



The Role Of The Visual Art/Craft Industries, In The Development Of Tourism In Ghana (A Case Study Of Accra And Winneba)

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Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to find out how the Visual Arts Industry could be organized and incorporated into the tourism Industry. The study was purely qualitative in nature and specifically sought to identify, examine and analyse types of craft objects which local crafts men produced and the type of artefacts international tourist would like to purchase back home. The simple random sampling technique was employed to select 124 respondents. Questionnaires were used to collect information from international tourists and local crafts men. Findings of the study were discussed and analysed in descriptive form. The findings revealed that international tourists inclined to take some craft objects home. Another finding was that, there was not a strong and steady relationship between the local crafts men and the Ghana Tourists Board.

Key words: *tourism, international tourism, crafts.*

1. Introduction

Many countries of the world today have realized the need to promote Tourism in their countries. This was due to the adventurous nature of man. Tourism can be said to be the movement of people within and across a country's borders for pleasure, educational research or business. Haywood (1989) conceptualized tourism as "An amalgamation of several components: the art of travelling, temporary stay at a destination and activities undertaken at the destination".

Tourists are interested in visual arts articles because of their usefulness and portability. In many parts of the world, handicrafts are given as gifts to express love, appreciation and respect. Amenuke, Asare, Dogbe, Ayiku and Baffoe (1991) also say that parents offer dolls, toys and other articles to their children to express their love. Married couples exchange visual art objects as gifts; friends and relatives also give each other gifts in art forms. Such gifts may include; jewellerys (beads, rings, necklaces etc). The Courier magazine (1996) reported that, revenue from the sale of handicraft was a big foreign exchange earner for many developing countries. In Ghana, many handicraft articles are made and each year, foreign tourists come down to watch our festivals, visit places of interest like; game and wildlife, beach resorts, without taking much handicraft back home.

Though evidence suggests that in Ghana, much more revenue could have been made by the tourism industry through the production and marketing of crafts. Rather, more emphasis was still placed on sight-seeing, game and wildlife and festivals to the detriment of the handicrafts. It was therefore important, if the handicrafts sector are given the boost and incorporated into the tourism industry. It focuses on: finding out the location of the major visual arts/crafts centres in

Ghana, identifying the type of craft objects that could find markets through the tourism industry, determined why the handicrafts had so far failed to play any significant role in the tourism industry and suggesting ways of incorporating the handicrafts into the tourism industry.

2. Tourism

Dearden, (1983) says that "tourism is a resource-based, which includes "facilities and attractions. The facilities include; transport services, infrastructure, superstructure (i.e. accommodation, catering services, auxiliary services and picnic sites). The "attraction" is made up of; the natural resources (specific scenery, sand, sea), others are man-made

resources such as; Olympic Games, world cups, international soccer matches, recreational opportunities, historical/archaeological attractions, (e.g. Stonehenge), historical sites and cultural resources such as handicrafts, language, arts and music.

3. International Tourism

It focuses on the socio-economic benefits and encourages mutual understanding between two countries. It also respects and appreciates the historical, cultural and the environment of a country.

4. Crafts

The World Book Encyclopaedia (1996) refers to crafts as “the process of making articles by hand i.e. the hand is the most important part of the craft process because it controls and manipulates both the materials and the tools”.

Haywood (1989) describes craft as “leisure activities which involve making things i.e. converting various raw materials as clay, wood and wool into objects through the exercise of skills typical requiring manual dexterity”.

Vida Yeboah (1995) in her article “Land, Culture and Tourism” sees craft as the greatest appeal and attraction to large group of tourists includes; metals, bronze works, leatherworks, wood carvings, hand woven fabrics and pottery.

Fynn (1991) say that Ghanaians express their most valued thoughts in proverbs through the medium of clay, wood, brass, gold, leather, silver and clothing material”.

5.Craft Centres Found In Ghana

In Ghana, craft refers to all the arts that can be seen, they can also be perceived by our sense of touch. Areas noted for visual art articles in Ghana from the report of Inter-tourism '86 exhibitions are:

- Ashanti region: sculpture:- Ahwiaa (home of stools and dolls)
- Greater Accra region: sculpture: - Centre for National Culture (shopping centre for arts and craft and local textiles).
- Eastern region: sculpture: - Aburi (noted for carving of stools and wooden statuettes).

The local textile centres as reported by Inter-tourism '86 exhibitions are:

- Ashanti region: Kente weaving: - Bonwire, Adinkra printing, Ntonso.
- Volta region: Kente weaving: - Agbozome and Kpetoe.

- Upper East region: Smock weaving: - Bawku.

Areas noted for the making of pottery craft according to the report of Inter-tourism '86 exhibitions are:

- Ashanti region: Pankrono and Mfensi.
- Volta region: Kpando, Koloenu, Vume.
- Upper East region: Kasena-Nankani district
- Central region: Adewukwaa and Gomoa Impremu

Areas noted for the production of beadworks are:

- Ashanti region Akropong, Darbaa.
- Eastern region Abompe, near Osino, Agomenya, Somenya.

Area noted for the production of calabash art is

- Upper East region: Bolgatanga

Areas noted for the production of basketry are:

- Eastern region: Ngyresi (Cane basketry)
- Upper East region Bolgatanga.

Area noted for the production of leatherworks is

- Upper East region: Bolgatanga

Areas noted for goldsmithing are:

- Western region: Tarkwa, Prestea and Sekondi.
- Ashanti region: Kumasi, Obuasi and Konongo.

6. Methodology

The Simple Random Sampling Technique was employed to select 124 respondents. In this research; International tourists were 100 and local crafts men 24.

The criterion for the selection of these respondents (i.e. tourists) was their interest in the Ghanaian visual arts/crafts and the cooperation of the local crafts men.

The principal instruments designed to conduct the research were questionnaires. Questionnaires were used because according to Sarantakos (1998) the questionnaire when used for data collection allows for limited interference on the part of the researcher. The questionnaires set for international tourist contains 7 items. And another set for local crafts men contains 8 items. The questionnaires were administered to local crafts men in Accra and Aburi and those for international tourist were entrusted to the caretakers of tourist centres in Accra and Winneba. They distributed them to the tourist

and were later collected. After retrieving the completed questionnaires, the data were analysed and presented in percentages and frequencies.

7. Questionnaire For Local Crafts Men

1. What type of handicrafts do you produce? (Please state)
 - (a)
 - (b)
2. Do you have any crafts associations? (Please tick) (✓)

Yes [] No []

 - i. If Yes to Question 2, are you a member?

If yes, what benefit do you derive from your membership in the Crafts Association?

(Please state some of the benefits)

.....
 - ii. If No, why are you not a member? (Give reasons)

.....
3. How do you market your products?

.....
4. Do foreigners purchase your products direct?

.....
5. Which of the products do they like best? List according to priority

.....
6. What problems do you meet in your crafts business?

.....
7. Do you have any relationship with the Ghana Tourist Board?

.....

 - i. If Yes, to Question 7, how, if any, do you benefit from that relationship?

.....
 - ii. If No, why?

.....
8. How do you think your products can be improved to increase the patronage of tourists or foreigners?

8.Questionnaire For International Tourist

Please tick in box where applicable

8.1.Section 1

1. Age Range: (Please tick (√))
- (a) 15 – 20 years []
- (b) 21 – 25 year []
- (c) 26 – 30 years []
- (d) 31 – 35 years []
- (e) Over 35 years []
2. Gender (Please tick (√))
- (a) Male []
- (b) Female []
3. Country of origin (Please state)
-

8.2.Section 2

4. For how long have you been in Ghana?
- (Please tick (√))
- (a) Up to 1 week []
- (b) Between 1 and 2 weeks []
- (c) Over 3 weeks []
5. Purpose of visit (Please tick) (√)
- (a) To see historical monuments, museums, art bazaar and cultural festivals []
- (b) To see vegetations and animals in their natural habitat []
- (c) To have recreation at Ghana's beaches []
- (d) To attend conference or business transactions []

6. Have you been to any crafts shop or bazaar?

(Please tick) (√)

(a) Yes []

(b) No []

7. Do you have any intention of sending some crafts home?

(Please tick) (√)

(a) Yes []

(b) No []

7.i. If Yes to Question 7, please list three types of craft objects according to priority

(a)

(b)

(c)

7.ii. If No to Question 7, please give reasons:

.....

7.iii. What, in your opinion, can be done to re-orient the crafts to the taste of foreign visitors?

.....

9. Results and Discussions

Tables and charts below shows responses gathered from the questionnaires administered. From the study it was found out from the local crafts men that International tourist visiting craft villages prefer purchasing small carvings. Table 1 gives an overview of craft tourist like best.

Crafts They Like Best	Frequencies	
	Responses	Percentage (%)
Small carvings	40	40
Kente cloth	30	30
Straw basket	30	30
Others	-	-
TOTAL	100	100

Table 1: Products Tourist like Best

Source: Field survey

Table 1 shows that 40 of the local craftspeople said, the tourists like small carvings and this represents 40 percent; 30 of them said they like” kente” cloth and this represents 30 percent, 30 of them said they like straw baskets and this represents 30 percent.

It was also found out from the local crafts men that high cost of materials was one of their problems. Chart 1 below gives an overview of the problems facing the local crafts men.

10.Problems Facing Craftsmen

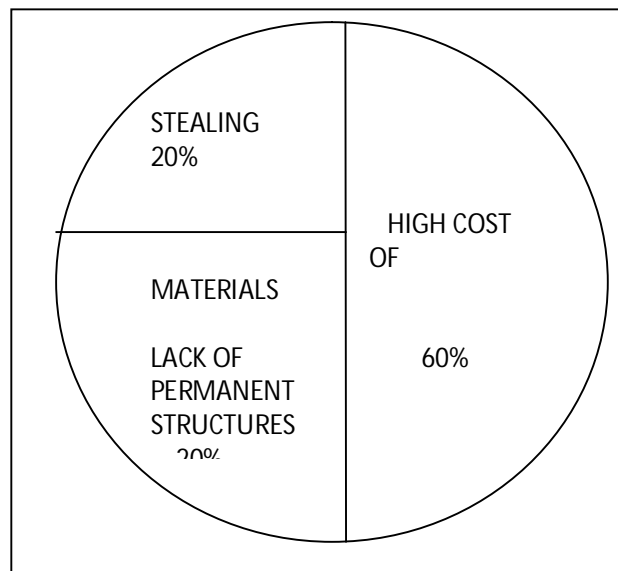


Figure 1

Source: Field survey

Chart 1 showed that 60 percent of the respondents complained of high cost of materials in making the handicrafts; 20 percent do not have permanent structures for selling their finished products; 20 percent complained of rampant stealing at their shops.

The research, also revealed that majority of the local crafts men does not have any form of relationship with Ghana Tourist Board. Table 2 below indicates the responses given by the crafts men. The table shows that 80 of the local crafts men do not have any relationship with Ghana Tourist Board, and this represents 80 percent, and 20 of the respondents say they have relationship with Ghana Tourist Board and this represents 20 percent.

Relationship with G.T.B.	Frequencies	
	Responses	Percentage (%)
No relationship	80	80
A form of relationship during special occasions	20	20
TOTAL	10	100

Table .2 Form of Relationship with Ghana Tourist Board (GTB)

Source Field survey

From the research, a great number of the crafts men said that there should be an improvement on their finishing so as attracting more tourists.

The bar graph below gives an over view of the views of how they could improve upon their products.

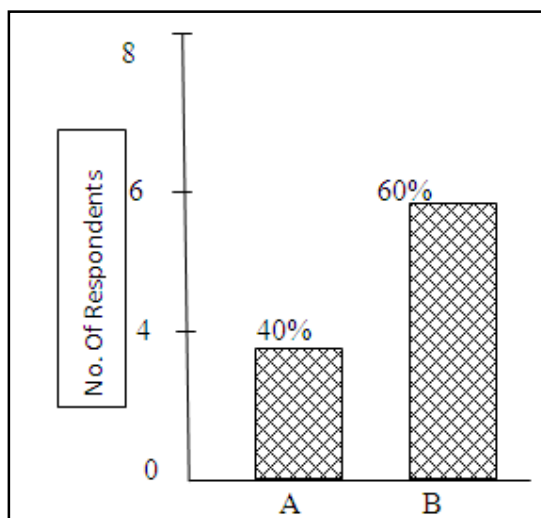


Figure 2: Bar Graph representing Local Crafts people's Views about how they can improve their Products

Source: Field survey

Bar 'A' represents 40 respondents who said, their surrounding should be kept clean and this represent 40 percent.

Bar 'B' represents 60 respondents who said, finishing should be improved and this represents 60 percent.

Results from the findings shows that international tourists like to visit monuments, museums and art bazaars. Below was the breakdown of responses.

Purpose of Visit	Frequencies	
	Responses	Percentage (%)
To Visit Monuments, Museums, art Bazaars	40	40
Vegetation and animal habitat	28	28
Beaches	24	24
Conferences and Business Transaction	8	8
TOTAL	100	100

*Table 3: Purpose of Visit by Tourist
Source: Field survey*

Table 3 shows that 40 tourist respondents have visited monuments, museums, art bazaars and cultural festivals. This represents 40 percent, 28 tourist respondents have visited vegetation and animals in their natural habitat, and this represents 28 percent, 24 tourist respondents have recreated at Ghana's beaches and this represent 24 percent; 8 tourist respondents have attended Conferences and Business Transactions, and this represents 8 percent.

This therefore confirms Dearden (1983) findings that "historical archaeological attractions, e.g. Stonehenge, historic cities and cultural reasons such as handicrafts, language, art and music are resources that attract tourists." With these findings, it was hoped that more concrete efforts would be put into the making of craft objects in order to improve the tourism industry.

Results from the findings indicated that majority of the international tourists like visiting craft shops or bazaars. Table 4 gives an over view of their responses.

	Frequencies	
	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	96	96
No	4	4
TOTAL	100	100

*Table 4: Visit to Craft Shops or Bazaars
Source: Field survey*

Table 4 shows that a total number of 96 respondents answered “Yes” and this represents 96 percent while 4 answered “No” representing 4 percent.

The findings also revealed that visiting tourists had the intention of sending some craft objects home. Below were the breakdowns of their responses.

	Frequencies	
	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	90	90
No	10	10
TOTAL	100	100

Table 5: Tourist intention of sending some craft home

Source: Field survey

Table 5 shows that a total number of 90 respondents answered “Yes” and this represents 90 percent while 10 answered “No” representing 10 percent. It implies that there was a high level of demand for Ghanaian craft objects by international tourist who visited the country. This therefore confirms Fagg (1974) when he observed that “Crafts attract tourists from overseas”.

The study found out that international tourists like purchasing carvings to be given as souvenirs.

Below was a breakdown of their preferences.

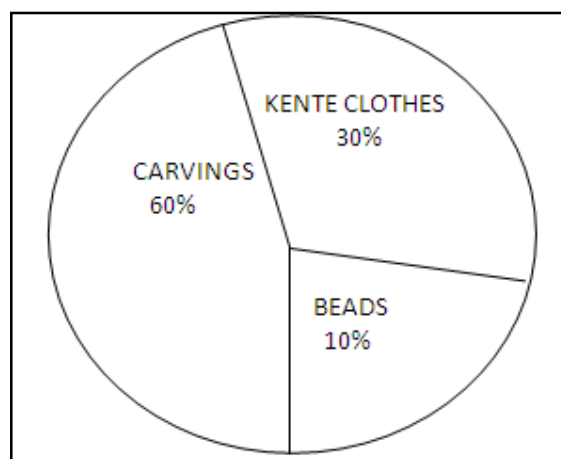


Figure 3: Crafts Objects Tourists Want According to Priority

Source: Field survey

Chart 3 shows that 60 percent of the respondents like carvings; 30 percent like "kente" cloth, while 10 percent like beads. This therefore affirms Vida Yeboah (1995) findings that "the greatest appeal and attractions to large groups of tourist include metals and bronze works, wood carvings, hand woven fabrics and pottery".

The research revealed that the carvings produced by the local crafts men were bulky and there was the need to improve upon their finishing. Finally, there was no need to re-orient the craft; they should remain in their local taste.

11. Conclusion

The major revelations from the research were that the crafts centres were rooted in the various ethnic cultures, and as such, scattered all over the country. The craft objects produced include stools, kente clothes, beads, straw baskets etc. Stalls and bazaars were built and located at various vantage points in Accra and other large towns for the purpose of selling the artefacts. International tourists were the larger consumers of these products. An overwhelming majority of the tourists, who have been visiting Ghana, had the intention of taking crafts objects home. Many of them prefer small carvings because they were more convenient to ship abroad. There were a few who would not want to see any changes in form, size or function of the artefacts, in spite of any shipping problems. Most of the crafts objects lacked good finishing. It was suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the finishing so in to attract more international tourists to Ghana. There was also the need for the crafts men to develop a marketing strategy through the publication of brochures which can be given to tour organisers so as to sell Ghana crafts abroad.

It was suggested that crafts people especially the carvers, should try to carve some renowned tourist centres in wood so that the tourists who visited such places can get model of that place to take home. Places cited included the "Boti" falls, the castles, "Paga" crocodile pond etc.

The findings clearly suggested that the handicrafts sector had not performed very well in the promotion of tourism in Ghana.

The following recommendations are offered according to the findings:

There should be a relation between the local crafts men and Ghana Tourist Board. The board should occasionally organise a workshop on how to develop an effective marketing strategy and maintaining quality standard.

The Ghana Tourist Board should establish some handicrafts villages that would concentrate on the making of traditional forms which culturally and aesthetically reflect the life and value system in a particular locality. The youth in such a locality (i.e. the JSS graduates for example) could learn the vocation of making the crafts so as to become self employed in future.

The Craftsmen's should encourage its members to form co-operatives so that they could approach the banks for loans. The loans could help them to meet the high cost of certain imported raw materials like yarns for the making of kente clothes.

The Craftsmen's should carve important traditional symbols, which pertains to their locality into miniature forms. Such models could be purchased by the International tourists who visited those areas. In the same way, models of well-known tourists' centres like the Castles, Waterfalls, Paga crocodile pond and the Akosombo dam could be carved by the carvers, so that international tourists could purchase them to their countries. This would help to bring in foreign earnings into the country.

12.Reference

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