions easily (Kresic & Prebezic, 2011).

In the tourism literature, numerous classifications of tourism attractions can be found. One basic classification of tourism attractions is proposed by the UNWTO (McIntyre, Hetherington & Inskip, 1993), which classifies all destination attractiveness factors into seven categories. These categories are: 1. Natural tourist resources; 2. Cultural heritage; 3. historical heritage; 4. Climate conditions; 5. Infrastructure; 6. Tourist services; 7. Tourist facilities. Although widely accepted, this classification is often considered to be insufficiently detailed. Therefore, in the scientific literature numerous additional classifications of tourism attractions can be found. They differentiate according to the degree of classification details, as well as the basis for the classification.

2.4 Theoretical Review

Understanding travel motivation has been covered by theoretical papers, which revealed a base for different tourism motivation theories; for example, Crompton’s theory, expectancy theory, the means-end theory, and drive theory (Card & Kestel, 1988; Cohen, 1972; Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1981; Iso-Ahola, 1980; Pearce, 1982; Uysal & Hagan, 1993). Although there are many competing theories that try to explain travel motivation, Pearce (1982) argues that no single theory of travel motivation can completely explain tourist behaviour. He suggests that travel motivation theory should take into consideration long-term goals, measurement issues, multiple motivations for behaviour, the perspective of the observer, and the qual-

itatively different nondeterministic nature of fundamentally motivated behaviours.

2.4.1 The Means-End Theory

The means-end theory is used as a practical framework to examine the push and pull relationship. The ‘means’ refer to the destination attributes, while the ‘ends’ refer to the motivational forces that are important to the traveller in selecting potential destinations (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). The means-end theory is said to provide a better understanding of potential consumption motives by depicting how concrete product attributes are linked to self-relevant consequences of consumption and personal life values (or goals), in a hierarchical model of consumers’ cognitive structures. In essence, this approach is thought to be able to identify the choice criteria used by consumers to evaluate and select among alternative products or services and explain the higher-order reasons leading to the salience of these particular criteria (Grunert & Valli, 2001).

The means-ends theory’s main assumption is that people do not purchase products for the products’ sake, but for the benefits that their consumption can provide. That is, the utility of a product is not so much in its features, but in the functional and psychological consequences it delivers, which are in turn important for the realization of consumers’ goals and values.

A similar assumption underlies the concept of consumer-oriented products. Two general assumptions are guiding this framework. The first is that consumers buy and use products depending on their evaluation of the self-relevant consequences of these behaviours. They establish the self-relevance of the consequences based on individually held values, while inferring their valuation from the products’ attributes. These attributes, consequences, and values (ACV) and, above all, the links consumers establish between them, constitute the essence of means-ends theory. The second assumption has to do with the level of intent and awareness of consumption-related behavioural decisions. Consumers are assumed to make voluntary and conscious choices between alternative objects, which are guided by the search for positive consequences and/or the avoidance of negative outcomes (Olson & Reynolds, 2001).

Klenosky (2002) used the means-end approach to examine which factors help in choosing from among the alternative destinations to travel for vacation. The strength of the means-ends theory is that it can help to determine the destination attributes that attract tourists to specific destinations, and it examines the relationships

between these destination attributes and motivational forces. In other words, the means-end theory provides an alternative approach for examining the extent to which these higher-level forces match the destination attributes that influence tourists to travel to specific destinations.

2.4.2 Push and Pull Theory

The push and pull theory was developed by John L. Crompton. He developed the theory in 1979 in order to examine tourists' motivations for travelling to a particular destination. Other researchers have improved upon this theory (Devesa, Laguna, & Palacios, 2010; Hanqin & Lam, 1999; Kozak, 2002; Phau, Lee, & Quintal, 2013; Prayag & Hosany, 2014; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Early discussions of motivations related to visitors' choice of a holiday destination suggested that these motives can be classified into 'push' and 'pull' factors (Crompton, 1979). Since Crompton's initial empirical effort, many studies have attempted to identify push and pull motivational factors in different settings such as nationalities, destinations and events (Jang & Wu, 2006). Examples included Yuan and McDonald's (1990) study on motivations for overseas travel from four countries: Japan, France, West Germany and the UK. Uysal and Jurowski (1993) also studied the nature and extent of the reciprocal relationship. Thus, existing studies suggest common push factors such as escape, novelty, social interaction, and prestige. These tend to explain why tourists choose a place over another, what type of experiences they seek and the type of activities they want (Ryan, 1991).

The idea behind Crompton's theory is that before the travel experience or the long-awaited vacation, there is dysequilibrium in the individual's cultural-social-psychological needs. Then, after travelling or during the vacation, equilibrium of those needs is established. The main assumption guiding the push and pull dimension is that people travel because they are pushed by their own internal forces and pulled by the external forces of destination attributes (Crompton, 1979). Hence, when their intrinsic forces equalize with the destination attributes, equilibrium is obtained.

The pull factors (such as landscape, culture, price, service, climate) refer to a mixture of facilities and services that all contribute to the destination attractiveness for people in a selection situation (Hu & Ritchie, 1993). Once a tourist decides to travel, it is the pull factors that attract the tourist to select a particular destination (Oh, Uysal, & Weaver, 1995). Pull factors are the 'destination attributes' or 'drawing powers', which respond to the push factors

of motivations. Destination attributes can either be material resources or the perceived expectations of the tourist (Uysal & Hagan, 1993). In other words, the 'pull factors' can lead an individual traveller to select one destination over another once the decision to travel has been made. The 'pull factors' can be seen as exogenous forces, which have been characterized in terms of the features, attractions, or attributes of a destination (Klenosky, 2002).

In a similar way pull factor—the external forces related to natural and historic attractions, food, people, recreation facilities, and marketed image of the destination (Klenosky, 2002)—showed that push and pull travel motivations are not independent but related to each other. Whereas push factors refer to the forces that push individuals from home and make the decision to travel, pull factors simultaneously pull them toward a specific destination.

3 Materials and Methods

3.1 Study area

The study was conducted in the Cape Coast Metropolis of the Central Region, Ghana. It is located on longitude 1° 15'W and latitude 5°06'N, about six kilometers east of Elmina. The Metropolis is bounded to the South by the Gulf of Guinea, to the West by the Komenda Edina Eguafu Abrem Municipality, to the East by the Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese District, and to the North by the Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira District. Cape Coast is described as the tourism 'hub' of the Central Region because of its numerous tourist facilities and services. Cape Coast attracts the highest number of international tourists in Ghana because of its historical slave trade (Ghana Museum and Monument Board's report, 2015). The destination is endowed with different kinds of attractions, including historical, ecological and cultural attractions. Also, most international tourists notably visit Cape Coast because it has a United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) world heritage site, Cape Coast Castle, because of its historical role in the slave trade. Cape Coast is known for its ancient forts such Fort Victoria and William built by the early European traders. It has a lot of tourist sites to its credit, which include forts and castle, cultural festivals, eco-tourism, business tourism and many more. The forts and castle today attract more than 100,000 tourists annually, most of whom are international tourists (Arthur & Mensah, 2006). Special events like the Emancipation Day, the Pan Africa Festival

(PANAFEST), and the Fetu Afahye are held biennially and annually in Cape Coast. Such events attract more arrivals. Other places of attraction include a series of Asafo Shrines, Cape Coast Centre for National Culture, Victoria Park, Hans Cottage, and the Omanhen's Palace (Emzintmadze). Christ Church and Wesley Methodist are the first Anglican and Methodist Churches in Ghana, respectively, all located around the castle. There are also hotels, resorts, pubs, and guesthouses that are located along and near the coasts; some of these entertainment venues are The Breeze, Oasis Beach Resort, Castle Restaurant, Mighty Victory Hotel, Baobab Guest House, Dans Paradise Hotel, Capital Hill Hotel, Samrit Hotel, Royal Ridge Hotel, Pemampsie Hotel and many homestays. These characteristics make Cape Coast a diversified destination where people visit for varying purposes. It is therefore prudent to carry out a study of this nature to help manage the destination; effective management means identifying the special features of Cape Coast that attract diverse types of tourist. This will aid in development of design strategies that will help them maximize destination attractiveness and record long-term sustainability. A map of the study area is presented in Figure 1.

3.2 Research Design

To assess the attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination, this study adopted a quantitative research

approach. Quantitative research is a way of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables which are measured and analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2008). In line with the research approach, a descriptive cross-sectional survey design was adopted as the research design. Descriptive cross-sectional survey design describes and interprets what exists (Payne & Payne, 2004). This design is most appropriate since an attempt was made by the researcher to describe the existing situation by asking respondents to complete a questionnaire to draw meaningful conclusions.

3.3 Data and sources

Primary data derived from the fieldwork with the help of the questionnaire was the source of data for this study. International tourists who visited Cape Coast during the period of data collection were asked to fill out the questionnaire.

3.4 Target population

Data was collected from international tourists who visited Cape Coast in the month of April 2017. Cape Coast as a destination is recognized as the epicenter of attractions in the Central region and Ghana. Although all age groups visit the destination, the focus population was international tourists above 18 years. The reason was that they can read and appreciate the concept under study. Using the average number of arrivals in April from 2013–2015, the total population for the study was 1121. This was made up of Foreign Adults (FA) and Foreign Students (FS) arrivals.

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedure

It was virtually impossible to undertake the study with all members of the target population. A sample size of 294 was obtained using Yamane (1967) sample size determi-

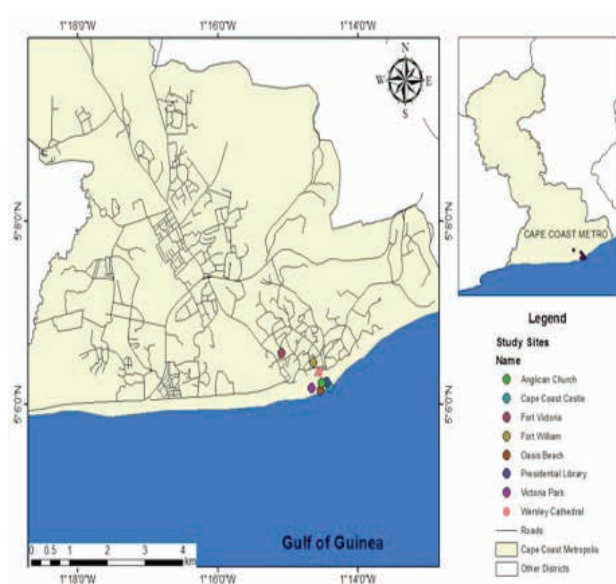


Figure 1: Map of Study Area (Source: Cartography and Remote Sensing Unit, UCC (2018))

Table 1: Arrival of International Tourists in Cape Coast

	Foreign Adults (FA)	Foreign Student (FS)	TOTAL
April, 2013	1112	116	1228
April, 2014	931	418	1349
April, 2015	559	227	786
Average	867	253	1121

Source: Ghana Museum and Monument Board Report, 2015

nation technique. This number was representative of the population in terms of time and space. The technique is based on the assumption that there should be a population, a sampling frame, and margin of error. The formula used was $n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$ where n = sampling frame, N = total population and e = the margin of error.

$$\begin{aligned} n &= 1121 / (1 + 1121(0.05)^2) \\ n &= 1121 / (1 + 1121(0.0025)) \\ n &= 294 \end{aligned}$$

To sample the respondents, convenience sampling was employed due to the fact that tourist populations are mostly on the move, and as such getting the sampling frame from which to probabilistically select the unit of enquiry is not possible. However, care was taken to avoid selection bias by ensuring gender equity and limiting the number of participants from any group.

Using convenience sampling, the researcher and the field assistants stood at key areas around the Oasis Beach Resort, Mighty Victory Hotel, Castle Restaurant, Baobab Rest House, the Breeze beach, Dans Paradise Guest House and around the castle. They administered questionnaires to respondents who were part of the target population. Specifically, data was collected from only international tourists who had spent at least a day in Cape Coast. Thus, international tourists who just arrived on the day of data collection during the data collection period were excluded from the study.

3.6 Research instrument

The questionnaire was the main instrument for the collection of data for the study. The questionnaire focused on five key pull factors (destination natural resources, cultural/history and man-made resources, accessibility, amenities, and complementary services) that make Cape Coast an attractive destination (UNWTO 2005; Swarbrooke, 2002; McIntyre, Hetherington & Inskip, 1993). The five pull factors measuring destination attractiveness were captured using a 5-point Likert Scale (*Strongly Agree* = 4.5-5.0, *Agree* = 3.5-4.4, *Neutral* = 2.5-3.4, *Disagree* = 1.5-2.4, *Strongly Disagree* = 0-1.4). Tourists were asked to indicate their extent of agreement or disagreement with statements posed by the researcher.

The choice to use a questionnaire was influenced by the fact that it was more efficient, accessible to the respondents, and uniform in terms of questions (Amedahe, 2002). It was deemed suitable for the study because it helped in gathering large quantities of infor-

mation from respondents within a short period. Closed-ended questions were used in the questionnaire, because they are easy to answer and also make data analysis easier for researchers (Glosow, 2005).

Before the actual collection of data, a pretest of the instrument was carried out at Elimina Castle. A sample size of 30 international tourists were selected for this purpose on 1 March, 2017. Pre-testing was done to ensure the suitability of the research instruments and to clarify areas of ambiguity or complex questions. Following this exercise, irrelevancies were removed and ambiguous questions were reworded to suit the interpretation of the actual study.

3.7 Statistical analysis

Each questionnaire completed by the respondents was checked for accuracy and consistency of the responses to the items on the instrument. After editing, a template was developed and used to create a data analysis matrix on the computer, as well as to code responses to the items on the instrument. After coding, the data was then entered into the computer analysis matrix developed with the computer software Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21.

Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21 was used to process data collected from the field. After data entry, the data was screened to check for errors. Descriptive statistics considering frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations, were used to analyze the data and were presented in tables.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Participation was always done on voluntary basis. Informed consent was therefore sought from participants before they responded to the survey. Provision of adequate information about the study enabled the participants to decide whether they wanted to take part or not. An introductory letter from the Department was used to seek consent from tourism and hospitality-related facilities management. Secondly, the issue of anonymity was highly ensured. This was guaranteed because the names of participants did not appear on the instrument used. The use of questionnaires guaranteed respondents anonymity, since names and other personal details were not associated with specific responses given. Confidentiality was adhered to in the study. These were the pertinent provisions made to protect the rights of all the participants.

The researcher was able to achieve this by not sharing or discussing any information given by the respondents to a third party. Moreover, data gathered from respondents was only to be used for the purpose for which they were collected. Finally, respondents were assured that their participation in the study was voluntary and at any point in time, they were free to withdraw from the study.

4 Results

Table 2 represents the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. Concerning sex, 51.7% of the respondents were females while 48.3% were males. The implication of this is that more female international tourists compared to males visit Cape Coast, as they are attracted to the various recreational activities that exist in Cape Coast. Age as a sociodemographic characteristic has been

Table 2: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

Sociodemographic characteristics	Frequency (n = 294)	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	142	48.3
Female	152	51.7
Age		
Below 20	34	11.6
20 – 29	167	56.8
30- 39	47	16.0
40 – 49	18	6.1
50 – 59	15	5.1
60 and above	13	4.4
Occupation		
Students	107	36.4
Self employed	83	28.3
Public servants	69	23.5
Volunteers and missionaries	20	6.8
Housewives	2	0.7
Retiree	13	4.4
Marital status		
Single	191	65.0
Married	100	34.0
Widowed	2	0.7
Divorced	1	0.3
Religion		
Christianity	202	68.7
Islam	22	7.5
Tradition	6	2.0
No religion	54	18.4
Others	10	3.4
Level of Education		
No formal education	1	.3
Basic	1	.3
JHS	11	3.7
Senior High/Vocational/Technical	59	20.1
Tertiary	201	68.7
Others	21	7.1
Average monthly income		
GH¢100 – GH¢ 1000	105	35.7
GH¢ 1100 –GH¢ 2000	60	20.4
GH¢ 2100 – GH¢ 3000	23	7.8
GH¢ 3100 – GH¢ 4000	21	7.1
GH¢ 4100 – GH¢ 5000	25	8.5
GH¢ 5100 – GH¢ 6000	60	20.4

identified to have a strong influence on tourists' behaviour (Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2009). With age, 56.8% were 20-29 while the lowest percentage (4.4%) were aged 60 and above. From this, it could be inferred that most of the tourists are young and between the ages of 21-29. The implication is that the youth with the energy and zeal to explore are more likely to visit tourist sites compared to the aged. In relation to the occupation of the respondents, the distribution indicated that 36.4% were students and only 0.7% were housewives. The finding that students form the majority of tourists who visit Cape Coast is a clear indication of the fact that most of the tourist sites in Cape Coast, especially the Cape Coast Castle, have some history and other important information that are beneficial to students for research purposes.

In terms of marital status, three-quarters (65%) of the respondents were never married (single) while only 0.3% were divorced. This indicates that most of the travelers were never married. This is possibly a confirmation of the notion that those who are single are at liberty to travel wherever they wish to without any restrictions from their partners. In terms of religion, the findings indicated that the majority (68.7%) were Christians while only 2.0% were traditionalist. This shows that the dominant religion of tourists who visit Cape Coast is Christianity. It was also shown from the study that almost 69% (68.7%) of the respondents had a tertiary level of formal education while just 0.3% had no formal education and basic education. This is an indication of the educational role of tourists' sites like castles. Since tertiary students are of a level of education where they need to acquire knowledge from various sources, tourist sites become one of the means by which knowledge is acquired. This explains why they form a majority of the respondents. The average monthly income for 35.7% of the respondents was GH¢100–GH¢1000 (\$23–\$230) and few of them (7.1%) had monthly incomes of GH¢ 3100–GH¢4000 (\$705 – \$920). This is a clear indication of the fact that most of the tourists are students who may still be dependent on their parents and thus may not have income of their own.

Table 3 shows the attributes that make a destination attractive. Table 2 shows that on the whole, tourists agreed that natural resources ($M = 2.63$), cultural history and man-made resources ($M = 2.52$) and amenities ($M = 2.50$) were the major attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. On the other hand, tourists were uncertain on accessibility ($M = 2.47$) and complementary services ($M = 2.33$) as attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

The findings obtained from the study indicate that natural resources, cultural/history, man-made resources

and amenities are attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

In relation to natural resources, tourists identified comfortable climate ($M = 2.77$), unspoiled nature/scenic beauty ($M = 2.52$), beautiful landscape ($M = 2.81$), quality of sandy beaches ($M = 2.58$), lush vegetation ($M = 2.55$) and dramatic landforms (e.g., flat and hilly lands) ($M = 2.56$) as the attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

In terms of cultural/history and man-made resources, the respondents flagged the historical buildings/artistic and architectural features ($M = 2.89$), traditional arts (e.g., artistic fishing skills, clothes, music) ($M = 2.72$) and unique cultural heritage (e.g., cultural display) ($M = 2.77$) as the elements that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. On the other hand, they were divided over the attractions of the shrines ($M = 2.36$), museums ($M = 2.31$), souvenir shops ($M = 2.35$) and library (Atta Mills Presidential Library) ($M = 2.24$) as attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

In relation to accessibility, the respondents agreed that Cape Coast was relatively accessible in terms of transport services (mass transport and car rental) ($M = 2.54$) and proximity to nearby attractions such as Kakum National Park ($M = 2.76$). However, tourists were divided over the quality of the road network ($M = 2.27$), the adequacy of working days and the opening hours of attractions ($M = 2.39$), affordable of entry fee ($M = 2.49$) and availability and speed of infrastructure, the internet and the comprehensiveness of guidebooks ($M = 2.39$) as attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

Regarding amenities, the respondents agreed that the availability of moderate accommodation ($M = 2.74$) and diverse accommodation stock ($M = 2.69$) are attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. However, they were divided over the quality of the existing accommodation ($M = 2.49$), professionalism of the hospitality staff ($M = 2.46$), number of restaurants ($M = 2.35$), variety of foods ($M = 2.40$) and food sellers who provide quality services ($M = 2.35$) as attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

Finally, with complementary services, the respondents agreed that friendliness of local residents ($M = 2.76$) and availability of banks, forex bureau, insurance companies, ATM services, and so on ($M = 2.63$) are attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. On the other hand, tourists were uncertain over cleanliness and tidiness ($M = 1.98$), availability of visitor centers/receptions ($M = 2.26$), recreational sites (e.g., sports stadium, gym, parks, gardens) ($M = 2.32$), visibility of police ($M = 2.22$), availability of health services ($M = 2.27$), telecommu-

Table 3: Dimensions of Destination Attractiveness (N=294)

Dimension	% in (Agreement)	Mean	Std. deviation
Natural resources			
Comfortable climate	84.7	2.77	0.57
Unspoiled natures/ scenic beauty	60.4	2.52	0.65
Beautiful landscape	85.7	2.81	0.50
Quality of sandy beaches	71.2	2.58	0.71
Lush vegetation	65.6	2.55	0.68
Dramatic landforms (e.g. flat and hilly lands)	64.5	2.56	0.65
Overall score	68.3	2.63	0.40
Cultural History / Man-made Resources			
Historical buildings / artistic	90.6	2.89	0.38
Traditional arts (e.g., artistic fishing, skills, clothes and music)	77.5	2.72	0.56
Unique cultural heritage (e.g., cultural display)	81.9	2.77	0.53
Shrines	45.6	2.36	0.64
Museums	50.2	2.32	0.78
Souvenir shop	53.6	2.35	0.77
Library (Atta Mills Presidential Library)	41.2	2.24	0.73
Overall score	68.3	2.52	0.39
Accessibility			
Accessible transport	67.4	2.52	0.72
Good road network	51.8	2.27	0.83
Long working and opening days and hours of attraction sites	57.8	2.39	0.78
The affordable entry fee	62.9	2.49	0.73
Its proximity to nearby attractions	80.6	2.76	0.53
Accessibility on the internet and in guidebooks	56.0	2.39	0.76
Overall score	68.3	2.47	0.49
Amenities			
Affordable accommodation	80.8	2.74	0.57
Sufficient accommodation	73.0	2.69	0.55
Quality accommodation	59.0	2.49	0.67
Staff who provide quality accommodation services	59.6	2.46	0.72
A lot of restaurants	54.1	2.35	0.78
Variety of foods	59.8	2.40	0.79
Food sellers who provide quality services	52.3	2.35	0.76
Overall score	68.3	2.50	0.45
Complementary services			
Friendliness of local residents	84.2	2.76	0.58
Cleanliness and tidiness	36.6	1.98	0.87
Availability of visitor centers / receptions	46.1	2.26	0.77
Recreational sites (e.g., sports stadium, gym, parks and gardens)	50.0	2.32	0.76
Availability of banks, forex bureau, insurance firms and ATMs	70.5	2.63	0.62
Visibility of police	44.8	2.22	0.79
Available health services	45.3	2.27	0.75
Telecommunication system and internet connection speediness	48.5	2.18	0.87
Entertainment (cinemas, discos, bars, pub)	53.9	2.34	0.79
Overall score	68.3	2.33	0.48

Scale: Strongly Agree = 4.5-5.0, Agree = 3.5-4.4, Neutral = 2.5-3.4, Disagree = 1.5-2.4, Strongly Disagree = 0-1.4

nication system and internet connectivity ($M = 2.18$) and entertainment (cinemas, discos, bars, pub) ($M = 2.34$) as attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

5 Discussion

In relation to natural resources, tourists perceived them as an attractive factor. This implies that cleanliness of the environment is one thing that attracts tourists to a destination. Thus, at destinations where tourists experience uncomfortable climatic conditions and unfriendly environment, they are less likely to be attracted to such destinations. The reason for the finding could be that the nature of the environment in Cape Coast is a major factor that pulls tourists to Cape Coast. This confirms the push and pull theory affirming that the pull factors such as landscape and climate all contribute to the destination attractiveness for people in a selection situation (Hu & Ritchie, 1993). The finding implies that natural resource is one of the major attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. This affirms the study by Murphy, Pritchard and Smith (2000) who emphasize that features such as the natural environment and other primary features (such availability of attractions and amenities, etc.) may be core determinants in defining the attractiveness of a destination for tourists.

In respect to cultural/history and man-made resources, the respondents flagged the historical buildings/artistic and architectural features, traditional arts (e.g., artistic fishing skills, clothes, music) and unique cultural heritage (e.g., cultural display) as the elements that make Cape Coast an attractive destination. On the other hand, they were divided over the attractions of the shrines, museums, souvenir shops and library (Atta Mills Presidential Library) as desirable attributes. The findings corroborate a previous study by Zhou (2005), who found that landscape, culture, relaxation, climate, and price are important attributes of a tourism destination. Naidoo and Ramseook-Munhurrun (2012) reported similar findings, where historical sites, beaches and local cuisine were found to be attributes that make a destination attractive. Moreover, Stepchenkova and Morrison (2008), identified some important attributes such as sites/museums, agriculture, customs/culture, arts, scenery and so forth as attributes that attract tourists to a destination. The findings further support the push and pull theory that stipulates that culture is an important pull factor that contributes to the destination attractiveness for people in a selection situation. The reason for the finding could

be that since the international tourists are from different cultural groups, the need to understand the Ghanaian culture will be an essential element they would consider in the course of their visit. This means that the cultural/historical elements of Cape Coast need to be upheld by the natives of Cape Coast. More so, the Ghana Tourism Authority needs to stage and package these cultural elements to make them appealing to tourists. Such measures will enhance the sustainability of attractiveness of Cape Coast.

Regarding accessibility, the respondents agreed that Cape Coast was relatively accessible in terms of transport services and proximity to nearby attractions such as Kakum National Park. This finding of the study supports the push and pull theory, which states that the nature of services at a destination is a key factor that pulls people to the destination.

In terms of amenities, the respondents were in agreement that the availability of moderate accommodation and diverse accommodation are attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination, which affirms (Chan & Baum 2007; Gunasekaran & Anandkumar, 2012; Banasree et al., 2020) studies that show the significant relationship between natural resources and diverse accommodation in influencing tourists' choice of destination. However, they had a mixed feeling about the quality of the existing accommodation, professionalism of the hospitality staff, number of restaurants, variety of foods and food sellers who provide quality services as attributes that make Cape Coast attractive. The findings of the study corroborate that of O'Leary and Deegan (2005), who found that the important attributes that relate to the attractiveness of a destination were beautiful scenery, environment, and tranquility, as well as price-quality ratio. These findings have been linked to the fact that natural resources, cultural resources, and amenities are the major things that tourists look out for to enhance their stay.

Regarding the final category results above, the respondents perceived that complimentary services at the destination do not make Cape Coast an attractive destination. Though they agreed to friendliness of local residents and availability of banks, forex bureau, insurance companies and ATM services, more basic services are needed to define the value of Cape Coast as a destination appealing to tourists. The finding on complementary services explains the means-end theory, which affirms the provision of a better understanding of potential consumption motives by depicting how concrete product attributes are linked to self-relevant consequences of consumption and personal life values (or goals), in a hierarchical model of consumers' cognitive structures.

6 Conclusion

The existence of the natural resources, cultural/history, man-made resources and amenities at Cape Coast would serve as forces that attract tourists to Cape Coast. Tourists are more likely to visit Cape Coast as these attributes continue to exist. Natural resources, cultural/history, and man-made resources and amenities are the major attributes that make Cape Coast an attractive destination.

6.1 Recommendation

It is recommended that the natural resources and the cultural heritage should be well preserved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in collaboration with Ghana Tourism Authority to ensure its sustainability. Sustainable tourism management with proper management and planning will ensure that destinations maintain environmental integrity, and that the resource that makes Cape Coast an attractive destination is protected. It is therefore of utmost importance that Ghana Tourism Authority will ensure that the attractions are constantly improved and expanded in accordance with the new trends and developments in the marketplace. Moreover, the perception of attractiveness may also differ depending on whether the tourist is travelling alone or with other people. Finally, depending on where the tourist finds information about a destination, the individual's perception about attractiveness may be influenced either positively or negatively.

6.2 Limitations and directions for future research

Despite the study contributions, it is constrained in scope and suffers from some limitations. The sample included only international tourists, excluding domestic tourists; this limits the generalizability of results. Therefore, future studies may consider taking the perspective of domestic tourists, and a comparative study from both perspectives, or a comparative study should be conducted among two destinations, to assess why one destination is more attractive or less attractive to the other.

Bionotes

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