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Influence of Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices on the Performance of Tour Operator Firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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Abstract : The study sought to establish the influence of strategic tourism pricing practices on the performance of tour operator firms. Mixed methods research design was adopted. The population was 256 Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO) Full Members that are located in Nairobi County and from which a sample size of 156 was estimated. Questionnaires and structured interviews were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analyses were used in the analysis to answer the research objectives. The findings on the influence of strategic tourism pricing practices on the performance of tour operator firms revealed that to a large extent tour firms used transportation cost as a strategic pricing practice (81.7%) followed by accommodation cost (69.5%). Strategic pricing practices explained 0.1225% of the variability in performance of tour firms and positively influenced performance though not statistically significant($R^2 = 0.001225$, $\beta = 0.029$, $t\,(1290) = 0.398$, $p = 0.390 > 0.05$). The study concludes that tour operators could apply strategic pricing for their revenue and customer growth, but only to a certain extent. The study also recommends that tour operators should minimize overdependence on price practices.

Keywords: Strategic Tourism Pricing, Tour Firms, Performance, Game Theory

Introduction

The pricing process is of critical importance in establishing the value received by a firm in the exchange of services and goods it produces. Firms that set prices too high miss out on the much needed sales. Similarly, such firms will miss out on valuable revenue if they set the prices too low. According to Sammut-Bonnici and Channon (2015), price setting is reactive, while strategic pricing is proactive, and that makes all the difference when handling market dynamics. This is beccause the best pricing model is aimed at maximizing profit and revenue without impeding on customers' expectations. Price setting can be a difficult task, especially because many variables must be factored in before the final price is determined. Additionally, according to Zimbroff and Schlake (2015), determining the accurate price of a product is often times based on values that are not easily identifiable. As a result, many companies have ended up with incorrect pricing of their products or services, resulting in reduced revenues, and sometimes even losses.

Strategic Tourism Pricing is important because as they pick their choice of holiday destinations, tourists are guided by the price at these destinations and how such prices compare with those of living at the origin and/or alternative destinations (Forsyth & Dwyer, 2009).

Background

The tour operating businesses combine two or more travel services that include transportation, accommodation, catering, entertainment, and sightseeing, among others. Once they have packaged them, tour operators have an option to sell these travel services directly to final consumers as a single product or through travel agencies (Yarcan & Çetin, 2021). A tour operator is technically a wholesaler because the business of tour operating involves sourcing for different tourist products components, packaging them into an attractive holiday product, and selling it to potential customers (Nyaruwata, 2022). Working very closely with hotels, transportation providers, and attractions, tour operators purchase large volumes of services and package these at a better rate compared to what the traveler could have gotten if he opted to purchase individually. According to Nyaruwata (2022), tour operators can broadly be divided inbound and outbound tour operators: Inbound because their focus is to create holiday packages for travelers who wish to visit the destinations in which they are based; and outbound because they specialize on creating package holidays for travelers from their source markets who desire to travel to other destinations around the world. A tour operator therefore plays a pivotal role in the distribution chain by linking customers and providers of tourism services, and thus has the power to influence both the demand and the supply side. The bundled combination of transportation, accommodation and services is the product that a tour operator sells to customers (Yarcan & Çetin, 2021). This package is oftentimes at a cheaper price due to bulk buying by the tour operator. Tour operators distribute this package directly to the customer or indirectly through a 'middleman' (the travel agent). Customers who opt to deal directly with individual suppliers end up paying more.

Kenya's tour operators are guided and regulated by the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO). The certification of tour operators' in Kenya is by a joint collaboration between the Ecotourism Kenya (EK), KATO and Travelife, an international certification scheme based in The Netherlands (Ariya et al., 2021). KATO recognizes various tour operators in Kenya including inbound, outbound, domestic and ground operators (KATO, 2020). Further, Kenya's tour operators are classified into five categories - Class A; Class B; Class C; Class D; and Class E- based on their financial turnover. Other classifications comprise Associate, Affiliate, Provisional and Corporate.

Statement of the Problem

Kenya's tourism sector has faced turbulence since the 1990s. For instance, between 1992 and 1996, an air of desperateness was evident in Kenya's tourism industry performance (Akama, 1999). In 2008, Kenya's travel and tourism industry documented one of the worst performances mainly attributed to the global financial crisis and the post-election violence resulting from a contested presidential election (De Sausmarez, 2013). The tide seemed to have turned in 2011, when more than 1.2 million tourists visited the country earning the sector over KES 97.9 billion, a 32.9% increase from 2010 (Government of Kenya, 2016). This positive performance, however proved to be short lived. For several years that would follow, Kenya's tourism industry performance declined every election cycle, while threats by terrorists, and volatility in Somalia made an already bad situation worse (Muragu et al., 2021). Kenya missed out on her identified tourism sector targets for the period 2018 to 2022 including increasing tourism arrivals from 1.45 million to 2.5 million and tourism earnings from Ksh.119.9 billion to Ksh.175 billion by 2022 (Government of Kenya, 2023). The Annual Tourism Sector Performance Report - 2022 indicates that Kenya recorded only 1,483,752 international tourist arrivals against a 2.5 million tourists target (Government of Kenya, 2023). This unfortunate state of affairs has negatively impacted and further complicated the tour operations business in Kenya over the years.

There's therefore a call for a more robust marketing approach with the potential of improving the Tour Operators performance to be in line with the Vision 2030 Economic Blueprint; The National Tourism Blueprint 2030; and The New Tourism Strategy for Kenya 2021-2025. The role of strategic tourism pricing towards this cannot be underestimated. Price related decisions have a great impact in a company's performance and competitiveness (Barros & Sousa, 2019). Strategic tourism pricing underscores the fact that not all tourism pricing problems can be addressed by changing the price. This study will specifically focus on strategic tourism pricing and its influence on tour operator firms' performance.

Literature Review

Kenya's Tourism: Status of Key Strategic Interventions

Following an all-inclusive scrutiny aimed at unmasking Kenya's level of competitiveness globally, Kenya Vision 2030 Economic Blueprint, covering the period 2008 to 2030, underscored the importance of tourism and listed it among six key sectors under the economic pillar that were proposed to deliver the 10 per cent economic growth rate per annum (Government of Kenya, 2007). According to this Blueprint, Kenya's aim was to be among the top ten long-haul tourist destinations globally. This goal was to be achieved by applying several strategies including: aggressive development of Kenya's coast to include the establishment of two resort cities in strategic locations; increasing tourist revenue by enhancing service quality and charges for Kenya's premium safari parks, and by ensuring that facilities in parks that are underutilized are improved; offering new niche products of high value; enticing the setting up of international hotel chains that are high end; and enhance business tourism through investments in new conference facilities.

However, a progress report on the implementation of Kenya Vision 2030 released in 2022 indicated that most of these strategies were yet to take shape. For instance, the resort cities were only identified in 2019, with little or no activity happening there (Government of Kenya, 2022). Several implementation challenges were cited, including; Inadequate funding allocation; Weak inter-governmental co-ordination; and Insecurity/terrorism threats (Government of Kenya, 2022). The progress report further noted that the modernization and expansion of KICC had commenced, but was only at 34.4 percent complete as at December 2021. In addition, the proposed Nairobi International Convention Centre being undertaken by the Bomas of Kenya was at a paltry 10 percent complete, spelling more doom to the realization of the Economic Blueprint (Government of Kenya, 2022). The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic complicated matters further.

Post COVID-19, The New Tourism Strategy for Kenya 2021-2025, launched in May 2022, lists four (4) components – namely, Brand; Marketing; Experiences; and Enablers (Government of Kenya, 2022). According to the strategy, a third of the total revenues generated by the top five Kenya Wildlife Service Parks happens between July and August and an additional 20% between September and October (Government of Kenya, 2022). During the rest of the months, tourism activities are at an all-time low, posing a serious challenge of sustainability. The issue of overcrowding can be handled by shifting visitors to more underutilized parks through a suitable tourism pricing strategy (Government of Kenya, 2022). The strategy further reports that tourism along Kenya's coast has declined over the years as evidenced by a steady loss of market share to peers. To mitigate against further tourism sector negative effects brought about by COVID-19, the Kenya Government launched The COVID-19 and Travel and Tourism in Kenya Policy Brief. The policy stipulates pricing revision for tourism products as key, among several other strategies geared towards turning around Kenya's tourism sector performance. (Government of Kenya, 2020).

Strategic Tourism Pricing

Product pricing is strategic because the price attached to a firm's product has an impact on the value consumers place on it and further determines its subsequent purchase (Onyeaghala et al., 2019). According to Rapaccini (2015), price is the only Marketing Mix component that generates income. Strategic pricing focuses on value the product delivers to the customer, or on the firm's competitive edge, rather than on production cost (McCormick, 2016). This approach is premised on the fact that customers often make their purchasing choices based on psychology as opposed to logic. In this view, what is most valued by the consumer may not necessarily be the most costly to produce (McCormick, 2016). Further, strategic product pricing incoprorates best practices and assures that pricing strategies and analytics supplement business operations. At the core of this pricing approach is the view that changing price is not always the best solution to pricing challenges (Micu & Micu, 2006). It's important underscore the fact that pricing in the tourism and hospitality sector is multifaceted for it involves varied factors including product characteristics and uniqueness, the operating business environment, the costing of the tourism and hospitality industry investment, and the customer's sensitivity to price and their unique inclinations (Barros & Sousa, 2019). Consequently, it's imperative for tour firms to distinguish price setting from strategic pricing as they should differentiate reacting to market conditions and proactively managing them. Enhanced profitability is realizable by discovering and utilising collaborations between customer needs and seller capabilities. Discovering and taking advantage of such synergies is what Micu and Micu (2006) calls strategic pricing.

The coordination of competitive decisions, interrelated marketing, and financial decision-making so as to set prices profitably is at the heart of strategic pricing (De Toni et al., 2016). Besides changes in attitude, strategic pricing also requires a change in when pricing decisions are made, how they are made, and who makes them (De Toni et al., 2016). For consumers, more often than not, the price of a product is the most obvious indicator of cost (Armstrong& Kotler, 2009; Dudu and Agwu (2014). Getting the right price for the product cannot therefore be over emphasized. The hospitality sector, more than ever, is fiercely competitive.

To stay ahead of the pack, tourism enterprises must employ innovative managerial solutions, including but not limited to, ingenious pricing solutions (Barros & Sousa, 2019). According to the UNWTO (2015), the competitiveness of a tourist destination is determined by price and includes costs associated with transportation, food, accommodation, and attractions among others. Pricing for tour operators entails a strong mix of strategic marketing and financial analysis. This is because pricing has a direct bearing on the income achieved and, combined with costs, will affect the overall profitability of the tour firm. This makes the pricing strategy critical for long-term success of the firm (Janssen, 2021). Owing to the fact that pricing is the single source of revenue for the tour firms' product, strategic pricing ensures that pricing is done with the aim of recouping costs and delivering satisfactory profitability (Adhikari, 2019).

Consequently, pricing decisions have a significant impact on tour operators' performance for they directly influence revenue streams and profitability (Dudu & Agwu, 2014; Kotler et al., 2014). More purchases translate to more revenues and vice versa. After all, price is the sole generator of revenue; the value attached to goods and/or services (Lihao et al., 2016). Price determines a tour firm's market share and effectiveness. As such, managers of tourism enterprises must possess competencies and skills in designing pricing policies which results to greater levels of performance underscored by a competitive price advantage (Buiga et al., 2017). Setting the right price for tourism offerings can determine the success of a tour operator, influence customer perception, and directly impact the bottom line. An effective pricing strategy should propel tour firms towards profit maximization. Further, it should enable the tour firm realize the targeted investment returns, enhance profitability and actualize the sought after market share (Ammar, 2019).

Theoretical Review

The Game Theory

Game Theory, according to Rosenmüller & Trockel (2001) is a mathematical framework used to study strategic interactions between rational decision-makers. Game theoretic concepts apply when the activities of numerous agents - may they be individuals, groups, firms, or a combination of any of these - are dependent on each other (Turocy & Stengel, 2001).

Game theory aids leaders who are involved in pricing to decide with assurance on the market pricing manoeuvres and tactics their competitors are likely to apply (Wells, 2022). It aids towards profit maximization goals and shows how a firm's own choices may impact those tactics. According to Brams and Davis (2023), game theory explores situations where the outcome of one participant's decision depends not only on their own actions but also on the actions of others. These situations are called "games" in the context of game theory. The games could represent scenarios such as pricing decisions by competing firms, negotiations between countries, or even evolutionary dynamics in biology. (Brams & Davis, 2023). To a large extend, game theory provides a powerful tool for understanding strategic interactions and predicting outcomes in a wide range of real-world scenarios. (Turocy & Stengel, 2001)

Game theory can be applied by tour operators in their pricing strategies, considering the interactions they have with other players in the tourism market. Tour operators play a crucial role in the industry by creating and selling travel packages, which often include accommodations, transportation, and various activities. In essence, game theory provides a strategic framework for tour operators to analyze and optimize their pricing strategies in a dynamic and competitive tourism market. By considering the interactions with competitors, consumers, and other stakeholders, tour operators can make more informed decisions about pricing and market positioning.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed methods research design. A mixed method research design is used when the researcher is interested in collecting both numeric and qualitative data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Mixed methods research designs helps in adding more information to the analysis done, hence a more definite conclusion. This study was conducted in Nairobi County. Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya is situated in the southern part of the country at an altitude of 1,660 meters above sea level. The county was picked for this study because it plays host to about 256 tour operators of different levels out of 400 tour operators registered members of KATO as at June, 2017 making it the most representative compared to the rest. The 256 KATO Full Members located in Nairobi County constituted the target population for this study. The study used Yamane formulae in computing the sample size of 156 (Yamane, 1967). The study used questionnaire and structured interview guide for data collection because questionnaires can used to collect vast quantities of data from a variety of respondents while interviews are aimed at collecting clear and more relevant reponses (Okello, 2022). The questionnaire had both open ended and closed ended (on a 5 point likert scale) questions. Pilot study was conducted on the questionnaires and the findings of the pilot study revealed that all the variables (strategic tourism price, tour operator firm performance) had Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.7 ranked as good and excellent. The study used supervisor's advice in determining the validity of the study measures. Pilot study was conducted on the structured interview guide on two of the managers from the Tour Firms.

Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and simple linear regression analyses were used to analyze quantitative data to answer the research objective (Okello, 2022). Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between strategic tourism pricing practices and tour operator firms' performance. To assess the extent to which strategic tourism pricing practices affect tour operator firms' performance in Nairobi County, Kenya, the regression model of the form below was used

$$P = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PRI + \varepsilon$$

Where β_0 is the constant, β_1 is the slope for price variable and ε is the error term Prior to performing linear regression analyses, pre-requisite tests/ assumptions for linear regression analyses including Normality, Linearity, Heteroscedasticity, and Multicollinearity was done (Okello, 2022). Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data collected from the interviews.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

The study collected data from a sample size of 156 Tour Operators, from which 131 questionnaires were filled in and returned, giving a response rate of 84%. The study conducted interviews with 5 managers. Table 1 shows that most of the tour operator firms had operated between 11 and 20 years (30.7%), had handled below 500 (32.06%) and were from Category E of KATO Membership (48.09%)

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Duration of Company Operation		
Below 10 years	25	19.30
11-20 years	37	28.07
21 – 30 years	40	30.70
Above 30 years	29	21.93
Number of Visitors Handled per Annum		
Below 500	42	32.06
500 – 1000	24	18.32
1000 – 2000	17	12.98
2000 – 3000	23	17.56
Above 3000	25	19.08
KATO Membership Category		
A	23	17.56
B	6	4.58
C	9	6.67
D	30	22.90
E	63	48.09

Descriptive, Correlational and Regression Analyses of Strategic Tourism Pricing and Tour Operator Firms' Performance

Descriptive Analysis

The study found that the respondents agreed to a large extent that Tour Operators used transportation cost as a strategic tourism pricing practice (81.7%) followed by accommodation cost (69.5%). This implies that transportation costs and accommodations costs were the core of strategic pricing for the tour operator business

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices

Price	**Level of Extent**				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Transportation costs	3 (2.3%)	2 (1.5%)	6 (4.6%)	13 (9.9%)	107 (81.7%)
Accommodation costs	3 (2.3%)	6 (4.6%)	12 (9.2%)	19 (14.5%)	91 (69.5%)
Park entrance charges	1 (0.8%)	5 (3.8%)	20 (15.3%)	37 (28.2%)	68 (51.9%)
Tour guiding costs	5 (3.8%)	12 (9.2%)	18 (13.7%)	37 (28.2%)	59 (45.0%)
Visa charges	7 (5.3%)	16 (12.2%)	27 (20.6%)	51 (38.9%)	30 (22.9%)

Key: 1=not at all, 2=very small extent, 3=small extent, 4=average and 5=a large extent

Correlation between Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices and Tour Operator Performance

The correlation analysis findings shown in Table 3 indicated that there was a weak and positive relationship between strategic tourism pricing practices and Tour Operator performance though not statistically significant,

$$r(131) = 0.035,\ p = 0.691 > 0.05.$$

Table 3: Correlation between Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices and Tour Operator Performance

Correlations			
		Tour Operator Performance	Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices
Tour Operator Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.691
	N	131	131
Strategic Tourism Pricing	Pearson Correlation	.035	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.691	
	N	131	131

According to the assumptions' tests for linear regression analysis i.e. Normality, Linearity, Heteroscedasticity, and Multicollinearity from the linear regression analysis tests, the strategic tourism pricing and tour operator firm performance variables were normally distributed as indicated by data point along the straight line in the Normal Q-Q plot for Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices variable. Strategic tourism pricing and tour operator firm performance variables were linearly related as indicated by the deviation from linearity test $(F(12{,}117) = 1.082,\ p = 0.382 > 0.05)$. There was no evidence of multicollinearity (VIF = 1) and heteroscedasticity (spots are diffused and do not form a clear specific pattern from the Heteroscedasticity Chart Scatter Plot).

Linear Regression Analysis

The findings from Table 4 indicate that there was linear relationship between Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices and Tour Operator Performance, however, not statistically significant $F(1,89) = 0.747, p = 0.390 > 0.05)$. Strategic tourism pricing practices explained 0.1225% of the variability in Tour Operator performance $R2$ = 0.001225. Strategic tourism pricing practices had a positive influence on Tour Operator performance though not statistically significant $\beta = 0.029, t\ (1290) = 0.398,\ p = 0.390 > 0.05$.

Table 4: Regression Coefficients for Linear Relationship between Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices and Tour Operator Performance

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.205	.311		13.502	.000
	StrategicTourism Pricing Practices	.029	.073	.035	.398	.691
a. Dependent Variable: Tour Operator Performance						

$$F(1,89) = 0.747, p = 0.390 > 0.05), R2 = 0.001225$$

The estimated regression equation from Table 4 above is given by:

$\text{Performance} = 4.205 + 0.029 *$ Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices The model revealed that strategic tourism pricing practices positively affects Tour Operator performance, i.e. a unit mean index increase in strategic tourism pricing practices applied increases the performance of tour operator firms by a positive mean index value of 0.029.

The findings from the interview with one tour manager from Tour Firm B commented that…" price is everything! It brings the money…". Another tour manager from Tour Firm C commented…" to boost our profits, we at times adjust our prices…" A manager from Tour Firm Z said that… "offering tourism products at the right pricing is a long and painstaking process, but worth the trouble…".

Discussion

The study findings revealed that to a large extent tour operators used transportation cost as a strategic pricing practice followed by accommodation cost. This is because transportation services underscore the role of tour operators. This finding is consistent with the claim by Serge (2020) that by definition, a tour operator is in charge of transport and accommodation arrangements on any tour or vacation. Furthermore, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2014), for a visitor to qualify as a tourist, one must be in a given destination that is at least 80km (hence transported) away for more than 24 hours (hence accommodated). As such, Serge (2020) states that a tour operator possesses a large volume of travel services cutting across transportation, services, and lodging. This means that the core business of tour operators is to transport visitors and also when visitors are transported from one area to another they will definitely need accommodation. The implication is that tour operators wouldn't be in business if they weren't involved in transporting and accommodating tourists. Kantawateera et al., (2015) asserts that transportation is at the core of the travel and tourism experience. That is why it is not possible to contemplate tourism without transportation.

The study revealed that the least used strategic tourism pricing practice was visa charges. This means that visas are not the core business for tour operators since they are more often than not issued and charged by the respective issuing governments. The implication is that tour operators cannot rely on VISA Applications to raise their revenues, except in the few instances when they facilitate the processing for visas and charge a small fee for the visa processing (Picazo-Peral & Moreno-Gil, 2018).

The study revealed that there was a weak and positive relationship between strategic tourism pricing practices and Tour Operator performance though not statistically significant. The implication is that tour operators have authority to determine the price on the product by putting a mark-up on the price given by the supplier. Tour and vacation packages price determination is at the heart of the business-decision process for every tour provider. If they set the right tour price, it's the key to a profitable business (ORIOLY, 2018) . It follows that the higher the mark-up on the supplier's price, the higher the revenue received by the tour firm. These findings are consistent with the findings of Picazo-Perala and Moreno-Gill (2018), who also found that the price offered by tour operators' is affected by several factors including their brands, accommodations' ownership, targeted segments, awards and incentives, promotional activities, and pictographic features in their brochures. Further, according to Barros and Sousa (2019), tour operators play a major role in determining tourism industry pricing. It is also important to note that pricing decisions play a pivotal role towards tour firm profitability because it impacts on demand and sales turnover. Further, customers oftentimes consider pricing as an indicator of quality.

The study findings further revealed that there was no statistical and significant linear relationship between strategic tourism pricing practices and Tour Operator performance. This means that higher pricing of tourism products by tour operators may not necessarily result to improved performance. In other words, higher pricing of tourism products does not automatically translate to better Tour Operator performance. This finding is supported by Forsyth and Dwyer (2009) argument that tourists compare the price at the destination with the costs of substitute destinations. Notably, in situations where the destination price is considered unattractive, tourists may opt not to travel at all. Tour operators shouldn't therefore assume that raising the price of their products, regardless of how lucrative those products are, will automatically generate more revenues. These findings are also consistent with the findings of Buiga et al

(2017) that a touristic product price is well-defined through a combination of noticeable attributes. The ultimate satisfaction attained by a tourist is dependent on the amalgamation of these goods and services - private or public; they are supplied by diverse public or private entities. In any case, there are other factors that may eat into the profit margins of tour operators such as government taxes and competition from other tour operators (Buiga et al, 2017). Importantly therefore, besides pricing, tour operators must continually evaluate their operating procedures and business strategies in order to sustain increased profit margins.

The study findings further revealed that strategic tourism pricing practices had a positive influence on Tour Operator performance though not statistically significant. This means that tour operators could apply strategic pricing to improve their performance, albeit only to a certain extent. Effectively, tour operators cannot over rely on pricing, but must also explore other strategic initiatives to boost their performance. For example, Picazo-Peral and Moreno-Gil (2018) assert that tour operators have improved their own profit margins by developing and promoting their own brands, as opposed to emphasizing on the unique features of destinations and their accommodation. This underscores the fact that pricing may not be the only determinant for revenue generation for the tour operators. Besides, tour operators do not have the monopoly of determining the price of tourism products. Furthermore, in some destinations, tour operators are also shareholders in hotels, while in others they own the hotels entirely. In this view, they have a great interest in the sustenance of these accommodations, oftentimes using their brands to market the establishments (Picazo-Peral & Moreno-Gil, 2018). These study findings contradict Kotler et al., (2014) findings that pricing is commonly underscored as the most important parameter for revenue generation. In fact, Devashish (2011) declares price as the only Marketing Mix element that produces revenue. Further, several studies have demonstrated that firms obtain significant revenue increases by aggressively applying strategic pricing aimed at diverse customer segments. In fact, Ammar (2016) posits that the flexibility of pricing decisions has enabled marketers to regulate the demand of their products.

Conclusion

Whereas it is clear that strategic tourism pricing practices resulted to increased performance of tour operators, the study findings show that tour operators can use/rely on Strategic Tourism Pricing Practices for their revenue and customer growth only to a certain extent. There is therefore a need to explore other strategic practices that can blend in with pricing so as to strengthen tour operators’ revenues and customer base.

Recommendation

Overdependence on pricing practices by tour operators should be minimized for they might not necessarily lead to positive revenue and customer growth.

There is need to explore the moderating factors that would facilitate strategic tourism pricing practices to enhance the revenue and customer growth by tour operators.

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