

Preserving the Cultural Diversity of its Region through the Public – Private Sponsorship – A Case Study of the South West Region

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Abstract

Culture and tourism have a mutually beneficial relationship which can strengthen the attractiveness and competitiveness of regions and countries and culture is increasingly becoming an important element of the tourism product, which also creates distinctiveness in a crowded global marketplace. Regional attractiveness and competitiveness are directly linked and countries and regions increasingly have to compete to attract residents, visitors and inward investment. The South West cultural festival thus simply shows those things that make citizens of this Region unique and a forum to explain who they are. It is understandable that with all the activities associated with intensive motivation of the development of cultural tourism in the South West Region in particular and Cameroon in general, a number of both private and public companies has decided to partner with the organisers of the second edition of the South West Region cultural jamboree this as a primary means to reach specified business goals.

Keywords: Culture; Diversity; Diversity; Cultural festival; Cultural tourism

Introduction

Cultural tourism allows travellers be they domestic or international to be absorbed in local ceremonies and routines while taking away not only attractive photos but also sharing memories of unique experiences. As for the destinations hosting this cultural jamboree, it encourages local communities to embrace their culture and boosts economic growth [1]. The cultural values of the indigenes of the South West Region are specific precondition for the development of the cultural tourism industry in this Region in particular and Cameroon in general and in essence they are a set of objects and phenomena whose cognitive and emotional effects which are intended to satisfy the tourist cultural needs and include works of art which are movable tangible cultural values, an assortment of art objects, works of painting, sculpture, folk crafts, embroidery, costumes, masterworks of cinema and literature [2].

Tourism will never be completely sustainable as every industry has its impacts but it can work towards becoming more sustainable that is one that should attempts to minimize its impact on the environment and local culture so that it will be available for future generations, while contributing to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems [3].

Cameroon culture is unique, rich and interesting in many ways, and for various reasons the country has passed through many different and interesting political eras that has helped to shape and reshape traditions, customs and belief patterns of the people. Over two hundred and fifty (250) ethnic groups live in Cameroon's ten Regions and across the different regions, communities pay loyalty to local Chiefs, Fons, Lamidas as well as they are being ruled by the central government. Cultural lovers will therefore like to travel to experience the essence of assorted cultures especially in the South West Region which is cosmopolitan [4].

Background of South West region cultural festival

The dream of a South West Cultural Festival became true on December 5, 2015, at the Amusement Park in Kumba, Meme Division and the first edition which runs from December 5-12, 2015 was launched by the Secretary General in the Ministry of Arts and Culture, Mouhtar Ousman Mey. The second edition of the South West Region

cultural festival runs from December 9-16 2017 and was launched by the Minister of Arts and Culture at the Molyko Omnisport stadium. The theme for both editions being: "transmitting our cultural heritage to the younger generation: a call for mobilization," activities include traditional dances, craft exhibition, live performances by artistes, cinema, female canoe race and it also include the participation of people from the other regions of country [5].

Literature Review

Culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (UNESCO, 2001) and in a touristic sense, culture refers to both 'peoples' and their ordinary social characteristics, traditions and day-to-day patterns of behaviour which mark them out as 'different', as well as to more exceptional representations of creative and artistic endeavour [6].

Diversity means understanding that each individual is unique in the following dimensions: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies and this should challenge people to not only be tolerant of others, but to try to learn from them [7].

UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) states that "cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind, the global diversity of cultures and the unique experiences they can provide is a key resource for the tourism sector; a resource which would appear to be limitless and though societies may have the right to express

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Government parastatals and local administration	Academic institutions	Private businesses	Local media houses	Hospitality establishment	Foreign government
South west chief conference	Catholic university institute of buea (CUIB)	Source du pays	Cameroon radio and television (CRTV)	Mountain hotel	Consulate general of Nigeria
South west development authority (SOWEDA)	University of buea (UB)	Nestle	Hi television (HITV)	Quinick hotel	
Cameroon development cooperation (CDC)	Paidwa	Union des brasseries du cameroun (UCB)	Galaxe media		
Pamol	Local government training center	Chococam	Canal2		
Cameroon tourism	Public works school annex buea	Dangote cement comapany			
United councils and cities of Cameroon (UCCC)		Orange			
Buea municipality					

Source: fieldwork 2017.

Table 1: Main sponsors of the South West Region cultural festival second edition (9th-16th 2017).

themselves culturally and participate in cultural practices which shape their identities, they also have the right not to [2]. Occasion like the South West Region's cultural festival like any cultural festival is also a vital opportunity for cultural groups to participate in the tourism development process and invigorate the experience of the increasingly cosmopolitan tourist.

Research Methodology

For this research work, the researchers used both primary and secondary data that is information collected from fieldwork through direct observation and also through books and the website of the study area respectively. This research also uses quantitative or qualitative method of data collection and according to Jary and Jary, qualitative techniques rely on the skills of the researcher as an interviewer or observer in gathering data whereas quantitative methods place reliance upon research instruments employed to gather data and analyse it for example questionnaires [8].

Analysis and Findings

Sponsorship in Tourism events like in any business sponsorship has as an objective to allow companies to be viewed as a good neighbour, to be seen supporting the community (corporate social responsibility) and contributing to its economic development is extremely powerful and creates enormous goodwill [9].

Sponsoring events that appeal to their market are likely to shape the buying attitudes of people and help generate a positive reaction and exclusive sponsorship is a significant way to create competitor differentiation and the fastest growing form of marketing [10].

From Table 1 below, the researcher found twenty five main sponsors of the South West Region cultural festival second edition as follows: five academic institutions, one foreign sponsor, two hospitality establishments, four local media houses, six private business houses or companies and seven government parastatals and local administration.

Conclusion

The socio-cultural impacts of tourism on the host communities result from the direct and indirect relations with tourists (inbound and outbound) and the host. As this involves the movement of people to different geographical locations and the establishment of social relations between people who would otherwise not meet, cultural clashes can take place as a result of the differences in cultures, ethnicity, religion, values, lifestyles, languages, and levels of prosperity. On a positive note it can foster understanding between peoples and cultures and provide cultural exchange between hosts and guests as well as boosts economic growth and income of the host community.

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