

## MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM: PARADIGM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EKITI STATE NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*There are silent notable tourist activities and centres in Ekiti State that are not known by both indigenous and foreign tourist. This fact attracts the study of Marketing Communication and Tourism: Paradigm for Sustainable Development in Ekiti State Nigeria. The study examines the influence of traditional mass media and Digital media as marketing communications tools on tourism development in Ekiti State. Survey research design was adopted in the study. Primary data and secondary information were utilized for the study. The population of the study was 92 consist of School of Business Lecturers in Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti and staff of Ekiti State Tourism Board. Stratified sampling technique was used to drawn sample of 60 respondents. Data was analyzed and two hypothesis were tested, Traditional Mass media and Digital Media being the Marketing communications tools are significant with Tourism development in Ekiti State. The study attracts recommendations among are: Government of Ekiti State should re-direct their investment plan to awake and develop some of the silent notable tourist centre in the state. This driven can assist the state to increase their internal generated revenue. Also, there is need for Ekiti State Tourism Board to employ the service of marketing expert to position the entire notable tourist centre in the state in the mind of both indigenous and foreign tourist to increase the level of patronage.*

**Keywords:** Marketing Communication, Tourism, Tourist, Festival, Traditional Media, Digital Media

### Introduction

Ekiti state being one of the growing states in South-West, Nigeria in Sub-Sahara Africa need to develop most its available tourist centre to enhance economic development in the Area. Some of the notable tourist centre and remarkable cultural festival such as Ikogosi warm and cold spring, Erinta water fall Ipole-Iloro Ekiti. Ire-Ekiti Ogun shrine ( display of artifact or historical objects), Olosunta and Orole Hill of Ikere- Ekiti, Fajuyi Squire, Erijian Ekiti special fish pond tourist centre, Okeyinmin stone layers tourist centre, Oke-mesi Ekiti Ladunwo festival and Udiroko festival, Ekiti. All the mentioned tourist centre and festival can be of benefit to Ekiti State if proper marketing communications are implemented.

Tourism is one of the valuable service industries that attract investors and foreign citizens from various nations with zeal to tour round countries to observe natural features. The World Tourism Organization (1996) defined tourism as comprising of: "Activities of persons travelling to and staying in place outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year and not less than 24hours for leisure, holiday, business and other non- remunerated purpose". McIntosh & Gupta (1981) defined tourism as "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business, host government and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors" (Tunde, 2012).

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 (Kim, & Tommy 2013). Marketing communications must be targeted to defined audiences largely because of the information-rich nature of contemporary society: consumers are both inundated with media and marketing communications and extremely aware of their own conscious ability to screen out unwanted or irrelevant information (McCabe, 2012). Marketing communication can be executed through traditional mass media and digital media (social network). If marketing communication is knitted into tourism industry in Ekiti State, most of the world tourist will recognize the area as one of the tourism zone among developing countries in the world.

According to Mastny cited in Martha & Raymond (2008) for the world's forty poorest countries, tourism is the second-most important source of foreign exchange after oil. According to Timothy & Suchi (2014) posit that Tourism is an active and economically viable industry that requires the ability to continuously adjust to customer's changing needs and wants, as the customer's satisfaction, safety, and enjoyment are the main focus of the industry. The study analyzes essence in which marketing communication can publicize tourism activities with continuous support of government policies to boost the industry in Ekiti State Nigeria.

### **Statement of the problem**

The major challenges of tourism in Ekiti State is that; it possesses some of notable tourist centre and remarkable cultural festival such as as Ikogosi warm and cold spring, Erinta *cçp* water fall Ipole-iloro Ekiti, Ire-Ekiti Ogun shrine ( display of artifact or historical objects). Olosunta and Orole Hill of Ikere- Ekiti. Fajuyi Square. Ado- Ekiti. Erijian- Ekiti special fish pond tourist centre. Okeyinmin stone layers tourist centre. Oke-mesi Ekiti Ladunwo festival, Udiroko festival, Ekiti and so on: but are not empowered by Marketing Communications for world recognition. All the mentioned tourist centre and festival can attract tourist to the state which in turn enhance economic growth and Nigeria economic development among tourism driven countries.

Stake holders in the state of study fail to realize that tourism motivate economic growth and also attracts tourist from all over the worldwiness natural features and cultural festival. NQL only does this increase the popularity of the place, it also boost Gross Domestic Product (GDP). GDP is a unit used for analyzing the income of a country through various trades.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To examine the extent traditional mass media promote tourism in Ekiti State.
- To ascertain the extent digital media influence tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Traditional mass media has no significant influence to promote tourism in Ekiti State.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Digital media has no influence on tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti State

### **Nature of Tourism and Its Importance**

Tourism has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries. This growth goes hand in hand with an increasing diversification and competition among destinations. This global spread of tourism in industrialized and developed states has produced economic and employment benefits in many related sectors - from construction to agriculture or telecommunications. The International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST) defined tourism as the totality of the relationship and phenomenon arising from the travel and stay of strangers provided the stay does not imply the establishment of a permanent residence and is not connected with a remunerated activity (cited in Tunde, 20 12). World Tourism Organization (WTO) as an activity involving the travels of persons to places outside their usual environment for not more than once for leisure, it is indicative

of how such activities may benefit host and local economies and communities (cited in Ayeni & Ebohon, 2014). Tourism is a means of rural and urban development, employment & generation at all levels of government in developed Nations such as Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Australia and the United States (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). Kinwar (2002) noted that tourism industry has become a job generator, both services oriented and product oriented in the sense that the people are employed in order to provide services to the tourists. The industry gives room to partnership and entrepreneurship within the tourism business concept thereby creating an innovation and bringing about economic activity (Morrison Rimmington & Williams 1999). Tourism enhance economic development in every nation whereby improve standard of living of the citizenry. Martha and Raymond (2009) posit that the economic might of the tourist industry has helped transform societies, often for the better. Tourism has several advantages over other industries:

- It is consumed at the point of production so that it directly benefits the communities that provide the goods.
- It enables communities that are poor in material wealth but rich in culture, history, and heritage to use their unique characteristics as an income-generating comparative advantage.
- It creates networks of different operations, from hotels and restaurants to adventure sport providers and food suppliers. This enables tourist centers to form complex and varied supply chains of goods and services, supporting a versatile labor market with a variety of jobs for tour guides, translators, cooks, cleaners, drivers, hotel managers, and other service sector workers. Many tourism jobs are flexible or seasonal and can be taken on in parallel with existing occupations, such as farming.
- It tends to encourage the development of multiple-use infrastructure that benefits the host community, including roads, health care facilities, and sports centers, in addition to the hotels and high-end restaurants that cater for foreign visitors.

Tourism industries contribute immensely to Nation economy, if proper attention is given by both government and individual concern.

### **Types of Tourism Activities**

Tourism emanates from various formation of life that entices both individual and government agencies to invest in the host communities and also conduct research about some important issues. Tunde, (2012) analyzed various types of tourism structure as follows:

1. Ethnic Tourism: This is travelling for the purpose of observing the cultural expressions and life-styles of truly exotic people. Examples include visits to native homes, attending dances and ceremonies and possibly participating in religious rituals.
2. Cultural Tourism: This type of tourism involves having experience and in some cases participates in a vanishing lifestyle that lies within human memory e.g. costume festivals, folk performances, arts and crafts etc.
3. Historical Tourism: Travelling to places where there are museum, cathedral circuits that stresses the glories of the past e.g. guided tours of moments.
4. Environmental Tourism: To travel for the purpose of “getting back to nature”, man-land relationships. It is primarily geographic in nature and will include destinations such as Assop waterfalls, Plateau state. Aso rock, Abuj a, Rock formation Jos Plateau, Yankari National Parkn Bauchi and other natural wonders.
5. Recreational Tourism: It includes taking part in sports, sun bathing “Ayo” or Ludo game and social contacts in relaxed environment.
6. Business Tourism: This centres on participation in conventions, meetings, seminars and form of travel.

### **Marketing and its Impact in Tourism Development**

Marketing is a discipline that creates satisfaction to both individual government through identification of needs and wants. It also polishes the image and creates awareness of goods and services. With the aid of marketing, tourism will be able to strive in Nigeria economy. Marketing is societal process by which individual and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services of value with others. For a managerial definition, marketing has often been described as “the art of selling products.” but are people are surprised when they hear that the most important part of marketing is not selling. Selling is only the tip of the marketing iceberg (Kotler, 2004). Marketing concept involves an identification of an opportunity to provide a consumer service or product for which a sufficient large number of people are ready to pay a profitable price and the mobilization of resources to provide that service. Thus, businesses start with an awareness of customer needs, finding out what these need are, mobilizing resources to produce products or services, which satisfy the needs, and informing the customer of the existence, price and place of availability of the products or services (Tiewere, 2009). The application of marketing in tourism industry is an equal focus on the “four Ps” (Product, Place, Price and Promotion). Product: the destination or region as a product can only be consumed by travelling to that region. Equivalently, the product is also the place and each tourist can consume or buy the product/place at different prices (Kolb 2006). As a matter of fact, when marketing a city, price is the least of focus. This is because it discourages some tourists whose intention is to have fun without paying anything. Promotion is an awareness created by media and other advertising agents for the events. The promotion of socio-economic expansion by tourism was driven by the fact that, as an export industry, it encourages new spending within the local or host communities (Ogunberu, 2011).

### **Marketing Communications influence in Tourism Development**

Marketing communication has a great influence in tourism development in Ekiti state. Tourism in various destinations in the state attracts many foreign tourists irrespective of Nigeria security challenges with the influence of diverse marketing communications strategies. Marketing communication is a management process through which an organization engages with its various audiences. By understanding an audience’s communication environment, organizations seek to develop and present messages for its identified stakeholder groups, before evaluating and acting upon the responses. By conveying messages that are of significant value, audiences are encouraged to offer attitudinal and behavioural responses (Fill, 2006). Marketing communications strategies has relationship with strategic planning. Ijewere (2009) sees strategic planning as the managerial process of matching organizations resources with its marketing opportunities over the long run. With the availability of natural resources in Nigeria environment which erupt into tourist attraction can be strategically place among other tourist attraction which in turn to attract foreigner to invest in the country.

One of the aspects of marketing communications strategy is product positioning. According to Nwokoye (2000) Product positioning is the intending way in which consumers are to perceive the product (brand) in relation to the competition. This intended brand position is effectively communicated to buyers through advertising as promotion strategy. Through marketing positioning several tourist attractions with natural endowment in Nigeria can be favourably perceive by both citizens and foreigners across the Globe which gear towards Patronage in turn enhance economic development.

### **Marketing communications Elements**

Marketing communication actually consists only of three elements: a set of tools, the media and messages. The tools to accomplish promotion are advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing and public relations (Baines, Fill & Page 2008).

Marketing communication utilizes two media such as Traditional or mass media and Digital or online media. Relationships between online media and mass media are continually evolving. In the past ten to fifteen years,

there has been a distinct shift in favour and popularity from the more conventional forms of mass media, to newer forms of advertising, namely interactive and digital media: a shift considered as being reflective of our current socioeconomic environment.

In exploring the distinctions and complementarities between the traditional or mass media and digital or online media one must understand the technical distinctions between these various media forms (Brydon, 2011). Historically, advertisers have used traditional mass media, namely radios, magazines, television and newspapers, to convey their intended objective. Digital media is described as being channels of communication that join multimedia formats with electronic system capabilities, modern telecommunications, television and computer technologies. Through digital media, advertisers can reach a global range of target publics (Arens, Weigold, & Arens, 2011). Digital media by way of the internet has given rise to the omnipresent phenomenon that is social media: an online forum of interaction, widely adopted by the masses that replicates the real world without geographical barriers. Social media fosters the ability for consumers to connect, create, contribute and share their ideas, opinions and values with one another. Rappaport, (2008) posit that online social media platforms include apps, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn. YouTube and MySpace may be considered the seat of viral marketing: open forums wherein is the consumers often prone to being fickle and of short attention spans, who dictate brand quality, image and promotion. By engaging with and appealing to consumers on these platforms, advertisers are able to combat their potential albeit predicted loss of total brand control by incorporating and involving their target publics; fostering and strengthening customer relationships and brand loyalty as a result (Cheong, De Gregorio, & Kim, 2010).

Traditional or mass media are typically highly centralized, require significant investment and resources and can be heavily influenced by governments through various mechanisms and forms of control (Banerjee, 2008). The new or alternative media on the other hand have radically different characteristics. The new media such as the Internet can be used for both points to mass communications as well as point to point and mass to point message distribution. They are also extremely de-centralized, require very low investment, provide greater interactivity and public participation and are much more difficult to control (Banerjee, 2008).

## **Methodology**

In this study, survey research design was adopted. Primary data and secondary information were utilized for the study. The population of the study was 92; consist of School of Business Lecturers in Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti and staff of Ekiti State Tourism Board. Stratified sampling technique was used to draw sample of 30 respondents. A questionnaire was designed in five point likert scales of Strongly Agree, Agree, No Comment, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The reliability of constructs was tested by using Cronbach's alpha test, using SPSS version 20. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated 0.8 for the questionnaire survey, Because  $\text{Alpha} \geq 0.7$ , the reliability of the questionnaire is acceptable. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in accordance with sample size and Regression Analysis was used for data analysis using SPSS version 20.

## **Discussion and Results**

### **Background of Respondents**

The total number of respondents used based on sample size was 60 and the same numbers of questionnaires were retrieved. The analyses and their percentages are shown in table I below.

**Table 1: Questionnaire distribution**

Respondents	Distributed	Retrieved	% utilize
Male	38	38	63.3
Female	22	22	36.7
Total	60	60	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 2 shows demographical distribution of respondents. The analysis of distribution of gender of respondents shows that 38 were male and 22 were female. The analysis of distribution of age of respondents shows that 10 respondents fall between the age of 26-35, 36 respondents fall between the age of 36-45 and 14 respondents fall into 45 above. The analysis of educational qualification shows that 16 respondents are holder of B.Sc/BA/HND, and 44 respondents are holder of MBA/IM.Sc/MA, The analyses with the corresponding percentages are shown below.

**Table 2: Demographical distribution of respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Sex		
Male	38	63.3
Female	22	36.7
Total	60	100
Age (years)		
26-35	10	16.7
36-45	36	60
45 above	14	23.3
Total	60	100
Level of Education		
B.Sc/BA/HND	16	26.7
MBA/M.Sc/MA	44	73.3
Total	60	100

Source: fieldwork, 2016

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis one

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Traditional mass media has no significant influence to promote tourism in Ekiti state.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Traditional mass media has significant influence to promote tourism in Ekiti state.

**Table 3 (A): Model Summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate	Change Statistics				
					R square change	F change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F change
1	.928 <sup>a</sup>	.861	.824	.54213	.861	22.797	3	11	.000

A. Predictors: (Constant), Newspapers, Radio, Television

b. Dependent Variable: Tourism

c. p<0.00

**Table 3(B): Regression Analysis**

#### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (constant)	2.443	.264		9.249	.000
Television	-.168	.226	-.920	-.741	.474
Radio	.065	.063	.400	1.032	.324
Newspapers	.230	.146	1.573	1.577	.143

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism

b. p<0.00

### Decision Rule

Since the combination of Newspapers, Radio, Television contributed to 86.1% influence on Tourism. The R<sup>2</sup> for the study on the traditional mass media of marketing communications suggest that there is a strong influence of the independent variables on Tourism. The F values (22.797) are significant since is greater than p<0.00 which implies that the model is fit and robust. Therefore, traditional mass media has significant influence to promote tourism in Ekiti State.

### Hypothesis two

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Digital media has no influence on tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti state

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Digital media has influence on tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti state.

**Table 4 (A): Model Summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate	Change Statistics				
					R square change	F change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F change
1	.934 <sup>a</sup>	.871	.836	.52223	.871	24.852	3	11	.000

A. Predictors: (Constant), Newspapers, Radio, Television

b. Dependent Variable: Tourism

c. p<0.00

**Table 4(B): Regression Analysis Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (constant)	2.500	.261		9.574	.000
Television	-.074	.073	-.486	-1.010	.334
Radio	.259	.103	1.631	2.506	.029
Newspapers	-0.68	.059	-.361	1.161	.270

a. Dependent Variable: Tourism

b. p < 0.00

### Decision Rule

Since the combination of you tube, Facebook, Twitter contributed to 87.1% influence on Tourism. The R<sup>2</sup> for the study on the Digital media (Social media) of marketing communications suggest that there is a strong influence of the independent variables on Tourism. The F values (24.852) are significant since is greater than p<0.00 which implies that the model is fit and robust. Therefore, Digital media (Social media) has influence on tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti State.

### Discussion of Findings

Based on regression analysis result from hypothetical test one, it was revealed that Traditional mass media has significant influence to promote tourism in Ekiti State. Since significant F value (p<0.00) is less than The F values (22.797). Okunna (1999) describes the mass media as an intermediate transmitter of information that reaches members of the audience simultaneously. Considering the mass media as transmitter of information is supported by Berth (2007), who also sees mass media as any medium used to transmit mass communication. He goes further to say that until recent, mass media were clearly defined and comprised of six mass media industries namely; books, newspapers, magazines, recordings, radio and television. Traditional media enables people to participate in events and interact with communities over long distance. For instance global events such as: - Olympic Games, World Cup soccer and royal weddings are capable of creating an intense

conversation globally. Traditional media platforms such as, TV, radio and newspapers bring the outside world into our homes (Nekatibebe, 2012).

The hypothetical test based on the regression analysis result shows that Digital media (Social media) has influence on tourist to patronize tourism in Ekiti State. Since significant F value ( $p < 0.00$ ) is less than The F values (24.852). The result is in accordance with Arens, Weigold, & Arens, (2011) opinion which says that Digital Media allows consumers a considerable degree of autonomy in the way in which they respond to products and engage with advertisers. The prospect of the consumer having the ability to credit or discredit a product and or brand to potential consumers leaves advertisers apprehensive of interactive media. Gillin (200) states that social media has given voice to millions of ordinary internet users who can now relate their experiences and opinions to a global audience at little or no cost. The scholar further explains that people do not abandon technologies that make it easier for them to communicate. According to him the sooner the marketers dive in and begin experimenting with these new channels, the more successful they will be in the future.

### **Conclusion**

Since it was reveal based on research findings that both traditional mass media and digital media has contributed significantly to the growth of tourism development in Ekiti State, if Ekiti State tourism board stakeholder would deploy various marketing communications tools, both indigenous and foreign tourist can be aware of some of the silence and notable tourist centres and cultural festival in the state. Traditional mass media such as radios, magazines, television and newspapers had succeeded in conveying their intended message to target market in order to achieve tourism activities objective in the state. Social Media is all about socializing and sharing opinions. These opinions can be expressed as written entries in the form of blog posts or comments, spoken podcasts, video presentations and votes on social media sites. These opinions are direct and unfiltered. It has become necessary for Ekiti State tourism board to embrace social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to market services, the main reason behind this adoption could be ease of implementation, relatively low or no cost, growing tendency of target audiences using those channels and the ability to perform the tasks without the help of traditional media outlets.

### **Recommendations**

- Government of Ekiti State should re-direct their investment plan to awake and develop some of the silent notable tourist centre in the state. This driven can assist the state to increase their internal generated revenue.
- There is need for Ekiti State Tourism Board to employ the service of marketing expert to position all the notable tourist centre in the state in the mind of both indigenous and foreign tourists to increase their level of patronage.
- Ekiti State Tourism Board should create a viable Marketing Department for continuous scanning of business environment which will assist in application of appropriate Marketing Communications tools to be relevant in the competitive environment.
- Ekiti state tourism board should extend their level of awareness in respect to tourism and cultural festival beyond local television, radio and magazine to attract both indigenous and foreign tourist
- Digital (social) media such as facebook, twitter, instagram you tube and so on should be committed Ekii State tourism board to inform, persuade and remind both indigenous and foreign tourist to visit the various centre in the state
- Necessary infrastructure should be put in place to reflect and commensurate with the messages given by Marketing communication to the target market.



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