UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PERCEIVED FAIRNESS OF VISITOR ATTRACTION USER FEES IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

HOPE AHIAGBAH

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BY
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Thesis submitted to the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a Master of Philosophy degree in Tourism Management.

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in the university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature……………………… Date…………………………...

Name: Hope Ahiagbah

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised under the guidelines on supervision of the thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature………………………... Date……………………

Name: Dr. (Mrs) Ewoenam Afua Afenyo-Agbe

ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees at attraction sites in the Central Region of Ghana. The study employed a pragmatist philosophy of research – a mixed-method approach using a cross-sectional design. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from 301 visitors whereas an In-depth interview guide was used to elicit information from the attraction site managers. Descriptive analysis, factor analysis, cross-tabulation, ANOVA and Independent sample T-test, as well as inductive content analysis, were used for the data analysis. The findings revealed that the basis of the pricing policies at visitor attractions included market segmentation, competition, activity-based pricing, economic trends, cost of operation, seasons, feedback, and stakeholder consultation. Again, the study revealed that four main factors accounted for the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees, visitors also perceived the attraction user fees as fair hence, their post-visit intentions toward the attractions were positive. It was concluded that the findings highlighted the complexity and multifaceted nature of pricing decisions at the visitor attractions. Additionally, visitors largely perceived the attraction user fees as fair and reasonable. It is recommended that visitor attractions continue to provide high-quality experiences and activities at affordable user fees to the visitors as well as updating visitors on new tourism offerings in the region.

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To my family, I am very grateful for your endless love and support, both morally and financially.

DEDICATION

To my Mum, Mawuse O. D. Amelorku

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CEDECOM	Central Regional Development Commission
CRCC	Central Regional Coordinating Council
FA	Factor Analysis
GHCT	Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust
GMMB	Ghana Museums and Monuments Board
GNA	Ghana News Agency
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
IDI	In-Depth Interview
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
PANAFEST	Pan African Historical Theatre Festival
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PPI	Post-Purchase Intention
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Tourism is a universal phenomenon and a widely recognized industry in many parts of the world. According to a study by Meyer and Meyer (2015) and Cuffy (2017), tourism has become one of the many economic engines that propel the world's economies, benefiting both the host communities and the national economies. In contrast to other supplementary economic sectors like industrialization, it is viewed in developing nations as a strategic tool for enhancing economic growth and eradicating poverty (Meyer & Meyer, 2015; Cuffy, 2017). On a global scale, tourism has acquired significant prominence and has been used as a strategy for poverty reduction, supporting Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) and growth, through infrastructure development, job creation, revenue generation, and foreign exchange (Emma & Scheyvens, 2019). So, tourism depends on attractions and visitors make attractions what they are.

Visitors invariably visit areas that have attraction sites, which are very important both for the development of the region and the visitor attraction itself (Yuliaril & Riyadi, 2019). Attractions are important not merely for drawing visitors to a location (Weaver, 2006) but more importantly, for the destination, their patronage provides the framework for encouraging visitor spending (Mathieson & Wall, 2006). According to Gunn (2004), attractions are the core of tourism. Thus, tourism can never exist without attractions. Visitor attractions, on the other hand, form the foundation of tourism production at tourist destinations. Not only in terms of formulating the tourism products but, more importantly, as a gauge of the performance of the entire destination (Croes & Kubickova, 2013; Frempong, Dayour & Bondzi-Simpson, 2015).

There are different types of visitor attractions with varied ownership structures (Choi & Suh, 2019). The tourism industry is a mixed economy (Anderson & Getz, 2009) that has its structures classified as public, private, and local community attractions within the tourism sector (Wanhill, 2009; Swarbrooke & Page, 2012). Public attractions are attractions owned and run by the state or government (see e.g. state parks, castles, etc.). Unlike public attractions, private attractions are attractions owned and run by individuals or private partners. Last but not least, local community museums which serve as attractions may also be owned and run by a non-profit historic society (Lee & Lee, 2009**)**. Within these types of visitor attractions, are embedded the issues of ownership structures which constitute the attraction user fees. These ownership types determine whether access to visitor attractions should be free or should require some form of payment. Not all attractions are free, hence, there are issues with user fees or pricing that exist at the attraction sites (Choi & Suh, 2019).

Pricing is one of the most important components when considering the purchasing of products or services (Carlson, 2020). It deals with the process of determining how much goods and services are worth (Buhalis, 2000; Avlontis & Indounas, 2007; Hudson, 2008; Reid & Bojanic, 2009). If the prices are high on goods without visitors getting the value of what they pay for, they might agitate but when they get the value for their money, they become satisfied. Studies have shown that pricing helps in taking strategic decisions

(Wolinsky, 1983; Piercy, Cravens & Lane, 2010). The prices set for products serve as an indicator to specifically differentiate between the available product and their quality levels. Thus, there is a fulfilment of expectations at which each price indicates a distinctive quality level. Based on this, it is worth noting that differences in product quality show how the products are priced. Similarly, in tourism marketing, the pricing of products or services is one factor the business owners consider pertaining to the hospitality and travel sector. For instance, the pricing technique (differential pricing) has highlighted the need to comprehend how visitors view the reasonableness of the price of tourism goods (Chung & Petrick, 2015). Consequently, the rates fixed for the products and services at the tourism destinations may influence visitors' decisions to patronize the attractions.

Usually, for the attractions that require some form of payment, the funds generated are channelled into developing, sustainability and quality management, and training development and maintenance of the visitor attractions (Buckley, 2003; Wilson, 2004). Based on these fees that people pay, they have some expectations (e.g. fulfilment) they should receive in return at the attractions. Just like any other product, the price value put on them has some form of implication that will either convince visitors to purchase it or not. Even though management determines the price value of products, consumers also evaluate what the products will offer and in the end, they conclude after assessing the value the product will offer as being fair or unfair (Sere De Lanauze & Siadou-martin, 2009; Smith et al., 2010).

Past studies have demonstrated that pricing affects one's choice of decisions regarding what products one should patronize (Haron et al., 1992;

Rosly, 1999; Amin, 2008; Amin et al., 2011). Different people exhibit different levels of price sensitivities especially when it comes to pricing of services (Huh & Li, 2015). Price sensitivity can be defined as a measurement of the extent to which the price of products and/or services influences the user's propensity to patronize them. When prices of goods and services are high, it has implications on both the firm's profit and customers' willingness to buy those goods (Kang-Hyun & Thanh, 2011). Certain categories of attractions regardless of how highly they are priced people may not complain about them as compared to other visitor attractions (see example, ecotourism, hiking, etc.) (Ramirez & Goldsmith, 2014). Literature has established that eco-tourists are willing to pay higher once they are convinced that the attraction is environmentally friendly as compared to the heritage attractions (Teeroovengadum, 2019).

Price fairness can be explained as people's evaluation and related feelings of whether the dissimilarity between a service provider's charge and the claim made by the comparable other party is fair or justified (Xia et al., 2004). According to Monroe (2003), price fairness is "a subjective price perception and judgement whether a price is fair or not". In other words, it is based on consumers' personal feelings or opinions. Based on the subjective nature of pricing, consumers even perceive the exact varying degrees of financial sacrifice, depending on each person's opinions. Studies have established that consumers who are rational and objective can remember and process price information without mistakes (Chung & Petrick, 2015).

Perceived price, on the one hand, is how much the consumer sacrifices to acquire products according to Zeithaml (1988). He also explained that three factors affect how people perceive dimensions of price: objective price, perceived non-monetary price, and sacrifice. The objective price is explained as the actual cost of the products or services. According to Zeithaml (1982) and Dickson and Sawyer (1985), consumers will convert prices in ways that are important to them because they do not always know or recall the true price of goods and services. The factors that consumers consider when determining their perceived non-monetary pricing include things like time, search expenses, and convenience. The entire perceived sacrifice based on perceived monetary price and perceived nonmonetary price would subsequently affect consumers' judgments of the value of a good or service (Zeithaml, 1982). Even though some may be aware of the true cost of the service bought (objective price), others might only remember whether or if the product is pricey (perceived price) (Zeithaml, 1988; Petrick, 2002).

Two situational variables affect the impression of price injustice (Monroe, 2003). For example, when a customer believes a corporation raised prices without providing a comparable increase in value a buyer only pays more than others do due to his or her unique history rather than whether to maintain the product's quality (see an example, age or employment status). The reason behind the increment in prices must be known to the consumers so that they may not feel they are being extorted. Therefore, a review of price fairness in this study is prudent because it paves the way to deal with the concepts of price perceptions. After all, fairness is regarded as one of the measurable constructs of price perceptions (Monroe, 2003).

Tourism only occurs at destinations, which are sites with unique nature-based, historical, or other iconic attractions that draw both local and foreign visitors for a variety of leisure pursuits (Framke, 2002; Jovicic et al., 2017). This emphasizes a claim made by Frempong et al., (2015) that famous attractions serve as the primary means by which tourist locations are known. In addition, the tourism sector has gradually evolved into one of the foundational pillars of the Ghanaian economy and continues to grow in terms of visitor arrivals as well as in terms of receipts (GTA Report, 2020). That being said, tourist destinations can only appreciate the benefits of tourism if there are enough resources and facilities to create lasting experiences for visitors visiting these attractions. A destination with more tourism-oriented recreational attractions always attract an increasing number of visitors (Herget, Petru & Abraham, 2015).

In Ghana, the Central Region has a diversity of attractions which attract user fees from its users. Hence, the region experiences some of the highest visitor arrivals and maintains significant attractions (Dayour, 2013). The issues of pricing for activities vary from attraction to attraction () Central region which serves as a designated tourism hub, is also home to several other major visitor attractions. It is well renowned for drawing visitors from all over the world and being one of the top visitor attraction destinations supporting the Ghanaian tourism sector (Badu-Baiden, Boakye & Otoo, 2016). This makes the region a major tourism hub on both the national and world stage.

Statement of the Problem

When consumers purchase products, they pay attention not only to features but the fairness of the price as well. Thus, several issues are considered including the price (Sere De Lanauze & Siadou-Martin, 2009).

Although the issue of perceived price fairness is not new in the tourism literature, existing studies are largely in the areas of marketing, lodging, transportation, food and beverage (Veisten, 2002; Dekhili, & Achabou, 2013; Haukeland et al., 2015; Waguespack, & Curtis, 2015; Wang, Fan & Liu, 2016; Mukaromah, Teja, & Anggraini, 2019; Severt et al., 2020) with less attention on the perceived price fairness of visitor attractions user fees.

Despite the existing literature's acknowledgement of the need to understand consumers' perception of price fairness of tourism products, the evidence is fragmented with different scholars, focusing on aspects of the issue rather than looking at it holistically specifically from the consumer and management perspective. For instance, while Domen, Aleksandra, Jasmina and Milfelner (2021) examined whether emotional responses determine price fairness perceptions and resulting behaviours, Maxwell (2008) looked at how consumers think about pricing and fairness of the product from the managerial perspective. Furthermore, the extant literature is dominated with evidence from developed countries while research in the context of developing countries is still in its infancy.

Although limited studies in Ghana have explored the issues of user fees (Waddington & Enyimayew, 1989; Nyonator & Kutzin, 1996; Witter, Arhinful, Kusi, & Zakariah-Akoto, 2007), the focus has been on the health sector where issues of affordability and equity are topical. Thus, not much is known about visitors' perception of user fees at other visitor attractions. These issues constitute a gap in the literature. Given the ongoing discussions on perceived price fairness, and the skewed nature of research done in the past, this study seeks to examine the issues of perceived fairness of user fees at various attraction sites in the Central Region of Ghana.

Research Questions

1. What are the determinants of the pricing policies at visitor attractions in the Central Region?
2. What are visitors' perceptions regarding the fairness of user fees at visitor attractions in the Central Region?
3. What factors influence visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees at visitor attractions in the Central Region?
4. How do visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees of visitor attractions in the Central Region influence their post-purchase intentions?

Research Objectives

The general objective of the study is to assess visitors' perceived fairness of attraction user fees in the Central Region. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. explore the determinants of the pricing policies at visitor attractions in the Central Region;
2. examine visitors' perception of fairness of user fees at visitor attractions in the Central Region;
3. analyse the factors that influence visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees at visitor attractions in the Central Region; and

4. examine the influence of visitors' perception of price fairness of user fees on their post-purchase intentions in the Central Region.

Significance of the Study

The results can prompt attraction site management to reconsider their pricing strategies, allowing them to determine whether the user fees are overpriced or underpriced at the visitor attractions. Additionally, this will provide relevant information to decision-makers in the tourism industry, such as planners and other participants, as well as other parties involved in the industry's development. It will also show how visitors feel about the perceived fairness of user fees at specific sites.

Practically, a study of this kind will inform managers about visitors' perception of the price of the visitor attractions within the region and country as a whole. This will inform the pricing policies and practices used by managers to regulate how prices are set for services at the various attractions. With this information available, managers will now have an accurate picture of what visitors look for at attractions in terms of cost and how it affects experiences, and also how visitors feel about the prices they pay when they visit these attraction sites. This will further help managers in decision-making in the areas of development, maintenance and keeping the attractions as a core tourism resource or product in good shape for its intended purposes. This in essence will be that knowledge of visitors' perception of fairness of user fees will help in the effective management, in terms of fair pricing, which will continue to look attractive and reasonable enough to allow visitors to be able to patronize these attractions. Besides, an attraction without an appreciable number of visitors who can afford to visit ceases to be an attraction.

Finally, the study will contribute to the growing knowledge of the perceived fairness of user fees to attraction sites among visitors. It will serve as a piece of baseline information for other academics.

Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees at the visitor attractions in the Central Region. The research was carried out at visitor attractions that are effectively operating within the destination area. The sampled population were respondents, who visited the attraction sites, and facilities, and used the services at the attraction, as well as park managers who are stationed therein. Respondents deemed fit for the study were adults 18 years and above who could read and understand English.

Limitations of the Study

The inability to get a sample frame (tourist arrivals) for determining sample size was one of the study's major constraints. The sample frame was calculated using Fisher et al.'s (1998) formula to establish the sample size for the investigation. Again, the usage of convenience sampling techniques limits generalisation for the study as only five attractions were used. Based on the results it might not apply to other attractions.

Definition of Terms

Visitor: A visitor is defined as "a traveller who embarks on a journey outside his/her normal place of residence to a preferred location for less than a year, for any primary aim other than to be employed by a resident individual in the place visited. A visitor, whether home, inbound or outbound, is referred to as a tourist (overnight stay) if there is an overnight stay in his/her trip, or as a same-day visitor (excursionist) otherwise" (UNWTO, 2014, p. 13).

Domestic visitor: Skanavis and Sakellari, (2011) defined domestic visitors as residents of a given country travelling to and staying in places inside their residential country, but outside their usual environment for not more than 1 year for leisure, business or other purposes.

International visitors: They are visitors who, for other reasons than to be employed and paid remuneration, move to a location other than that of his/her home (Candela & Figini, 2012, p. 25).

Attraction managers: They are defined as the head or officers in charge of the visitor attractions.

Attraction User Fees: They are site-based levies or monies charged to visitors in order to access the attraction

Perceived price fairness: Xia et al. (2004) define perceived price fairness as a "judgement of whether an outcome and/or the process to reach an outcome is reasonable, or just."

Visitor Attractions: A visitor attraction is a place or activity that is designed to draw in visitors and provide them with an enjoyable and engaging experience. This can include nature-based or cultural landmarks, amusement parks, historical sites, and other attractions.

Post-Purchase Intention: It refers to the plans or decisions that a visitor forms after completing a visit to a specific destination or visitor attraction.

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. The first chapter gives a general background to the study and deals with areas such as the problem statement, research questions, and objectives, significance of the study, and the definition of key terms. The second chapter delves into the review of literature on the following: determinants of pricing policies of visitor attraction user fees, visitors' perception of user fees, factors that influence visitors' perceptions of fairness, and post-purchase intentions as well as other related literature. Chapter Three emphasizes the study area, research design and philosophy, sampling procedure, target population, data sources, instrument for data collection, and conceptual framework for the study. The data analysis, including findings and discussions, is detailed in Chapter Four whereas, Chapter Five covers a summary, conclusions, and recommendations that have emerged from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of several issues underlying the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees. It specifically focuses on the concept of pricing fairness, visitor attraction and user fees, pricing policies at visitor attractions, user perceptions of price fairness, factors that influence user perceptions of price fairness, and visitors' post-purchase intentions at the attractions. The second part of the review provides a discussion of the theoretical perspectives underpinning the study and the conceptual framework guiding it.

The Concept of Pricing and Price Fairness

Pricing is a potentially effective technique to manage tourist attractions in a way that is effective, equitable, commercially feasible, and sustainable. It remains the pathway to generating revenue for a given attraction or firm. Notwithstanding, pricing is usually buttressed by the buyer's or consumer's ability and willingness to pay for a firm's services or products. Mehadafi (2007) claims that pricing is a process that determines the cost of a good or service by using information that is endogenous as well as exogenous sources to the business and other market-related data. Understanding how consumers think is a concept that is becoming more important as a result of the potential for an unfair pricing perception caused by the various observed prices for the same goods. There are other factors present at the time of judging the price as well, so the price variety is not the only thing that affects the feeling of justice.

Different concepts of fairness have been proposed to represent the various conditions under which established pricing fairness is assessed (Graafland, 2007), but according to Urbany et al. (1989), the most widely accepted idea is to think of fairness as a sense or belief that results from a comparison with typical behaviour expectations. Generally speaking, everyone is capable of identifying unfair circumstances and has a clear notion of what fairness entails, albeit it can occasionally be challenging to define (Xia, Monroe & Cox, 2004). It can also be well-defined through the outcomes, considering that fairness is considered to exist when things, activities, charges, and prices are agreeable, acceptable, and/or considerable. Consequently, a transaction is deemed fair if both sacrifices were made and each party involved received a proportionate amount of the profit.

Consumers typically compare prices with what is designated as a reference point (e.g. prior prices, competitor's pricing, and sellers' price) to determine if the price is fair or not. These comparisons can result in a variety of evaluations, such as being assessed as having favourable pricing, in which case the price is thought to be fair, and not having favourable prices, in which case the price is thought to be unfair (Bolton et al., 2003). In this regard, pricing fairness might be characterized as the evaluation and feelings that awaken when a customer compares a seller's pricing to another, the difference that results from the comparison may be deemed to be a discrepancy that is acceptable, fair, or reasonable (Xia et al., 2004). Monroe and Xia (2006) defined fairness in pricing as the absence or presence of only minor differences or inequities. Consumers experience these discrepancies when they compare the prices they pay to their expectations, benchmark pricing, prices paid by other customers, or prices imposed by other sellers for the same good or service.

Alternatively, when a fair price is set at a reasonable and acceptable level, it shows that the pricing is fair. They also mention the fact that sometimes a fair price could occasionally turn out to be less than anticipated. In furtherance, researchers, like Namkung and Jang (2010), conceptualise fair prices as the consumer's overall assessment of the price based on comparisons between the current price and prices that are considered to be acceptable by society (the reference price) and the consumer's interests (the level of adaptation).

In the tourism and service industries, fairness perception is particularly important since this is where pricing and product discrimination marketing tactics first occur. Because of this, the majority of research on pricing perception in the tourism and hospitality sectors considers factors including yield management use, price discrimination, and reference pricing as the primary predecessors of the unfairness of price perception (Mathies & Gudergan, 2011). Overall, the literature suggests that price fairness has mostly been examined from the perspective of the consumer. As a result, judgments are primarily dependent on the viewpoint of the customer. However, management perspectives are crucial to drawing valuable insights into what wholly constitutes a fair price, since factors involved in attraction pricing or prices are both endogenous and exogenous in context, with exogenous factors majorly influencing attraction prices enormously yet being out of the control of attraction management.

Conceptually, perceived price fairness can be constituted as buyers' assessments (cognitive and emotional) of whether a seller's price can be reasonably justified (Xia et al., 2004). In this study, price fairness is operationalised as the right, reasonable, or justifiable price that must satisfy both the visitors (able and willing to pay without too much difficulty) and the revenue objectives of the tourism business. Hence, attraction management must develop the pricing structures, goals and tactics to define price strategic place in the marketing mix while providing sufficient adaptability to adapt to varying circumstances and be able to somewhat meet customers' expectations and/or ability to purchase while also meeting their revenue objectives (Heath & Wall, 1992). Thus, decisions involving prices are among the most crucial that a management team can make, since these can have a significant impact on the business's ability to attract expected visitors, attraction revenue performance, and competitiveness.

Nevertheless, other studies have also established how consumers' emotional reactions, cognitive assessments, and subsequent actions toward sellers are all influenced by comparisons to price results (such as internal or external reference prices). Although the concept of pricing fairness considers both the pricing result and approach used to get at the outcome (Bolton et al., 2003), not many attempts have been made to look at how these methods are associated with price perception and its responses.

Visitor Attractions and User Fees

In many attraction sites, finances for maintaining and managing visitor attractions are becoming increasingly scarce or sometimes disappearing altogether (Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002). Fees for attraction sites have important equity, economic, administrative, and political ramifications, thus understanding the many opinions on charge options and the challenges attributed to them is essential (Clawson & Knetsch, 1966).

User fees come in different forms depending on the type of visitor attractions (Witt, 2019). These include; entrance fees, concession fees, activity-based fees, etc. Entrance fees refers to the price that visitors must pay to enter a visitor attraction sites or other ecotourism location. Entrance fees can be collected in a few different ways, such as at the site entrance or earlier at another administrative centre (Witt, 2019; Leask, 2022). They can be paid for directly by the visitor, or tour operator. On the other hand, user fees are fees charged to visitors to use the attraction sites. In the context of this study, user fees are fees paid by visitors to use the attraction and/or perform activities at the attraction sites (Downing, 2019). In other words, they are referred to as the activity user fees.

However, it can be said that the only difference that exists between these two is - one is paid at the entrance to access the visitor attraction while the other is paid to perform an activity at the attraction site. The issue of pricing regimes at different attractions also differs just like how the managers at the private attractions (but natural attraction) fix their own rates for activities. Whereas at the heritage attractions, it is different. Activity user fees charged at the heritage attractions range from Ghs 3.00 domestic students, Ghs 5.00 for adults (but all these fees have been reviewed for the year 2023, so students now pay Ghs 5.00 and adults Ghs 10.00) whereas at the nature-based attractions, it ranges from Ghs 13.00 for domestic students, Ghs 25.00 for adults and foreign students pay Ghs 40.00, foreign adults pay Ghs 60.00 to participate in activities at the visitor attractions.

This phenomenon has been the subject of numerous arguments, both in favour of and against it. The 'public good' and 'user pays' viewpoints are at odds with each other in these debates. Both points of view have merit. Issues such as use versus non-use value are central to these two viewpoints, as is efficiency versus equity (Reynisdottir et al., 2008). However, equity is at the heart of the 'user pays' perspective. It is only reasonable and appropriate for consumers of recreation services (and incur the charges) to contribute to the costs. Participation in outdoor recreational activities varies greatly among the general public. Visitors from outside the country (i.e., international tourists) should be required to contribute to the upkeep and management costs of the attraction sites they visit. It is interesting to note that those in lower-paying professions are more likely to engage in 'performance' activities, such as sporting events, where tickets are more expensive. As a result, those from lower socioeconomic statuses are prevented from taking part in outdoor recreational activities (Curry, 1985, cited in Curry, 1994). Discriminatory impacts on visitors from low-income families could be minimised by pricing differences (Reynisdottir et al., 2008).

Those who believe in the 'public good' argue that limiting access to attraction sites based on the ability to pay is unjust and unethical. More and Stevens (2000) pointed out that by imposing user fees, low-income groups could be shut out of recreational possibilities, which would be a violation of the purpose of public recreation facilities. Income redistribution is possible through the tax system, with higher earners paying more and thus contributing more to the protection of certain areas. Another 'public good' argument is that attraction sites have non-use worth (More, 1999). A site's existence can be valued by locals as an alternative for future use or as a safeguard for local heritage (This worth is demonstrated by their willingness to pay taxes). Non-user benefits can account for a significant amount of an area's total economic value, even if they are tiny in comparison to the area's worth to real users.

According to this perspective, if attraction sites were to introduce user fees, the number of visitors would decrease and so limit the positive economic benefits. While some argue that the introduction of user fees will lead to a decrease in the number of visitors to attraction sites, others argue that this will lead to an increase in the quality of the experience for visitors. A public good perspective argues that the administration of user fees might be expensive and unworkable in terms of practicality. The introduction of user fees would also increase the structure and commercialization of visitor experiences (Lindberg, 1998).

User fees are a contentious problem with no clear-cut answers. What matters is that there does not have to be an either/or solution. User fees are one alternative, but they are not the only ones that can cover the costs of establishing, maintaining, and managing public attraction sites. The use of a single financing source for attraction sites may be more inequitable than using a combination of public cash and fees. A rational economic approach has not been used much in Ghana's decision-making process for funding attraction sites because of pressure from the public, ideology, and politics.

Studies have found that people are prepared to pay for a wide range of outdoor recreation options. It is important to keep in mind that research on consumers' willingness to pay varies widely in their environment, making it difficult to draw meaningful comparisons. 'User fees' are frequently mentioned in the context of outdoor leisure in research (i.e., they may include fees for facilities as well as services). Studies that look at the establishment of new fees or the raising of current fee amounts could elicit very diverse responses. To keep things simple, the economic mechanics underpinning these various charge programmes are viewed as being almost identical (Reynisdottir et al., 2008). Free access to attraction sites is a non-market good.

However, its monetary worth to customers can be calculated (Bull, 1995). The same utility maximization and rationality-based decision-making principles that underpin market behaviour also apply to the willingness to pay for non-market goods. The readiness to pay shows a consumer's economic assessment of the products in question if a change in the non-market good (e.g. environmental improvement) results in the individual believing that he or she is better off as a result of the change (Hanley, Shogren, & White, 1997).

Attractions sites' economic value is most commonly measured by the willingness of visitors to pay for them (Tisdell, 2006). Using the Kaldor–Hick criterion, which states that if the total net value (social benefit fewer social costs) of the attraction sites increases, the total welfare of the society will also rise because gainers could theoretically make up for any societal losses by paying the losers. This is the foundation of social cost and benefit analysis. According to conventional wisdom, the lower the price, the fewer people will be willing to pay for it. Studies have shown that pricing has a significant impact on consumer demand (Stevens, More, & Allen, 1989; Richer & Christensen, 1999). Even if moderate levies or minor increases in user fees are introduced, they do not have a dramatic impact on demand for outdoor leisure (Eagles et al., 2002; Schroeder & Louviere, 1999; Krannich, Eisenhauer, Field, Pratt, & Luloff, 1999).

In addition, various demographic and psychological factors influence the readiness of people to pay discrepancies (Reynisdottir et al., 2008). To avoid severe inequities in access, any proposed charge policy must take these considerations into account before going into effect. There are a lot of discussions over if fees are unfair to guests with lower incomes. It is reasonable to infer that visitors' ability to pay influences their desire to pay, at least to some amount. When people who cannot afford to pay yet value a visit, there is a problem. No one knows how much money people are ready to pay for a good or service. The price sensitivity of low-income users is greater than that of high-income consumers (More & Stevens, 2000; Reiling, Cheng, & Trott, 1992). People are also more inclined to pay more to access a location if they have travelled a considerable distance to get there (Schroeder & Louviere, 1999).

Pricing Policies at Visitor Attractions

Pricing strategies and policies play an important role in the day-to-day management of both industrial and service firms. This is because, in the near term, price is one of the most helpful variables managers can change to promote or discourage demand for products or activities (Gazopoulou, 2012; Aziz et al., 2011).

There are a lot of tourist-used amenities which are public assets or are funded by a combination of public and private revenue sources. For instance, parks, beaches, marketplaces, gardens, centres for performing arts, stadiums, theatres, and even entire vacation destinations may be supported by the public or private sectors or, more frequently, a combination of both. Consequently, extra profit making is usually not a component of the customary administrative style for government agencies in charge of attractions, parks, and wildlife.

Visitors should, however, pay for the attractions' direct use, such as the capital and operational expenditures of trails, interpretive centres, and information, due to the administrative and maintenance costs of attractions. To visit an attraction, a visitor must therefore be ready to pay a price. Doing this will require that, A pricing strategy should include a general admission fee, use fees, concession fees, royalties and profit sharing, licenses and permits, taxes, and voluntarily donated funds (Laarman & Gregerson, 1996). Accordingly, Sharifi-Tehrani, Verbič and Chung (2013) noted that managers' determination of prices is hinged on the use of two broad functions. First, prices raise revenue for the management of the attraction. Secondly, price rations are based on user ability and willingness to pay. In that, from a competitive market perspective, price is determined by the forces of demand and supply. To put it another way, based on cultural factors, political, and economic occurrences, and history, several admission procedures may be used (Gu & Ryan, 2009).

On the other hand, Sharifi-Tehrani et al. (2013) observed that tourism pricing can be driven by managerial objectives (revenue, profits) as well. Implying that, particularly at visitor attractions, various factors including social-cultural, economic, political, and objectives pursued by the attraction management are ultimately part of the major determinants of the pricing strategy that is adopted and the price charged (Yin & Zou, 2007).

Cooper et al. (1993) also espoused that in tourism many other factors may influence pricing strategy. Due to the fact that the tourism industry's product is time-sensitive and cannot be preserved for later use, it may engage in a variety of last-minute pricing strategies. There is also a high price elasticity of demand shown by holiday and marketplaces, with a focus on determining the appropriate pricing levels (Cooper et al., 1993; Reid & Bojanic 2009). These are due to the erratic nature of the global tourism industry caused by short-term changes in currency exchange rates, global markets issues, oil prices, and political events which require sophisticated planning; hence, many tourism management organisations will sacrifice short-term profitability to produce acceptable load factors or occupancy levels because they depend on large volumes to break even (Hung, Shang & Wang, 2010).

Cost control is, therefore, a crucial component of pricing strategy due to the large fixed costs and close-to-break-even rates in many tourism facilities. If costs are not kept under control, this could leave companies open to financial collapse or takeover (Reid & Bojanic, 2009; Laarman & Gregerson, 1996). Furthermore, there is seasonal demand which usually results in low and peak season times, which necessitate management pricing to address issues with short-run capacity problems (Gunn, 2004).

Besides, Becken and Simmons (2002) noted that price is also connected with the psychological components of the attraction's level and quality or tourist activity of reference. It is, therefore, crucial to analyze how different target categories will react to price changes at attractions while taking into account all relevant benchmarks. (Guo et al., 2013). It has also been noted that tourist attractions have significant cash flow since a large portion of the payment for tourism-related goods is typically done before consumption. To pursue a pricing plan that is appropriate for the competitive context and takes into account these factors, any manager must have an understanding of these factors, and valuable sources for increasing the cost-effectiveness of the products offered (Breidert, Hahsler, & Reutterer, 2006). The pricing strategy should allow the tourism business to not only create revenues in the near term but also attract and keep clients over the long run (Barrows et al., 2012).

According to Kyurova (2013), pricing strategy should aid the company in gaining market leadership, gaining a competitive edge, and surviving challenging market conditions. According to Guo et al. (2013), market segmentation can help businesses in the tourism industry create and implement the best pricing policies. Forbes et al. (2014) claim that business owners may develop and implement an effective pricing strategy by utilizing a thorough accumulation of knowledge about the market in addition to data regarding the organization's activities.

User Perceptions of Price Fairness at Visitor Attractions

Consumers' judgement of whether or not prices charged at the attraction are reasonable or justifiable is essential for a given attraction because travellers juxtapose the prices, they pay at an attraction with what they pay for the same or similar products. In that, visitors perceive attraction prices as fair or unfair based on various variables. These variables include what services and types of attractions they visit and the kinds of activities present at the attraction in question.

Users' awareness of prices charged at other and similar destinations or attractions is also critical (Xia, Monroe & Cox, 2004). Besides, consumers engage in cost-benefit analysis which has to do with the perceived value they get out of the prices they pay at a particular attraction. Besides, the component of the product/attraction having any distinctive (tangible or intangible) qualities that set it apart from others is also considered. In that, how much buyers value the uniqueness or attributes of the attraction is a determinant of the reasonableness of the price they may accept to be charged for it.

Tourist (consumers) are also price sensitive, with them perceiving and reacting to product prices in different ways. However, Kim et al. (2009) enunciated that consumers' reactions to different prices may not be purely rational but rather driven by behavioural elements like preferences and perceptions, information access as well and the values placed on the services. Also, knowing a consumer's exact preferences for a good or service, and more specifically, knowing their willingness to pay (WTP) for that good or service, helps managers make better judgments about price points and pricing strategies (Barros, 2017).

Price information and visitors' awareness of the frequency of price changes also influence their perception of the fairness of prices. Along this tangent, Haws and Bearden (2006) affirmed Riquelme et al.'s (2019) conclusion that price increases over a brief period are likely to increase feelings of unfairness among consumers. It was discovered that when customers knew they were paying a different price than others, their perceptions of injustice were higher (David, Bearden & Haws, 2017; Krämer, Friesen & Shelton, 2018; Lastner et al., 2019; Ettl et al., 2019; Lou, Hou & Lou, 2020). Consumers are however more inclined to accept a higher price if they have personal knowledge of others who have paid a lesser one (Lastner et al., 2019).

There is also the price-quality effect and the prestige/image attributes of the tourism attraction/destination in reference. According to Wells and Prensky (1996), consumers frequently assume that price serves as a reliable gauge of quality. A product's pricing is a good indicator of its quality. Tourists will not choose whom to support based on price when the price disparities between various tourism services are minor. When it comes to making big decisions, consumers (tourists) frequently base their choices on pricing, particularly when they lack confidence. Tourists may be skeptical of attraction locations that require significantly less infrastructure than others of the same kind. They might speculate as to what is wrong with the tourist spot and believe that other, more expensive locations have better tourism amenities. Price-quality relationships are critical for tourists. Thus, tourism organisations and businesses during price-fixing must factor this in (Meidan, 1994). This, however, brings into the fray the issue of the end-benefit effect since prices are high. Buyers are price sensitive to the cost of the end benefit when prices are high, hence, any unmet expectations in terms of satisfaction and experiences may result in perceived unfairness. Attached to this, is also the fairness effect which has to do with the current attraction prices compared with prices people have paid in the past for the same attraction/product or products in the same category (Hung et al., 2010; Reid & Bojanic, 2009). That is, in similar purchase scenarios, consumers anticipate paying for comparable goods.

Notwithstanding, when visitors were able to understand why prices were rising, they would have fewer negative perceptions toward the attractions (Dasu & Tong, 2010; Abrate et al., 2012; Shapiro, Draver & Dwyer, 2016; Wang et al., 2016). Customers' attitudes and actions appear to be influenced by their assessment of whether the price rise is fair or unfair, according to a study. As a result, consumers typically unfairly interpret price adjustments (Riquelme, Román, Cuestas & Iacobucci, 2019). This is especially true for clients who consider themselves to be long-term supporters (Riquelme et al., 2019). According to Stevens' research on consumer behaviour, (1992: 44), tourists' decisions about their choice of travel location, their consumption of goods while away, and their decision to come back all depend largely on their assessment of the destination (Gun & Ryan, 2009).

Perceptions are very crucial because contemporary users of products are progressively becoming more selective. They have more knowledge, are older, and budget-conscious tourists. It has a significant impact on how people travel. For the tourism product to be competitive in such a market, it must be recognized as having a quality that is equal to or greater than that of its competitors (Aziz et al., 2011; Gazopoulou, 2012). As a result, it is crucial to have information on how customers perceive quality and costs, as well as how these factors affect customer behaviour. The value-for-money idea is the result of the interaction between price and quality. Travellers must subjectively evaluate the concept of value for money because leisure travel is an experiential good.

Measures of travellers' perceptions of quality or pricing are crucial in deciding an attraction or destination's competitiveness because a value that fosters competitive advantage is that an attraction can provide more for its visitors than it costs to produce it. Thus, studies of pricing, value and high quality can shed light on a nation's tourism offering, and ultimately provide information for a competitive edge in marketing its offerings and formulating a plan for promoting the industry (Stevens, 1992).

Tourism enterprises cannot overlook what a visitor's perception of a price means. Charges for the use of infrastructure, labour costs, time expenditures, and emotional costs all exist in a destination setting. Besides, the likelihood that a potential visitor will use the visitor attraction or facility can be dependent on the actual cost of the attractions in the region or country. There are also time costs and difficulties involved in travelling far to a particular region. If the tourist attraction and its offerings are unknown to visitors, uncertainty will surely surround the visiting experience (Heath & Wall, 1992).

Factors Influencing User Perceptions of Price Fairness at Visitor Attractions

According to earlier research, knowledge and experience represent the two main determining factors of pricing fairness perception. However, in the existing research, price fairness views were also created from two themes: (1) examination and identification of price fairness beliefs' antecedents (Campbell, 1999; Vaidyanathan & Aggarwal, 2003; Bolton & Alba, 2006; Campbell, 2007; Gielissen, Dutilh, & Graafland, 2008) and (2) examination of how consumers' views of price fairness affect their attitudes and behaviour (Xia et al., 2004; Daskalopoulou & Petrou, 2006; Lii & Sy, 2009). The results from the two streams shed light on the investigation of price fairness views in a variety of pricing contexts (e.g., Homburg, Hoyer, & Koschate, 2005; Martin et al., 2005) concerning consumers' reactions to a vendor's pricing plan (Herrmann et al., 2007; Choi & Mattila, 2009). Fairness is perceived by consumers, whether or not that perception is accurate, hence it is more of a subjective assessment than an objective one. In light of this, consumers' opinions of pricing fairness might not be crucial until they see a higher magnitude of the price difference and question price fairness based on their satisfaction level and experience, as well as their repurchase intentions.

With regard to factors, customers establish a benchmark or anticipated price depending on their familiarity with market rates and past transactions (Slonim & Garbarino, 1999; Gielissen et al., 2008; Cockrill & Goode, 2010), where knowledge is defined as "expertise and abilities obtained by a person or a group of individuals via the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject" (Sinclair, 2010). Knowledgeable customers have a highly developed cognition, which allows them to recall information in addition to efficiently encoding and interpreting new information (Monroe, 2003; Ofi et al., 2008). The aforementioned ideas lend weight to Rao and Monroe's (1988) findings that more informed consumers are less likely to base quality-related decisions on price or other extrinsic factors. Compared to more knowledgeable customers, less informed customers who are more doubtful will offer lower overall ratings and quality because informed buyers have more information about the product quality and costs and do not need to draw as many conclusions (Rao & Sieben, 1992; Ofir et al., 2008).

Price knowledge, according to Aalto-Setala and Raijas (2003), refers to a customer's ability to remember prices. According to this concept, Vanhuele and Dreze (2001) suggest that since consumers prefer to keep some kind of pricing information in their minds, customer price knowledge is preserved in long-term memory. Contrary to Dickson and Sawyer (1990), who point out that prices are only momentarily stored. Given that Bolton et al. (2003) claim that customers' judgments of price injustice might be influenced by their level of knowledge about prices, expenses, and profits, it is reasonable to suppose that there is a discrepancy between short and long-term memory evaluation. Despite having a greater comprehension of pricing, frequent visitors who are more devoted to the attraction will have a strong interest and be able to recall the amount charged in the past, which results in higher price awareness (Vanhuele & Dreze, 2001; Aalto-Setala & Raijas, 2003; Heiner, Kenning & Vogel, 2004).

However, Diaz (2004) and Pechtl (2008) point out that cost-conscious consumers assert to be knowledgeable about prices, and it is important to note that frequency (of stay) does not increase the size of the consumer's price knowledge but rather increases their level of confidence in the veracity of the prices that were charged to them. Customers' understanding of prices could be strongly influenced by environmental elements such as unemployment rates, the economic growth of a nation, and the availability of pricing information (Estelami et al., 2001). Customers now create their impression of the appropriate room prices using the Internet, which has become one of the key methods for providing knowledge or more precise information to the consumer (Fragniere et al., 2008), and guests base their perception of the acceptable room rates for various hotel kinds on the data gathered.

According to Estelami (1998) and Munnuka (2008), inconsistent hotel room pricing is one of the factors contributing to customers' low expectations. Customer’s knowledge of hotel room costs varies according to season. Moreover, facilitating services, such as travel agencies or any other third-party website companies might affect consumer’s pricing sensitivity (Munnuka, 2008), leading to comparing rates to rivals.

According to Sinclair (2010), experience is commonly explained as knowledge, competence, or observation of something gained by interaction with or exposure to it. Customers make simple speculations, personal interpretations, and conclusions drawn from others' prior experience, or quick assessments based on common sense (Xia et al., 2004; Maxwell, 2008b). Customers could have established a better memory for pertinent information about costs because of a long duration of stay or visiting an experience or repeated transactions at an attraction or facility (Estelami, 1998; Maxwell, 2008b), whereas, Ofir et al. (2008) revealed that experienced customers use the ease of recall as a cue for judging an attraction's or facility's prices. Experience is assessed using a customer's amount of time spent visiting, or within a certain timeframe. In contrast, Nagle and Holden (2002) postulate that buyers are more inclined to utilize price as a gauge of quality if they have less experience at the destination, attraction or facility.

Moreover, the staff-guest relationship, which is based on long-term, repetitive transactions, may affect how fairness is perceived (Xia et al., 2004).

Additionally, the similarity of comparable transactions, the choice of comparable other parties (self, other customers, or other sellers), and the buyer-seller relationship are all thought to have an impact on consumers' assessment of price fairness, according to a complete conceptual model produced by Xia et al. (2004) to illustrate how buyers form price fairness assessments. More specifically, Xia et al. (2004) claim that consumers will only notice pricing gaps when comparing two highly comparable purchases, as a fair judgement may not even be made if consumers believe the two transactions to be incomparable.

The outcomes of other studies have also shown that other factors affect customers' opinions of pricing fairness. Overall, buyers frequently use a variety of benchmarks to assess the fairness of pricing when comparing it to other prices, including previous prices, prices offered by competitors, and the cost of the goods supplied (Bolton et al., 2003). According to research on price discrimination tactics, pricing methods (such as uniform pricing versus differential pricing, posted pricing against auction pricing, etc.), affect how people perceive fairness (Haws & Bearden, 2006; Choi & Mattila, 2009).

People continuously compare their opinions to other people's opinions, according to the social comparison hypothesis (Festinger, 1954). When making such comparisons, people typically select like folks as the most crucial comparison target, followed by themselves. Consequently, it is highly likely that: (1) most impressions of and assessments of fairness are based on comparisons (Austin, McGinn, & Susmilch, 1980); and (2) people frequently compare themselves to those who are similar to themselves (Wood, 1989). Customers may therefore use other customers who bought the same goods as a point of comparison, and a price that is greater than what other customers paid is probably going to be seen as less fair. Bechwati, Sisodia, and Sheth (2009) also discovered that when consumers assess the fairness of a price, they frequently look at what previous customers have paid. Additionally, the relationship between the customer and seller acts as a buffer to lessen the adverse effects of an unfavourable price gap on fairness judgments (Xia et al., 2004).

It is uncertain, though, whether this buffer effect would hold for large price differences that disadvantage customers. According to Martin et al. (2009), loyal customers do consider a little price increase to be fairer than non-loyal customers do, but when the price increase is large, loyal customers' fairness views are not more favourable than non-reliable customers. Xia et al. (2004) made the following claim regarding how consumers view price fairness, customer attitudes and behavioural outcomes: depending on the type of fairness assessments, perceived price injustice may lead to negative behaviours such as self-protective tendencies, and even vengeance activities. The notion that perceived price justice is positively correlated with customer satisfaction and purchase intentions is supported by numerous empirical findings in fairness perception research (Campbell, 1999; Campbell, 2007).

User Fees and Post-purchase Intentions at Attractions

Emotions have a huge impact on how fair prices are perceived (Yang, 2005). According to Maxwell (2008b), fairness is the emotional component of financial decision-making, and buyers will become outraged if they feel personally wronged by the price. Xia et al. (2004) offer an additional three acts to indicate consumer response behaviours, namely no action, self-protection, and retribution. Besides, Hirschman (1970) also specifies three consumer response behaviours, which include exit, voice, and loyalty. Customers are willing to accept whatever price estimates are supplied to them for as long as they believe it provides them with a competitive advantage, therefore, their impression of unfairness in a "no action" situation has no bearing on their transaction. Yet, some silent clients are unimpressed and uninspired to act, or they feel it is not worthwhile to go through the hassle of reporting or switching to another hotel (Urbany et al., 1989). As soon as they check out of the hotel, these reserved types of guests may continue to complain about it to express their dissatisfaction (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004). Rather than avoiding action, customers choose to safeguard themselves and look for solutions that benefit them while minimizing their financial sacrifice (Xia et al., 2004).

Depending on how unjust they consider the situation to be, customers may decide to terminate the relationship, complain, request a refund, or spread bad rumours (Maxwell, 2005; Homburg et al., 2005; Cockrill & Goode, 2010). Furthermore, according to Schiffman et al. (2010), the rise of eWOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth) allows consumers to actively talk about their experience with others both verbally and visually by posting increasingly sophisticated, eye-catching, and attention-grabbing items online. According to Xia et al. (2004), the most serious negative response behaviour is seeking retribution. As a result of the fact that they could have the propensity to seek retribution to express their displeasure with the facility, hotel or attraction managers, angry guests tend not to return (Maxwell, 2008b; Zeelenberg, Bougie & Pieters, 2003).

Customers may have the propensity to argue with tourism/hotel experience providers when they are extremely irate, which could result in them choosing or switching to the attraction or facility of their competitors (Xia et al., 2004). Customers might also be willing to sue hotels in particular to harm their business. Customers could also organize boycotts, according to Maxwell (2008b), and while this tactic is thought to be ineffective at lowering rates, it is nonetheless disruptive to hotel owners. As a result, it may be claimed that unfavourable consumer response behaviours and views of price fairness are related (Ferguson, 2008; Maxwell, 2008b; Campbell, 2007; Xia et al., 2004).

Theoretical Review

A number of theories have been used in explaining the perceived price fairness of user fees from both the service and tourism industry- such as food and beverages, transportation, and attractions globally. Concerning this study, the theories used are discussed below.

Utility/Utilitarian Theory

Utilitarianism, the most popular consequentialist theory, is named after Utility, which refers to the use or benefits of the activity. Jeremy Bentham (1781) is the most prominent historical figure commonly associated with utilitarianism, either classical or hedonistic because he developed a calculus with two independent masters: pleasure and suffering. The usefulness of an end-based theory, utilitarianism, is that it focuses on the best possible outcomes, results, or repercussions of an activity. If an action creates or intends to produce at least as much good as bad as other alternatives, it is considered good (Frankena, 1963).

The application of the theory to tourism studies has been in the area of understanding the use and benefits of the activities at visitor attractions. This theory is applied to ensure that visitor attractions in the Central Region provide the best results for the most visitors possible (Frankena, 1963). The critics of the theory argue that it can be difficult to measure happiness or satisfaction and that it can result in sacrificing one's rights or interests in favour of the greater good. Furthermore, some contend that utilitarianism can be too focused on short-term gains and may not consider the long-term consequences of actions. If the outcomes of these actions make the two parties happy, then it is considered good (Frankena, 1963).

The principle of utility states that actions that benefit the largest number of people are the very best (Fennell, 2006; Rollin, 2005). The law that says we should "sum up the interests of all parties impacted by all conceivable actions and choose the action that results in the greatest net satisfaction of interests" is significant when it comes to making decisions about equality (p. 14). "Imagine what actions I would have taken in the same situation as everyone else affected by my activities" (Matheny, 2006 p.14). As a result, utilitarianism is a theory of making decisions based on what is best for the individual concerned.

According to Matheny (2006), utilitarianism has four main characteristics.

1. It is universal in that all interests should be considered, regardless of gender, nationality, or class.
2. It is welfare-oriented because it bases its definition of what is morally right on people's interests, including happiness or pleasure.
3. It is consequentialist because it measures right and wrong in terms of how our actions have ultimately served these interests.
4. It also sums up the interests of everyone impacted by any action, making it aggregative.

One assumption of the theory states that the kind of benefit to be maximised is not restricted to persons based on their superior status is important in the context of this investigation. 'This is because any entity having a welfare, be they human or otherwise' signifies this (Pluhar, 1990, p. 148). Thus, no matter the level of the standard of living and how well-off people are economically in the Central region, the pricing of attraction sites should be made flexible for everyone.

To put it another way, it advocates doing what is "best for the biggest number of people" possible. In the end, it is all about making everyone happy. In the theory, short- and long-term implications are taken into account. Bentham, often credited with establishing utilitarianism, held the view that the degree of pleasure or suffering one experiences determines one's level of well-being. The most pleasurable option is the one that is moral, ethical, or just. The application of cost-benefit analysis can approximate the value of pains and joys, although it is difficult to do so accurately. When it comes to utilitarianism, is all about making people as happy as possible and minimising their unhappiness.

The rule of utilitarianism is not a rule of action, but rather a set of moral standards. Morality must ensure that most people are happy. It is only when a rule of morality is widely recognised and followed that it can be said to be justifiable and should be followed. When it comes to establishing moral judgements, utilitarianism is a robust ethical framework that works well.

Distributive and Procedural Justice Concept

This study explores how communities view the equity and fairness of attraction user fees levied by tourist sites. Its foundations are the concepts of procedural justice and distributive justice put forward by Rawls in 1971. The theory has frequently been analyzed with the social contract. The theory contends that distributive justice is concerned with the fairness of choices made about actions and the distribution of resources, typically in terms of financial costs and benefits (Walker, 2012). Justice is described as fair and equitable governmental institutional processes, in contrast, according to "procedural justice" (Schlosberg, 2013, p 25). In the context of service decisions, procedural justice refers to how individuals view the fairness of the procedures utilized (Lind & Earley, 1992).

This concept used two elements of pricing fairness in this study, namely: distributive price fairness, which represents price outcomes (user/buyer assessments based on prices encountered/payable), as well as procedural fairness in pricing, which emphasizes the price-determining process (attraction management perspectives in terms of prevailing factors that account for prices charged). These ideas of justice are taken from theories of social justice. Distribution and allocation of outcomes are related to distributive justice (Walster, Walster, & Berschied, 1978), whereas the procedure used to decide on the distribution and allocation of outcomes is related to procedural justice (Gilovich, Keltner, & Nisbett, 2006; Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002).

The conceptual framework suggested in this study includes theoretical, and procedural justice and the ideas of distributive justice are the three guiding principles of distributive fairness involving equity, equality, and need. Distributive fairness is connected to assessments of distributive outcomes and if it is carried out judiciously (Rutte & Messick, 1998; Adams, 1965). While equity generally depends on the number of one's inputs (amount payable by individual tourists in this case), equality implies an equal distribution or chance independent of one's efforts or contribution (payment of same user fees, by which customers compare what they pay relative to others) using identified as perception factors (Chung & Petrick, 2016; Xia et al., 2004). Contrarily, the need-based distributive rule suggests that results should be allocated according to individual needs (e.g. individuals should be able to access facilities or attractions regardless of their status or characteristics) (Maxwell, 2008b).

Procedural fairness on the other hand is concerned with the steps taken and procedures used to arrive at results (Leventhal, 1980; Lind & Tyler, 1988) which is usually associated with price setters and factors accounting for the prices set. This means that procedures should be consistent, clear, and unbiased and that all stakeholders should have the chance to express their feelings and concerns. The idea of distributive justice specifically relates to whether or not individual inputs equal their outputs (Walster, et al., 1978). Nonetheless, it has been discovered that the development of procedural justice is significantly influenced by the existence of formal procedures for judgments (Aryee, et al., 2002).

The application of procedural and distributive theory to tourism studies has been in the area of processes and fairness of the resources at visitor attractions (Jamal & Camargo, 2014). The procedural justice theory is applied to ensure that the participation of local communities in decision-making and making sure their input is taken into account whereas, distributive theory can be applied to ensure the residents benefit from tourism and that the negative impacts of tourism are minimized. This theory was also criticized heavily since it can be challenging to put into practice, as it requires complex calculations and judgments regarding the criteria for a fair distribution of costs and benefits (Wegner & Pascual, 2011).

Attribution Theory

The idea of attribution theory seeks to explain how people identify the causes of an event or conduct as well as how this reference affects their subsequent behaviour. Heider was the one who first proposed the theory in 1958. According to some authors, attributing cause and responsibility is the underlying basis for how people see justice and fairness (Maxwell, 2008; Xia et al., 2004; Cohen, 1982). Cohen (1982) put forth an attributional approach to explain individual perceived fairness by stating that "understanding a person's views of justice may entail a comprehension of his or her attributions of cause and responsibility" (p.152). Yet, few studies on pricing fairness have incorporated attribution theories into their conceptual frameworks (Diller, 2008). Only a small number of scholars have experimentally evaluated attribution-based models in recent years, although Maxwell (2008) and Xia et al. (2004) both underlined the necessity to address attribution theory as one of the theoretical foundations in pricing fairness literature.

Dual entitlement (DE) is a principle that has long served as the basis for understanding and explanation of how consumers perceive price fairness and was noted to have several drawbacks (Aggarwal et al., 2003). They claimed, namely, that despite DE's assertion that cost-justified price rises should be seen as fair, this does not always happen in practice (Aggarwal et al., 2003). This agrees with the results of earlier studies. Focus group interviews were used by Maxwell (2008) to show that consumers no longer accept that the rising cost of goods is uncontrollable and that, in any current economic climate, cost control is the producers' responsibility. To address the limitations of the DE principle, Aggarwal et al (2003) proposed the attribution theory and suggested that an attributional approach would help comprehend the dynamics of price fairness perception.

In light of this, Weiner's (1980) attribution model played a role in the construction of the conceptual model for the study. Weiner (1980) suggested the CEAM attribution model (Cognitive attribution – Emotion – Action Model). According to this theory, a person's cognitive attributions affect their emotional reactions, which in turn affect their conduct (Weiner, 1980). To put it more precisely, when humans experience particular types of occurrences, they infer the cause(s) of the event and based on how they ascribe the causes, they experience various emotional reactions that influence how they respond to the events. For example, a judgment of assistance will be formed following cognitive attribution when persons are asked to contribute their class notes. Users are thus prone to feel negative effects and engage in avoidance behaviour if they believe that the sources of need are internal and can be controlled.

On the flip side, individuals are more willing to help and have a beneficial impact if the causes of need are thought to be external and uncontrollable variables (such as ability or instructor problems). Although the assisting behaviour of individuals was the initial context for this paradigm, it has been used in a variety of fields and situations.

Moreover, according to Weiner (1980), the three characteristics of temporal stability, controllability, and causality are used to ascribe observed behaviours. The causality/causation refers to whether the actor's internal or external environment was the root of the action. Who is responsible for a certain action determines the point of responsibility (Aggarwal et al., 2003). The term "controllability" describes how much a cause can be influenced by an individual. Particularly, action is more likely to be viewed as unmanageable if it is inescapable. Hence, controllability is assessed by asking "whether the actor might have done otherwise" (Aggarwal et al., 2003, p. 454).

The perception of the source as a temporary or permanent phenomenon is what relates to stability. Consumers infer the cause(s) of an action or an event based on any or all attributional dimensions, it is vital to remember. Also, the interpretation of three aspects, such as causality, controllability, and temporal stability, results in either positive or negative emotion, which is then linked to behavioural responses and intentions (Aggarwal et al., 2003; Weiner, 1985).

The application of the theory in this study is to understand how people perceive and make judgements about the causes of events and behaviours since it is a useful tool for decision-making (Reyna & Farley, 2006). Attribution theory is applied to understand how visitors perceive and evaluate their experiences. For instance, if a visitor has a positive experience at the attraction site, they may attribute it to the quality of the attraction and their positive attitude.

On the other hand, if the visitor has a negative experience, they may attribute it to the poor quality of the attraction, and unfriendliness of the staff (Reyna & Farley, 2006; Loewenstein & Lerner, 2003). The limitation of this theory is that visitors may make attributions about the quality of the attraction based on the price of admission. In this case, visitors may assume that a high-priced attraction is expensive because of the cost of maintaining the facility, when in fact the price may be driven by other factors (Nicolau & Mas, 2006).

Model of Perceived Fairness of Dynamic Pricing

The framework developed by Bo Dai (2010), centres on the moderating role of customer loyalty to indicate the relationships and feedback that exist between the various variables in the framework. In studying the effects of perceived pricing fairness on consumer happiness and behaviour; the framework with components of the *magnitude of the price difference, customer loyalty, the use of temporal/proximity of price difference, perceived price justice, customer happiness, desire to make another purchase, intention* *to use self-defence, and purpose to exact retribution.* The fundamental premise of the conceptual model of perceived fairness on consumer fulfilment and behavioural intentions is the relationships between the elements, such as the magnitude of the price difference (major versus. minor), customer loyalty (loyal versus non-loyal), the temporal proximity of price difference (close versus distant), perceived price fairness, satisfaction with the purchase, repurchase intentions, self-protection intentions, and revenge intent.

The model highlighted how customer loyalty played a moderating role between the magnitude of the price difference and temporal proximity of price difference which influences perceived fairness. According to Xia et al. (2004), a customer's perception of the price charged for products or services will influence the total perceived price fairness. Due to the close bond that exists between the buyer and seller, the connection may face some difficulty in the form of a very minor disparity that would be to the buyer's detriment rather than that of the seller (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995).

Once more, research has shown that some factors can easily affect how people perceive the fairness of prices. The extensive conceptual model developed by Xia et al. (2004) to show how buyers make price fairness assessments theorizes that the similarity of comparable transactions, the choice of comparable other parties (self, other customers, or other sellers), and the buyer-seller relationship affect consumers' assessment of price fairness. To be more precise, according to Xia et al. (2004), price variations will only be noticeable to consumers when comparing two transactions that are highly similar since a fairness judgment may not even occur if consumers consider the two transactions incomparable. The process of determining whether a price is fair is complex, and the extent to which this process can be understood depends on the discovery of factors that have specific associations with perceptions of price fairness. As a result, it may be theoretically impossible to suggest the most complete framework that can account for all circumstances involving price fairness judgement.

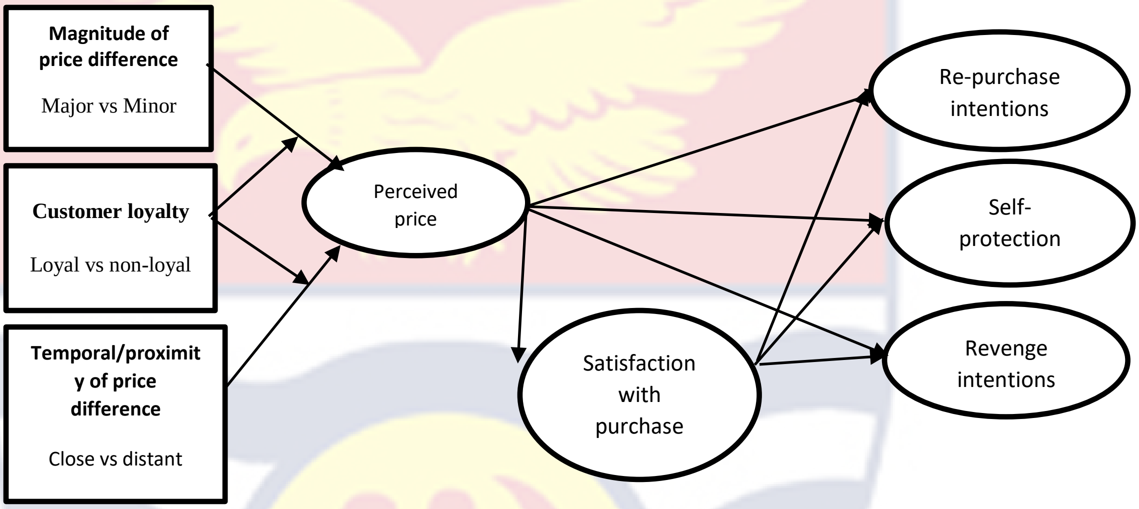


Figure 1: Model of Perceived Fairness of Dynamic Pricing (Bo Dai, 2010)

From the above model, perceived price fairness has a direct influence on satisfaction with purchases as well as consumers' behavioural intentions. Consumers' satisfaction with purchases influences behavioural intentions in the study. Bo Dai's (2010) conceptual model was used to study how customers become loyal to a brand and how it can impact their repurchase intentions.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

After a review of the theories underpinning the study above, the distributive and procedural justice theory was used as the conceptual framework for the study (Figure 1), even though the other two theories used also contributed to the study. The choice of this theory is based on the fact that it can easily be used to study any other group under different situations. It, therefore, provides a useful framework within which visitors to attractions in the Central Region and their perceptions about user fees can be evaluated.

The conceptual framework has been redrawn to make it more suitable for the study. The new framework is made up of five (5) components comprising the bases of pricing policy, price fairness judgement, price fairness, characteristics of visitors, and visitors' post-purchase intentions. It also shows the relationships among the variables. The framework looks at the general issues about the price and price determinants that might have influenced price fairness judgement and price fairness conclusions. A decision is such that, when customers believe a tourism provider has a bad reason to raise prices or impose additional costs, they feel distressed or angry toward the organization.

Price fairness judgement and/or attributions will also influence price fairness which is the distributive and procedural price fairness conclusions. Again, it takes a look at price fairness (distributive and procedural price fairness conclusions) which then influences price response actions (post-purchase intentions). Thus, whether the visitors intend to make a repeat visit or not to the visitor attractions. Finally, visitors' socio-demographic profiles influence their price fairness judgement, price fairness conclusions and price response-action.

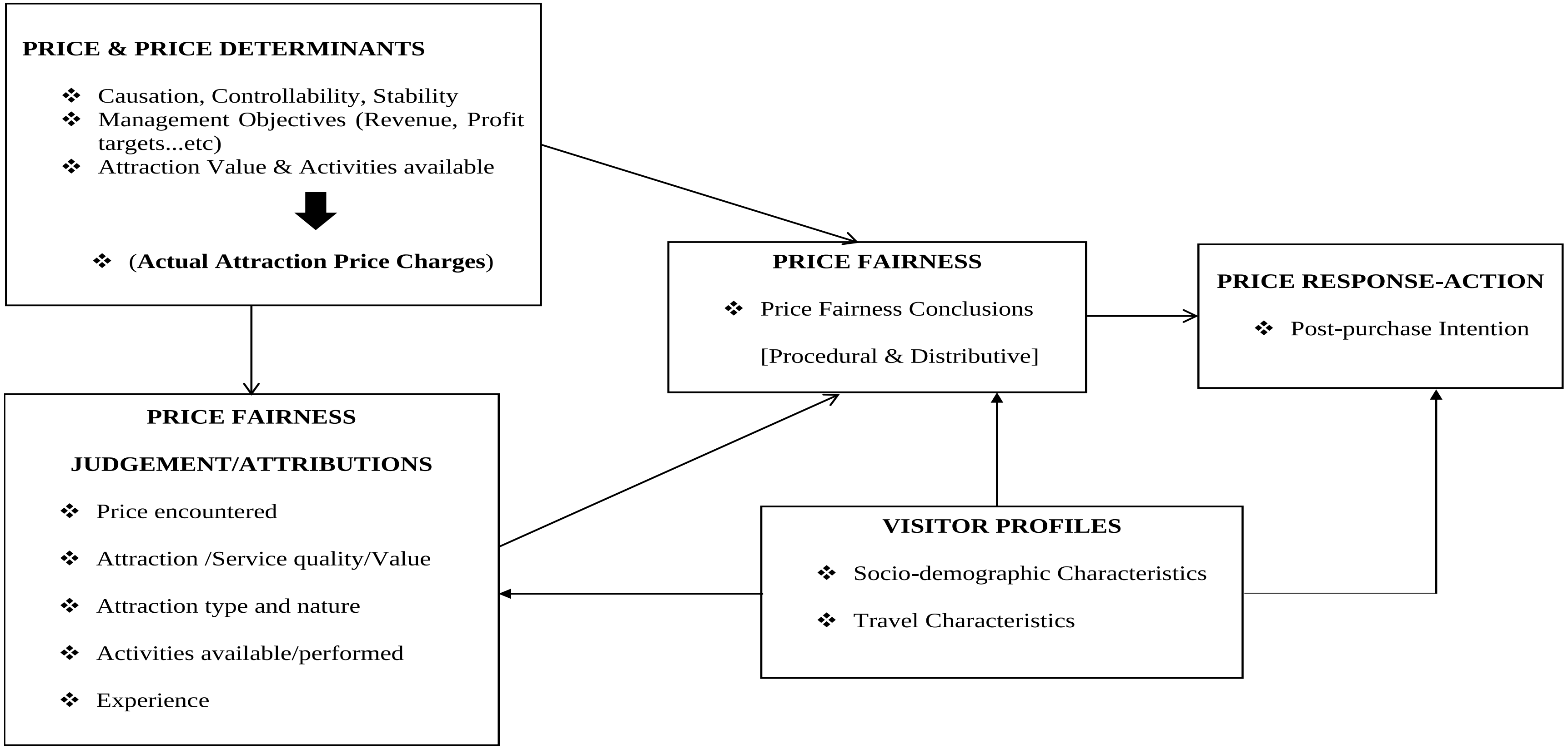


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for the Study
Source: Author's Construct, 2022

Based on the overall assessment of the theories used in this study, if the visitors are satisfied with the prices they pay for activities at the various attraction sites, they might repeat their visit. On the other hand, if they feel that they do not have value for the prices they pay, their withdrawal is sure. Therefore, the response-action (post-purchase intention) in the framework indicates an opportunity for the attraction managers to make the right decisions by enquiring from the visitors whether they enjoyed the activities or not.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of the concepts of pricing and price fairness and their relevance to pricing activities at visitor attractions. It highlighted the importance of user fees and visitor attraction. An examination of the issues relating to the bases of pricing policies, visitors' perceptions of attraction user fees, factors that influence visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees, and their post-purchase behavioural intentions. The concluding part of this review examined appropriate theories in price fairness and tourism relationship studies as well as the conceptual framework for the study. The methods used in this investigation are covered in the following chapter. It addresses difficulties with the study area, study design, sampling techniques, data processing, and analysis in addition to the difficulties with the fieldwork.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that guided the study. The issues covered include the study area, study design, and target population. This chapter also explains the sampling technique and procedures, sample size, research instruments, and procedures followed in data collection, processing and analysis. Finally, the challenges faced during the actual fieldwork as well as their implications for the study are highlighted.

Study Area

The study area for this research was the Central Region of Ghana. The region is one of the sixteen administrative regions of Ghana. The capital city of the region is Cape Coast, and it borders the Greater Accra Region on the east, the Ashanti and Eastern Regions on the north, and the Western and Eastern Regions on the west. The Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) shoreline stretches 168 kilometres to the south. It is the third-smallest region in the area, behind Greater Accra and Upper East, with a total area of 9,826 square kilometres, or roughly 4.1 per cent of Ghana's geographical area. The major economic activities within the study area include; farming, fishing, mining, and tourism. Mostly the people in the study area are farmers, fishermen and women. These farmers cultivate mainly corn, rice, vegetables and fruits as well as animal farming such as beekeeping and livestock production, expansion of the cassava sector through increased planting of seedlings and conversion of the harvest to gari, tapioca, starch, and flour were also done by the people of the region. Farming in the study area is mostly affected by several factors. Among them is inadequate and fluctuating rainfall. Concerning the fishing activity, the men go to cast the net and wait for several days with the hope to catch fish whereas the women go to buy the fish for either processing or selling to their customers freshly from the sea. The mining sites within the study area included the Saltpond and Cape Coast. Whereas mineral resources such as Lithium and Spodumene are mined at Saltpond, sand and stone are mined at Cape Coast.

The region is highly recognized as a tourism hub with many visitor attractions and for being where many of the country's top higher education institutions are situated. According to a report by the Ghana Statistical Service and Population Census (2021), the total population of the region is 2.2 million people, with farming, fishing, and tourism making up the majority of its economic activities. For the promotion of tourism, there are no deliberate attempts or advertisements of the visitor attractions. The region's development and promotion of tourism was why the Central Region Development Commission (CEDECOM) was established. It was a well-thought-out strategy for the growth of the Central Region and its inhabitants. Development of the tourism industry was chosen as the approach with the highest chance of success after the analysis of the region was conducted. In addition to a few protected UNESCO World Heritage Sites (the castles at Elmina and Cape Coast), Fosu lagoon, Forts, white-sand beaches, Assin Manso, other attractions, and special events (Fetu Afahye, Aboakyire Festival, PANAFEST, Emancipation Day Celebration), the region is also well-known for Kakum National Park, which is used as a tourism resource for destination promotion.

The region as a tourism hub is marketed through the management of these attractions. Some of the tourism activities undertaken at these attractions by the visitors include sunbathing at the beaches, learning or listening to the slave histories at the forts and castles, canopy walkway at Kakum National Park, crocodile and bird watching, and sightseeing.

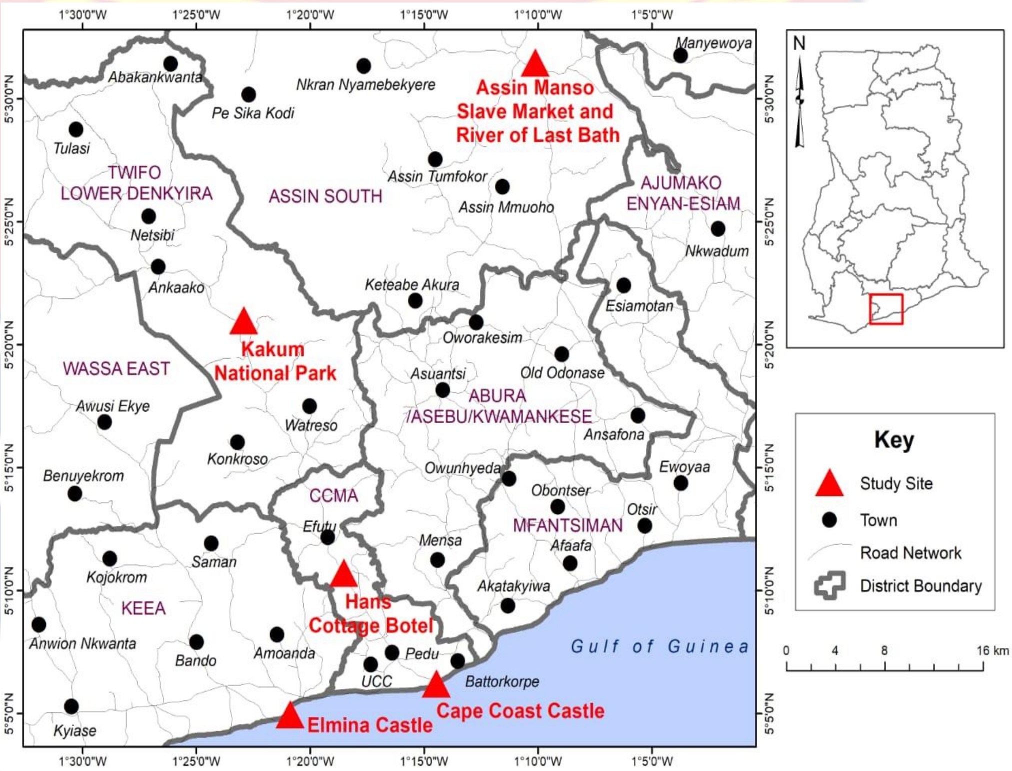


Figure 3: Map of Central Region showing Study Sites
Source: Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast (2022)

Due to its outstanding visitor attractions and destinations, the study region has particularly acquired a great international reputation in the tourism sector. Many visitors from around the world travel to the area for getaways and vacations as a result of these attractions. Additionally, it provides a chance for those who have never been to the area to come to see for themselves other noteworthy occasions, such as the festivals observed by the locals. There are more than twenty (20) visitor attractions in the area, according to the GTA

Central Regional branch. Only seven (7) of these attractions are actively functional even though others are recovering. They are made up of one private attraction (Hans Cottage) and six significant public attractions (Kakum National Park, International Stingless Bee Centre, Assin Manso Slave Market and River of Last Bath, Cape Coast Castle, Elmina Castle, and Beaches).

Kakum National Park, one of the major and most popular tourist destinations visited by visitors in Ghana, had an estimated 126,190 local and foreign tourists in 2018, according to a study by the Ghana News Agency (GNA) and Statista, while Elmina and Cape Coast Castles had 69,544 and 88,124 visitors, respectively (GTA Report, 2019). The region had an increase in local and foreign visitors to the different attractions even amid the COVID-19 outbreak (GNA, 2021). According to the aforementioned facts, these tourist attractions make the Central Region the best study area because they draw more visitors than any other tourist site in the area does each year.

Research Philosophy

This study adopted the pragmatist philosophical approach. According to Creswell (2003) in the pragmatism paradigm, knowledge is received or obtained through exploitation, conditions, and results rather than prior circumstances. The pragmatist paradigm is generally linked to mixed research as a principal philosophy embraced by several mixed methods scholars (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a), because it emphasizes practicality, flexibility, and the integration of diverse perspective. It acknowledges that both quantitative and qualitative methods have unique strengths, and the combination can provide a more comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena (Morgan, 2013). Pragmatism philosophy also encourages researchers to choose methods based on their usefulness in addressing specific research questions, fostering a pragmatic and adaptive approach that enhances the overall rigor and applicability of the study. Pragmatism philosophy was deemed suitable for this study because it prevented the researcher from being caught up in philosophical arguments over which research philosophy is the best approach given that this study used both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The mixed-method research is a form of research methodology used for conducting research that consists of collecting, analyzing, and incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. According to Dredge et al. (2018), quantitative data deliver a broad understanding of the topic whereas qualitative data offer a comprehensive understanding. The mixed-method approach was chosen because using a single method to study the perceived fairness of attraction user fees could limit the completeness and accuracy of the findings. This method permitted the researcher to employ any of the research methods of data collection available in sort of being attached to one particular method associated with either a qualitative or quantitative research approach. According to Trochim (2006), all qualitative data may be characterized or worked with numerically, but all quantitative data are based on qualitative judgement. For this reason, the mixed-method approach was chosen for this study.

Study Design

The study used a concurrent mixed method (cross-sectional) design. In a mixed method research, both quantitative and qualitative data are typically gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in a single study or a series of studies that look into the same underlying phenomenon (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). The target population (visitors) for this study are transient by nature, making the usage of this design ideal for gathering a single piece of data from them. As a result, the study used a sample survey to get information on how fair or unfair they thought the pricing of the attraction user fees was from both visitors returning from a guided tour as well as attraction managers who were stationed at the attraction therein. The study aimed to explore how visitors across the population perceived the fairness of attraction user fees. Therefore, the design was deemed appropriate for the study.

Target population

The target population for the study were the managers and visitors (Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian) who were above 18 years of age at the selected attractions within the region. The choice of managers was made based on their position as officers in charge of the visitor attractions and their expertise in the area in which the researcher was interested. The managers were also selected because, given their involvement in setting rates for the various activities offered at the attractions, the pricing issue could not be examined without taking them into account. Hence, the requirement to include them in the study. Visitors 18 years and above were included in the target population because in

Ghana a person 18 years and above is considered an adult and mature according to Ghana Statistical Service (2010).

Data Sources

The main sources of data for this study were questionnaires and In-Depth Interviews. The use of primary sources was suitable for collecting first-hand information from the target respondents. Additional information was sourced from the local tourism board in the form of projects. Other relevant and extant information was obtained from managers, reports, articles online, and the Ghana Tourism Authority Central Branch (GTA Report, 2021).

Sample Size Determination

Fisher, Laing, Stoeckel, and Townsend (1998)'s formular was used in determining the sample size for the study. The fact that the sample size of the target population under the analysis is unclear, as well as, the lack of a valid sample frame, necessitated the use of this technique or formular.

Therefore, as suggested by Fisher et al., (1998) to calculate the sample size (n) for the study, we used the formular;

$n = Z^2pq/d^2$

where:

n = desired sample size

Z = confidence level set at 95% (standard value = 1.96)

p = proportion of the target population that has similar characteristics

q = 1 – p

d = the margin of error set at 5% (standard value = 0.05)

The desired sample size calculated is:

$n = (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)/ 0.05^2$

$n = 384$

To cater for non-response, 10% of the sample size was calculated and added which is equivalent to 38, giving a total survey sample size of 422. This sample size for the study was regarded as reasonable and would aid in producing valid results provided that the sample size was sufficient for the estimate methodologies to be employed for data analyses. Thus, a sample size of 100 to 150 respondents is permitted to be sufficient for a reliable inference using parametric techniques (Brida & Scuderi, 2013; Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 2013). Based on this, it suggests that at least 384 visitors to attractions in the Central Region should be involved in the survey.

On the other hand, five (5) managers were selected for the qualitative study. These managers were members of the management team in charge of the various attractions in the region who were directly involved in running the affairs of the attractions and hence were in the position to give relevant information regarding the issues of pricing.

Sampling Procedure

The study used both purposive and convenience sampling techniques to select the respondents for the study. Purposive sampling, according to Arikunto (2010: 183), is the method of choosing a sample by taking a subject based on a specific objective rather than the level or region. The purposive sampling method was deemed appropriate because the sampling characteristics matched certain important concepts the researcher was seeking.

Again, this sampling allowed the researcher to select a sample based on the requirements of the study. In the context of this study, the attraction managers were selected because they had the characteristics the researcher was interested in. The five (5) major visitor attractions from which the managers were interviewed included Elmina Castle, Cape Coast Castle, Kakum National Park, Hans Cottage, and Assin Manso Slave Market/River of Last Bath. For instance, the purposive sampling technique was used to sample managers who had knowledge and information about the pricing of activities` and/or services at the visitor attractions.

The convenience sampling method was used to sample visitors at the attractions for the study. In this non-probability sampling methodology, units are chosen for the sample because they are the most accessible to the researcher. Since these visitor attractions received varying quantities of visitors, sub-samples were allocated based on the average number of visitors to these attractions. A number from the first four (4) potential respondents was picked at random using convenience sampling due to the unavailability of a sample frame. Respondents were given the questionnaire to complete at the researcher's convenience. In situations where three visitors in a group were encountered, only one respondent was given the questionnaire to answer, and two visitors were chosen from groups of four or more. The purpose of this was not to collect data from more than two visitors from any group of visitors regardless of the group size. This was carried out up until the target sample size was reached for every study site that was selected. This prevented the data being collected not to be skewed to one end of the population (Leiner, 2014). Since there was no sampling frame for the study, the employment of the convenience sampling technique was deemed appropriate (Taylor, 2005; Dornyei, 2007; Morse & Niehaus, 2009; Leiner, 2014).

Instruments for Data Collection

Two research instruments were used in this study to gather the data. These were a semi-structured interview guide and a structured questionnaire. Twumasi (2001) asserts that questionnaires are a very valuable and efficient method for gathering data in social research. The decision to use a questionnaire was also motivated by the fact that it provides greater room for the respondents' privacy and anonymity (Twumasi, 2001). Questionnaires are most effective for gathering quantitative data and is simpler to implement, hence its adoption was crucial (Cresswell, 2010). They are collections of structured questions that enable researchers to collect data from study participants (Veal, 2006).

The questionnaire for the study was divided into five (5) main sections and consisted of both open and closed-ended questions. Regarding the close-ended questions, the visitors were provided with alternatives to choose from while the open-ended questions were follow-up questions which allowed more room for the respondents to give their responses to the questions asked.

The first section of the questionnaire looked at the respondents' perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees. A 5-point Likert scale containing 24 items was used to measure visitors' perceived fairness of user fees at the visitor attractions. A Likert scale is a grading scale used to measure opinions, attitudes, or behaviours which was employed in this study to measure visitors' perceptions. The scale consisted of five parts for measuring these dimensions beginning with strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. These options were provided for the visitors to choose from that which best corresponded with how they felt about the statements. These dimensions included attraction and services, price information, economic value, and price fairness were adapted from different authors (such as; Chung et al., 2011; Chung & Petrick, 2015; Prebensen & Xie, 2017) and measured. Some modifications were made to make it suitable for the study.

The second section addressed from the points of the visitors, factors that influence visitors' perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees. Also, a 5-point Likert scale with 14 items was used to measure the variables under the various dimensions. These dimensions were adapted from these authors (Chung et al., 2011; Nassar, Mostafa, & Reisinger, 2015; Prebensen & Xie, 2017). The third section dealt with the issues of the respondents' post-purchase intentions and the dimensions for this objective were adapted from (Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Guo, Sun, Schuckert, & Law, 2016).

The fourth section looked at the respondents' background and travel characteristics. The background and travel characteristics are important because they have been observed to have influenced the visitors' perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees. It also set out the context within which the issues about pricing were discussed. These characteristics included in the instrument were sex, age, educational background, marital status, employment status, nationality, continent of origin, average monthly income level, the purpose of visit, travel party, the time of visit, and religious affiliation.

The instrument used for the qualitative data collection was a semi-structured In-depth interview guide (IDI). According to Kumar (2005), IDI is a face-to-face instrument for data collection. The IDI guide was designed to have questions that probed further into issues of how managers set prices for the activities at the visitor attractions.

Recruitment of Field Assistants and Pre-testing

There were six (6) field assistants recruited for the study. Four of them were postgraduate students and the others were undergraduate students. They were taken through a one-day training for the fieldwork so they could be familiar with the instruments for the study. During the training session, the field assistants were exposed to the purpose of the study, the administration of the instrument, and the approach to use in collecting data for the study. The field assistants selected for the study have had experience in collecting data from visitor attractions.

The researcher with the help of one field assistant conducted a pilot study on the **10th of March 2023** at the National Museum of Ghana in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The core aim of the pre-test was to gain insight into the feasibility of administering the research instrument, the clarity of questions, the validity of the instrument and any other challenges that may arise during the fieldwork. After the pre-test, there was a need to reword and reduce the number of questions. In all, thirteen (13) respondents took part in the pre-test. The time for administering the survey was estimated. The responses from the respondents were analysed to ensure the instrument was valid and reliable for the study. The necessary corrections were effected before the actual fieldwork was carried out.

Fieldwork and Related Challenges

A preliminary survey was conducted in February 2022 to make enquiries about the attractions actively operating in the Central region. In June 2022, introductory letters obtained from the department were sent to the various managers of the visitor attractions to seek permission from them to conduct the study at the attraction sites. The managers were succinctly briefed on the purpose of the study, the likely questions that would be posed to the target group, and the methods the researcher would employ to collect the data for the study.

The actual fieldwork for the study lasted for three (3) months (17th March – 30th May 2023). The researcher together with the field assistants went to the various selected attractions and administered the questionnaires to the respondents. While the field assistants helped with the administering of the questionnaires, the researcher conducted all IDI and observations. Before the administration of the questionnaire and the interview, verbal consent was sought from the respondents while a letter was given to the managers before the exercise took place.

One of the challenges encountered was the fact that the researcher was unable to obtain permission from one of the managers of the visitor attraction to collect data for the study. This occurred after several attempts were made to be granted permission to go for data at the visitor attraction. Other managers had to delay the researcher for almost one month before he was called to come and proceed with the data collection.

Again, failure on the part of managers to release the records of visitors received was a challenge which led the researcher to use Fisher's formular for the sample size determination. The researcher tried but the manager said there was no data available. So, the researcher had to use the self-apportionment strategy to collect data from the visitor attraction sites in the region. This led to the partial completion of some questionnaires.

Some respondents also clearly stated that the questions were bulky such that items on the questionnaire were just too many. Others also said categorically that they were releasing stress and could not help answer the questions. The language was also a barrier to some visitors during the data collection. Lastly, some Ghanaians leading the Whites (international visitors) to the various attractions denied the researcher the chance to engage them.

Data Processing and Analysis

A total of 384 questionnaires were administered at the various visitor attractions. The instrument used for the data collection was edited and coded. Following the editing, 301 instruments were determined to be useful for the analysis, while 83 were discarded. The response rate was 78%. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

Inferential statistical measures such as Factor analysis, which is a reduction technique was employed to order the data set. This was then rotated using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) since all the measurement items were individually drawn from different sources in the literature and could not be used as it were. Hence the need to run a factorial analysis for the data set. The t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to compare the mean responses of respondents to questions about the perceived fairness of user fees at visitor attractions in the region by their background characteristics to see whether there were variations. Additionally, cross-tabulation and descriptive statistics were also employed for the simple summarization of the sample in the study.

Concerning the IDIs, recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. Key issues which emerged from the transcription were grouped under common themes and issues identified by the researcher. The researcher also looked for patterns, trends, and contradictions between the themes formed. Interpretation of the data were done in this light and within the context of the written reflections of the researcher. A narrative approach was adopted in the presentation of the results. Again, direct quotations from the transcripts which were relevant to the findings were used to support the findings. Lastly, the usefulness of these formats is that they are easy to read and comprehend.

Ethical Issues

In order not to infringe on the rights and privacy of any respondents or managers at the attractions, these ethical issues were followed. With the help of a letter, permission was sought from the managers at the visitor attractions to undertake the study. The managers were reliably informed about the importance and implications of the study.

The next ethical element considered was informed consent. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the study as well as their expected role in the successful completion of the study. The researcher also sought verbal consent from the respondents before they engaged in the study.

Respondents who wished to withdraw from participating in the study were permitted to do so.

Anonymity was another ethical issue considered in the study. The identity of the respondents was protected. To achieve this, the researcher omitted the real names and the specific location information from the research report. Codes and bio-data were rather used to label the responses for the sake of analysis. On the issue of confidentiality, all respondents were given assurance that all information provided in response to questions posed during the study would be strictly used for its intended purposes. The information obtained was to be kept and will not be handed over to any third party under any condition.

Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the methodologies employed in the study. Specifically, the issues discussed were the choice and justification of the study area. The research philosophy (pragmatism paradigm) and study design (cross-sectional study design), the target population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments, and fieldwork and their related challenges were also discussed. The next chapter presents the results and discussions of the analysed data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the results of the study. It first starts by commenting on the profile of visitors to attractions in the Central region. It further explores the determinants of pricing policies at visitor attractions in the region. The chapter also examines visitors' perceptions of user fees at the visitor attractions, the factors that influence visitors' perception of user fees at the visitor attractions as well as their post-purchase intentions.

Profile of Respondents

Age, sex, level of education, marital status, religious affiliation, travel characteristics, and place of origin were the socio-economic and demographic characteristics focused on in describing the profile of the respondents. These characteristics have been noted in similar studies to have influenced visitors' perception and attitude towards attraction pricing (e.g. McCarville, Reiling & White, 1996; Chung et al., 2011).

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	154	51.2
Female	147	48.8
Age		
Below 20	9	3.0
20-29	148	49.2
30-39	84	27.9
Above 40	60	19.9
Highest Education		
JHS/Middle	4	1.3
SHS/Voc./Tech	25	8.3
First degree	133	44.2
Graduate/Postgraduate	139	46.2
Marital status		
Single	196	65.1
Married	105	34.9
Religious Affiliation		
Christian	239	79.4
Muslim	20	6.6
Others	42	14.0
Employment status		
Employed	187	62.1
Unemployed	79	26.2
Self-employed	32	10.6
Retired	3	1.0
Nationality		
Ghanaian	193	64.1
Non-Ghanaian	108	35.9
Continent		
Africa	211	70.1
Europe	50	16.6
North America	37	12.3
Australia	2	0.7
Asia	1	0.3
Purpose of visit		
Leisure	181	60.1
Education/research	98	32.6
Volunteering	16	5.3
Others	6	2.0
Travel party		
Individual Traveler	142	47.2
Group Traveler	159	52.8
Visitor type		
First-time Visitor	195	64.8
Repeat Visitor	106	35.2
Income Status		
Less than GHC 500	67	22.3
GHC 500 - GHC 1000	34	11.3
GHC 1001 - GHC 1500	45	15.0
Above GHC 2000	155	51.5

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah (2022).

In terms of age distribution, the majority of the visitors (49.2%) were between the ages of 20-29 years. The next age group was between 30-39 years (27.9%). Respondents who were above 40 years constituted 19.9% of the sample whereas those below age 20 represented 3% of the entire sample as shown in Table 1. The age group below 20 years recorded the least number of respondents at all the selected attractions in the Central Region. Plausibly, visitors to the attraction sites in the Central region are mostly the youth as shown in the results.

The educational attainment levels of respondents have been noted to influence their perceptions about price fairness at visitor attractions (Hidayah et al., 2009). From the sample drawn for the study, it emerged that the educational attainment levels of visitors were generally high. For instance, 46.2% of the respondents had attained post-graduate degrees, those who had first degree were 44.2%, and the remaining had SHS qualification (8.3%) and JHS (1.3%) respectively. This implies that every respondent who participated in the study had attained formal education. Further, evidence from the study suggests that 65.1% of the respondents were never married as opposed to those who were married (34.9%). Perhaps those who were not married had more time participating in activities as compared to the married. Cooper et al. (2008) also claim that young adults have much time to explore visitor attractions regardless of the price of the activities while the arrival of children, and married couples, indicates another responsibility that may constrain and dampen their travel propensity even though they might have the discretionary income.

The predominant religion ascribed to by the majority of the respondents was Christianity (79.4%), followed by those who belong to others (14.0%), and Islam (6.6%) as indicated in Table 1. Ghana is largely a Christian-dominated country, and it was not surprising that most of the respondents who visited the attraction sites professed to be Christians. In terms of employment status, 62.1% of the respondents were employed followed by 26.2% of those who were unemployed. About 10.6% were self-employed whereas 1.0% of the respondents were retirees as shown in Table 1.

Also, the survey further revealed that Ghanaian visitors were predominant in the sample (64.1%) while their non-Ghanaian counterparts were 35.9%. The result of the study is consistent with Hidayah et al., (2009)'s observation that domestic visitors were the main contributors to tourism in the Central region with a little over 60%, though the pattern of visitors has gradually changed. The study also identified the continents from which the visitors came to the various attraction sites. Continents captured in the study included; Africa, Europe, North America, Australia, and Asia. As indicated in Table 1, it emerged that the African visitors were the majority (70.1%) to have visited the selected attraction sites more than visitors from other continents. This is followed by 16.6% of the sample which was represented by visitors from the European region, while 12.3% came from North America. Approximately, 0.7% had come from Australia and Asians were the minority (0.3%) to have been to the attractions.

Regarding travel characteristics of respondents, about 60.1% of the visitors were individuals who travelled for leisure purposes to break away from everyday life (Wyles et al. 2016). Those who visited for education or research were 32.6%, followed by 5.3% for volunteering, and 2.0% of the visitors were others who travelled for unknown reasons (Table 1). The results from Table 1 also show that more visitors travelled in groups (52.8%) compared to visitors who travelled alone (47.2%). Furthermore, the study revealed that visitors who travelled to the selected attractions for the first time were 64.8% and repeat visitors were 35.2%. The survey also revealed the monthly income statuses of the respondents with the majority of the respondents falling above GHC 2,000 (51.5%). Respondents below GHC 500 were 22.3%. About 15.0% of the respondents fell within the income range of GHC 1,001 - GHC 1,500, whereas the least of the population fell within GHC 500 - GHC 1000, indicating 11.3%.

Determinants of Pricing Policies of Visitor Attractions in the Central Region of Ghana

This section seeks to explore the factors that influence the determination of user fees at visitor attractions in the Central Region of Ghana. Pricing techniques are essential elements of the day-to-day operation of tourism organisations because price is regarded as the most effective variable that attraction managers can use to encourage or discourage demand for services and products (Aziz et al., 2011; Gazopoulou, 2012). Setting prices for activities can be challenging if care is not taken and can have implications for visitor patronage.

Eight broad pricing policies (factors that influenced the pricing of visitor attractions) emerged when managers of the various visitor attractions were asked to state reasons why they priced the activities the way they did. On the whole, the main determinants were market segmentation, competition, activity-based pricing, economic trends, cost of operation, seasons, feedback and stakeholder consultation.

Market Segmentation

One of the determinants for pricing activities is market segmentation. Participants reported that visitors were divided into groups depending on their age (young or old), nationality, and interest in group tours. For instance, younger people (that is 17 years and below pay Ghs 7.00 for watching crocodiles and birds less than adults Ghs 15.00 (above 18 years). Additionally, in-house guests pay less (Ghs 30.00) for executive swimming pool than walk-in guests (Ghs 15.00) in places where there are accommodation facilities. As reiterated by one of the managers:

> *Depending on the number of people they bring…so with that too it depends on where they are coming from. For people like a native of this community or close to this community we hardly charge them high* (D2, a 31-year-old manager).

Because of the nature of the tourism offering at the attraction's sites, participants decided to peg the price according to the various visitor needs and types of visitors who visited them. The interviewees revealed that prices and/or user fees were divided into multiple categories ranging from children to adults and also nationality. Participants recounted during the interview that they set the prices so that everyone would be able to afford them. Despite the age differences, they did not want to deny any visitor the opportunity to visit the attraction. Besides, visitors who came here had different needs so there was no need to give all of them a fixed price. For example, activity such as video shooting does not have a fixed price so they use their discretion in fixing the rates for it. This might affect them and even their post-purchase intentions as age was an influencing factor (Masiero & Nicolau, 2012). A participant had this to say:

> *We look at the various ages of the visitors we receive. We sometimes observe or ask them about their age, whether they are students, alone or in groups so that we can know what to charge them. No visitor would want to be charged higher so we consider these basic details before asking them to pay. Especially, just as children pay different rates, likewise same as the adults* (A1, a 31-year-old Manager)

Competition

The second factor that influenced the pricing of activities was competition (existing rates). One of the participants remarked that they charged prices based on what their competitors were charging. In other words, they charged based on existing prices (Gu & Ryan, 2009). They did not want to overcharge their activities, thereby leaving their visitors out of choice so they fixed prices their visitors could afford. This was emphasized by a participant who said:

> *Again, we consider our competitors, and other people…these same activities we have here, are all over the country. We also don't increase it too much to make the zone attractive.* (E2, a 40-year-old Manager)

This was buttressed by another manager who indicated that:

> *Losing one customer is like losing a thousand customers so we prefer to charge prices they can pay* (B2, 55-year-old Manager)

At the visitor attractions, it was realised that participants did not want to lose any visitor, so they were doing everything plausible to make sure they kept patronizing their activities while maintaining and keeping the attractions in good standing so that it always appeals to people. Participants also noted that competitive pricing is about aligning your prices with your competitors' charges. Doing so would help keep visitor attractions competitive in the tourism market and ensure that visitors are paying fairly for the activities they engage in there.

Activity-based pricing

It came up from the interview that another factor considered by the participants was activity-based pricing. The study found that most of the activities were priced separately. Besides, these are interesting activities our visitors would want to partake in. One participant said:

> *The public pool is Ghs 15.00 per head and Ghs 10.00 per child. When you come to the executive pool, it is Ghs 30.00 per adult and children/kids are Ghs 15.00. If you are not an in-house guest and you want to use the executive pool, you pay Ghs 30.00. For children from age 6 to JHS level, we call them kids and are charged Ghs 15.00. For crocodile watching, it is also Ghs 15.00 per head and Ghs 7.00 per child* (B2, a 55-year-old Manager)

Another participant remarked that:

> *What influences the prices are the kinds of activities we engage in and this is a high-risk activity in terms of the canopy walkway which is the main attraction* (E2, a 40-year-old Manager)

Therefore, a visitor who performed more activities would eventually pay more. For example, a theme park might charge different prices for different rides as in the case of this study based on the cost of operating and maintaining these attractions.

Economic trends

The pricing for tours and other site-related activities were based on economic trends such as inflationary rates, exchange rates, and supply and demand of tourism activities. A participant pointed out that when prices go up, they also have to increase their price by a small margin because everything eventually went up. Ultimately, pricing trends in tourism activities are influenced by several complex factors that can vary depending on the destination and the specific activity. A participant recollected this during the interview:

> *We would not increase our rate if things were normalized so inflation…current inflationary rate or price hike is a huge influence.* (E3, a 40-year-old Manager)

Participants noted that an increase in prices affected every activity at the attractions, therefore, if they were in normal times, they would not have increased their prices because a price increment could discourage some visitors from visiting the attraction. According to Fyall and Garrod (1998), user fees are used as a device for achieving visitor demand or as a way to raise money for the maintenance and preservation of the visitor attraction.

Cost of operation

The cost of operating a visitor attraction can vary depending on several factors such as the size of the attraction, the number of staff required, and the cost of maintaining the attraction. In this study, participants revealed that the cost inputs were also a major reason why management charged certain prices for the activities. The cost inputs affected the prices largely for activities at the attractions. In the interview conducted a participant made this affirmation:

> *A swimming pool requires a lot of chemicals, we employ labour, maintenance, we also use electricity as well…has it not been that we have this chunk of*

> *water, we are to use than Ghana water* (B3, a 55-year-old manager).

Another manager also reported that:

> *For example, boat riding requires a lot of fuel, we employ labour, and we also use electricity…has it not been that we have this chunk of water we are to use than Ghana water, we would have been paying more* (B3, a 55-year-old Manager).

These issues raised by participants about the cost of operation and maintenance of the attractions are typical of Attractions in the Central region. These factors have been cited in the literature to have accounted for the pricing of activities in the tourism industry (see example, Prideaux, 2002; Richard & Wilkes, 2009).

Seasons

The public attraction managers revealed that even though they were not involved in the determination of the prices for main activities at the attractions, there were other factors they looked at when considering pricing. These events include public holiday parties and picnics, traditional seasons like Fetu Afahye, and the flying of drones for video documentaries, photo shoots, and facilities rented out for private engagements. This point was further elucidated by public attraction managers who stressed that:

> *So, we look at economic factors, public holidays, traditional seasons like Fetu Afahye, and flying of drones for video documentaries, photo shoots, and*

> *facilities rented out. Recently we had a good documentary on TV3 and you know Afahye is a special occasion in Cape Coast here. So, these other occasions and celebrations also add up to inform our pricing strategy"* (B6, a 55-year-old Manager).

A few of them stated that these were the only avenues for them to contribute to pricing decisions as managers and staff. These activities are irregular since they do not occur often. Again, the study also revealed that their inability to participate in the determination of regular pricing for activities caused a lot of challenges for them when visitors came around. These seasonal and holiday demands usually led to fluctuation periods which required attraction managers to fix reasonable prices for activities within the short run by considering the psychological aspects of visitors and the quality of the attractions (Becken & Simmons 2002; Gunn, 2004; Gu & Ryan, 2009).

As stated by Kyurova (2013), pricing policy helps attraction managers obtain a competitive edge over their competitors in the tourism markets. This result affirms the observation by Guo et al. (2013) that tourism organizations should accept and implement market segmentation as the best pricing policy which is one of the numerous factors accounting for pricing policies of tourism-related activities. Guo et al. (2013) further stated that the best way to measure how the target segments will perceive the price changes at visitor attractions is by factoring in all plausible reference points.

Feedback

Another key issue that emerged from the interview was feedback. Feedback from visitors on user fees, products or services is of great importance to the managers of the visitor attractions. This is because any form of feedback from visitors could aid attraction site managers in identifying the main issues regarding visitor attraction user fee satisfaction (Andriotis et al., 2008; Egresi & Polat, 2016).

The participant noted that feedback from the visitors and patrons helped shape the determination of the prices for tours and other related activities at the attraction.

This is aptly captured in the quote below:

> *Sometimes the strategy we use here is segmentation. We also look at the number of people and the various segments within the group (children, adolescents, adults, foreigners) coming for the tour. That's not all, we also get feedback from our staff about what the visitors are saying regarding our fees for tours* (A3, a 51-year-old Manager)

Drawing from the interviews conducted, participants at the selected sites noted that feedback from visitors could not be undermined. As a manager, you cannot say you will not take visitors' concerns seriously as stated by Participant B5. By confirming that every site visitor can afford their services, these comments assist the participants in modifying the user fees for activities. There becomes a problem when those who value a visit are unable to afford to do so (Reiling, Cheng & Trott, 1992; More &

Stevens, 2000). Literature suggests that persons with lower incomes are more price-sensitive than those with higher incomes (Reiling, Cheng & Trott, 1992; More & Stevens, 2000). In the same light, the feedback will help managers to know what exactly visitors want. Therefore, feedback is essential, especially when it is raised by visitors concerning how they feel about the rates charged at the attractions.

Stakeholder consultation

The opinions of stakeholders are particularly important in decision-making, especially when it involves a sensitive issue like user fees at visitor attractions. This is because visitors are extremely price sensitive, making it crucial for managers to make better decisions on price levels and pricing tactics. (Barros, 2017; Kim et al. 2009). Visitors respect the distinctiveness or features of the attractions, which helps them decide whether they are willing to pay an acceptable price. The more reason why the stakeholders need to be consulted.

The private attraction managers indicated that they were responsible for regulating the prices of activities and services at the site. They did this in consultation with their Board before the prices were published for visitors to patronize. Likewise, Sharifi-Tehrani, Verbi, and Chung (2013) stated that the utilization of two general functions is what drives managers' decision-making regarding prices. Price increases first increase income for the attraction's management. Second, price ratios are determined by the ability and willingness of the user to pay. Sometimes it happened that the prices were fixed for them. Another also stated that prices were regulated by the management at the site in consultation with the traditional authority. An interviewee pointed out this:

> *Yes, the person responsible for the regulation of the price here is the management. Currently, because the attraction is managed by two institutions the Wildlife Division and Forestry Commission and Ghana Heritage Conservation Trust, both management, sit together and agree on prices, thereafter, we send it to Parliament for approval and we move on with that…* (E4, a 40-year-old Manager)

Contrarily, among the selected visitor attractions, public attraction managers were not involved in making pricing decisions. One manager noted that:

> *For instance, in this attraction, we are supposed to make arrangements with management in Accra to determine the price but, it is the other way round. Sometimes, even the one (price) that just came, we were here and they brought the prices and said to charge it, so it is a top-down approach but not a bottom-up approach because if they had consulted us, we would have made some inputs that would be very important. Simply, we are not consulted when it comes to pricing; they just brought it and you have to charge and that is it* (A4, a 49-year-old Manager)

Studies have also revealed that consumers' needs are significantly impacted by pricing (Stevens, More, & Allen, 1989; Richer & Christensen, 1999). Visitors would respond as a result of a little increase in user fees. On the other hand, the demand for outdoor recreation is not significantly affected by the introduction of moderate taxes or slight increases in user fees (Eagles et al., 2002; Krannich et al., 1999; Schroeder & Louviere, 1999). That is why engaging the right people in making pricing decisions for activities to arrive at a consensus is key.

The concerns raised by participants about the pricing policies and/or strategies contributed highly to the way the activities were being priced which are typical of the selected visitor attractions in the Central Region. However, similar findings are replete in the tourism literature (e.g. Ropero, 2011; Narangajavana, Garrigos-Simon, García, & Forgas-Coll, 2014: Raya, 2011). These pricing policies have been cited as ways of determining the values of tourism activities in the tourism industry (Raya, 2011; Ropero, 2011).

These pricing policies mentioned by the participants influenced how the prices for the activities at the visitor attractions in the region were set, despite its linkage with the main marketing mix as cited in the tourism literature (e.g. cost-based pricing) (Camilleri, & Camilleri, 2018; Raya, 2011). Furthermore, the conceptual framework of the study explained the relationships that existed between the factors (e.g. management objectives, attraction types and activities, etc.) which had influenced which type of pricing strategies or policies to employ.

In sum, participants' conceptualisation of pricing policy, strategy and/or techniques for determining the price value of activities is consistent with the existing literature (Ropero, 2011; Camilleri, & Camilleri, 2018).

Visitors Assessment of Activities Engaged in at Visitor Attractions in the Central Region

This section of the study seeks to look at the activities visitors engaged in. The respondents' top reason for travelling was to seek new experiences. It was not surprising that majority of the respondents mentioned their participation in a variety of activities during the trip (Figure 4). These activities performed by the visitors were categorized based on the types of attractions they visited as shown in Figure 4.

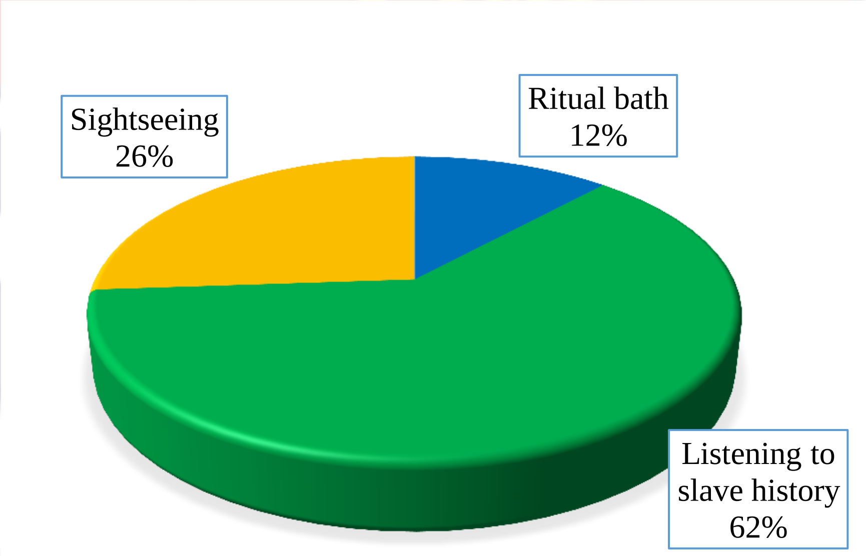
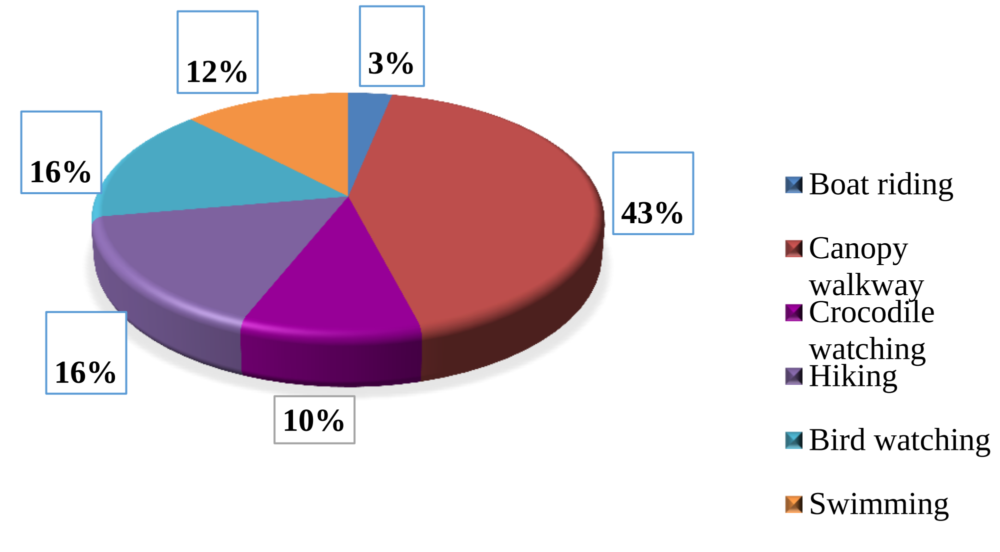


Figure 4: Activities Engaged in at the Heritage Attraction
Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah (2022).

Concerning the activities undertaken by visitors at the heritage attractions, it emerged that 62% of the respondents were mostly interested in visiting the slave sites/listening to History. Evidence from Figure 4 shows that other activities visitors engaged in at the heritage attractions included sightseeing (26%), as well as undertaking a ritual bath (12%). There are several historical or heritage sites in Ghana which explain this pattern of the results.

On the other hand, there are several natural attractions in the country. However, in the Central region of Ghana, the only nature-based attractions considered in this study were the Kakum National Park and Hans Cottage



Botel.

Figure 5: Activities Engaged in the Nature-based Attractions
Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022).

Regarding these attractions, the most activity visitors engaged in was the canopy walkway (43%) as indicated in Figure 5. In addition, 16% of the visitors engaged in hiking at the attraction followed by bird watching (16%), swimming (12%), crocodile watching (10%), and boat riding (3%). This may be because visitors travel to the attractions to experience the activities and break away from everyday life. Gunn (2020) purports that, the essence of visitors embarking on trips to the attractions is to partake in activities at the attractions.

A cross-tabulation analysis was performed to examine the proportion of activities visitors engaged in at heritage and nature-based attractions. The researcher, however, wanted to find out respondents' reactions towards the visitor attraction user fees and whether the rates charged for activities were fair or unfair.

Again, it is prudent to know from the visitors' perspectives whether they agree/disagree with the prices by taking into consideration the following components such as; experiences, activities overpriced, products being priced as a single unit, trip sponsored, and overall, how they rated the user fees (Figure 6).

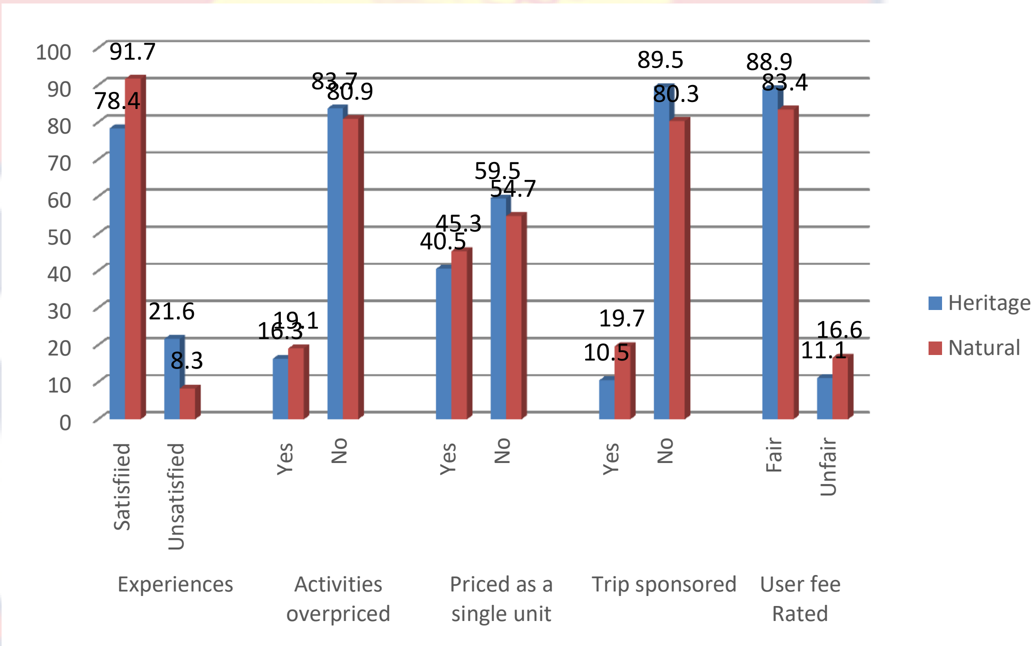


Figure 6: Respondents' Reactions toward the Visitor Attraction User Fees
Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022).

From the study, visitors were quizzed to answer certain questions concerning the user fees charged. The proportion (91.7%) of nature-based attraction visitors who were satisfied with their experience was more as opposed to that of the heritage attraction visitors (78.4%). Visitors who visited the Central Region explained that they enjoyed every experience as they travelled to the attractions to break away from everyday life (Wyles et al. 2016).

Visitors were also asked to rate whether the activities they performed at the attractions were overpriced or not. A lower percentage (16.3%) of the heritage attraction visitors were of the view that activities were overpriced same as those who visited the nature-based attraction (19.1%) as displayed in Figure 6. Thus, most of the visitors were of the view that the activities they performed at these attractions were priced well.

It was also revealed from Figure 6 that, about 40.5% of the respondents who visited the heritage attractions claimed the activities at the attractions should be priced as a single unit (bundled price) as well as nature-based attraction visitors (45.3%) who had the same view. This evidence may show that the visitors preferred activities at the destination to be priced as a single unit (bundled price) rather than separate pricing since it comes with some reduction. This finding confirms Andreas et al.'s (1999) observation that people prefer to pay a bundled price for the products they purchase because they come with some level of discount as compared to paying for the products separately.

From Figure 6, the result indicates that nearly 20% of the visitors to the nature-based attractions explained that their trips were sponsored. For heritage attraction visitors (10.5%), their views were not different. Considering the findings of the study, a lower percentage of visitors from both attractions said their trips were paid for. This pattern of the results could also be that the visitors were on educational trips or an assignment for their organisations as indicated as some of the reasons why they came to these attractions. Overall, when the visitors were asked to rate the user fees charged at the attractions, a greater proportion (88.9%) of respondents from heritage attractions and 83.4% of visitors to nature-based attractions agreed that the user charge was fair

(Figure 6). Respectively, only 16.6% and 11.1% of visitors from nature-based and heritage attractions complained the user fee being expensive and that they never had value for their money. In this case, reasonable pricing translates to fair user costs. Either at heritage or nature-based attractions, the respondents indicated that the rates for activities were fair. This finding is in line with the conclusion by Hans et al. (1996) that fair fees reflect the respondent's ability to pay for the activities at the attractions.

Visitors' Perceptions of Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees

This section looks at visitors' perceptions of fairness of visitor attraction user fees at the various sites in the Central Region. Accordingly, Likert scale type of statements was used to explore how visitors felt about the user fees charged at the attraction sites. The Likert scale requires that a respondent indicates the level of agreement or disagreement with the statements under each of the dimensions on visitors' perceptions of user fees (Smith et al., 1989). These dimensions were attraction and services, price information, economic value, and price fairness. These perception statements are captured below (Table 2).

Table 2: Visitors' Perception of Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees

Perception Statement	A	N	D
Attraction and services	*59.5*	*17.6*	*22.9*
The attraction has enough activities to be performed here	61.1	14.3	24.6
There have been better-quality services at the destination	54.2	20.3	25.6
There are facilities available here that offer me the needed experiences	70.1	13.3	16.6
There is much information provided about the attraction and services at this attraction	67.4	13.3	19.3
The restroom and resting areas are well-maintained at this attraction	57.8	27.9	14.3
There are enough signages for easy direction and access to the attraction and navigation through the attraction as well	50.8	17.9	30.9
The attraction had enough souvenirs to buy or take home	54.5	16.3	29.2
Price Information	*32.0*	*18.7*	*49.3*
I am well aware of the prices here before I came	36.5	18.6	44.9
I had a fair knowledge of this attraction's price through the advertisement	27.9	21.3	50.8
I had price information on this attraction from family and friends	37.5	15.9	46.5
I was informed about this attraction's price by a travel agent/tour guide	27.9	17.3	54.8
I am aware of the prices of other attractions so I know what to expect at this attraction	33.2	21.6	45.2
Information about attraction prices influenced me to choose this attraction	29.2	17.3	53.5
Economic value	*66.8*	*17.5*	*15.7*
The visitor attraction experience or service is appropriately priced	65.1	17.3	17.6
The price paid for additional services at the attraction is acceptable	60.1	24.3	15.6
The price paid for the experience is reasonable	70.4	14.6	15.0
The experience at this attraction offered value for my money	71.8	13.6	14.6
Price Fairness	*58.7*	*15.4*	*25.9*
I felt comfortable paying the attraction fee charged here	60.1	17.9	21.9
The attraction user fee/price here is agreeable	65.8	13.3	20.9
The price at this attraction is just/justified for what they offer here	60.1	13.0	26.9
Due to the economic situation, I think the price charged here is appropriate to keep the attraction running	49.8	14.6	35.5
The price charged at the attraction is worth the encounter/experience I had here	63.1	13.0	23.9
The price charged is fairly/honestly what I expected	53.2	20.6	26.2

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022). Scale: Agreed= 2.50-3.0, Neutral= 1.50-2.49, and Disagree=1-1.49

The essence of attractions and related services is to enhance visitors' stay at the tourist destination. Attraction and services, therefore, have been identified in the literature to have, for example, specifications to fulfil the demands and desires of visitors at the attraction sites (Rasethuntsa, 2021). Thus, taking into consideration the activities and services, prices offered, value for money and whether or not the prices charged are fair or unfair (Gelbrich, 2011; Ashworth & McShane, 2012; Tarrahi et al., 2016).

From Table 2, the result indicates that 70.1% of the respondents agreed that there were facilities available that offer them the needed experiences. Specifically, 67.4% perceived there was much information provided about the attraction and services, and 61.1% perceived the attraction had enough activities to be performed at the visitor attraction. As a result, the core reason why visitors embark on trips to the tourist destination is to experience these activities with the help of the attractions and services available. About 57.8% of the respondents also perceived the restroom and resting areas were well-maintained, and 54.5% perceived the attraction site had enough souvenirs for visitors to buy. Furthermore, the results also show that there have been quality services rendered at the destination (54.2%), and 50.8% perceived that there were enough signages for easy direction, access, and navigation through the attraction. The attraction and services may be subjected to the issue of price fairness as it is considered a key element when it comes to visitor attractions (Gourville & Moon, 2004).

According to the study, no visitor attraction can enhance visitors' experiences when there are no tourism resources and/or attraction sites and activities. Table 2 shows that visitors consider the attraction and services rendered as the key element that helps to enhance their stay at the attraction enjoyably. The result is consistent with the findings of Radam, Ya'cob, and Samdin (2016) that the competency of services offered to visitors at the attraction enhances their stay at the destination. This finding also supports Billie et al.'s (2002) affirmation that people had superior access to many recreational facilities that met their needs at the tourist attractions. The findings could be explained by the fact that attraction and services as unique features of the visitor attractions, may have shown signs of desired service quality (Sheppard & Cooper, 1995), and a setting that visitors may have expected to be while they embark on trips to the destination (Cheunkamon et al., 2022). Moreso, it is possible to explain the pattern of the outcomes because the Central region of Ghana is endowed with lots of tourism resources and facilities that can help enhance visitors' stay and/or visit to the region.

Concerning the price information, 49.3% of visitors to the attraction sites disagreed with the fact they were informed about the price before visiting the attraction (as stated in Table 2). The result indicates that 54.8% of the respondents were not informed about the attraction's price by a travel agent and/or tour guide, and 53.5% of the subjects disagreed that information about the attraction prices did not influence them to choose the visitor attraction of their choice. Specifically, 50.8% also disagreed with the fact that they had a fair knowledge of the attraction's price through advertisement, and 46.5% also professed they never had their price information from friends and families. Also, 45.2% of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of the prices of other attractions but they knew what to expect at the attraction, and 44.9% said they were not aware of the prices before coming to the attraction. From the above results, it can be deduced that all the respondents who visited the visitor attractions had no price information about the recreational activities offered.

Visitors' perceptions of fair prices were influenced by pricing information and their awareness of price changes' regularity. Along this line, Riquelme et al.'s (2019) conclusion that price rises over a short period are likely to exacerbate consumer emotions of unfairness was supported by Haws and Bearden's (2006) findings. Visitors may be more inclined to agree to pay extra for tourism offerings when they become aware of the prices being paid at the attractions (David, Bearden & Haws, 2017; Krämer, Friesen & Shelton, 2018; Lastner et al., 2019; Ettl et al., 2019; Lou, Hou & Lou, 2020). Literature has also established that visitors tend to believe that price is a reliable predictor of quality (Wells & Prensky, 1996). Because price-quality links are significant to visitors, tourism businesses and organizations should take this into account when setting prices (Oh, 2003).

However, visitors will not base key decisions on pricing when the price disparities between a variety of tourism services are minor. This finding validates McCarville and Crompton’s (1987) conclusion that providing information to the public (visitors) about delivery costs and the price of substitutes could increase the reference price, what people expect to pay and what they consider fair because it draws visitors' attention to the "actual" cost of delivering the recreation service.

Given this, attraction managers must ensure that their rates for the tourism offerings are displayed on the websites of the attractions to serve as a reference list and source of pricing information for the visitors who intend to visit the tourism destinations.

In relation to the economic value, the results from the study revealed that the majority (71.8%) of the subjects were in agreement that the experience at the visitor attraction offered value for money, and 70.4% of the respondents admitted that the price paid for the experience at the attraction was reasonable. From Table 2, 65.1% indicates that respondents agreed that the visitor experience or service was appropriately priced while the lowest, 60.1% of the respondents agreed to the fact that the price paid for additional services is acceptable. Overall, every visitor's expectation (such as; experience, quality service, value for money, etc.) was met at the tourist attractions. This finding is consistent with Tisdell's (2006) observation that an attraction site's economic value is most commonly measured by the readiness of customers to pay for them and receive fulfilment in return.

Generally, respondents' impressions of the price fairness at the attraction sites were positive. Visitors were asked about the level to which they agreed or disagreed with the prices charged for activities at the attraction sites. The majority (65.8%) of the respondents said the attraction user fees and/or price is agreeable followed by 60.1% who agreed that they felt comfortable paying the user fee. The same proportion (60.1%) of the respondents reported that they agreed with the price charged because it is justified for what they offer at the attraction. Also, 63.1% agreed that the price charged at the attraction was worth the encounter they had.

From Table 2, the survey revealed that 53.2% of the respondents have admitted that the price charged is fairly and/or honestly what they expected as opposed to almost half (49.8%) of the respondents who agreed that due to the economic situation, they think the price charged was appropriate to keep the attraction running. In sum, visitors to the various sites agreed to the statements that the prices for activities were fair because the benefits provided by the tourist attractions are beneficial in comparison to the perceived sacrifice (i.e., the price paid) (Monroe, 2003; Herrmann et al., 2007; Cockrill & Goode, 2010).

Dimensions for Visitors' Perception of Visitor Attraction User Fees

After the assessment of the respondents' reactions to the various variables measuring the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees, it was prudent to further look at the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) of dimensions for their perceptions about the attraction user fees for activities. Further analysis was required to find out how specific perceived fairness dimensions put together interrelate to influence visitors who patronized the activities at these attractions in the Central Region, hence, there is the need for Factor Analysis (FA) to be carried out. Factor analysis is a data reduction technique (e.g. Pallant, 2005). It deals with a bulky set of data and finds ways to decrease or lessen it, using a smaller set of dimensions or components.

Consequently, the Factor Analysis was carried out on twenty-three (23) variables and the outcome is displayed in Table 3. The sample adequacy and factorability of the data were also assessed when using the Factor Analysis in this study to make sure that all assumptions for the FA were met. Consequently, to guarantee the data's factorability, Bartlett's test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures were assessed.

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) state that the FA should pass Bartlett's test of sphericity with a value of ($p<0.05$), but the KMO index spans from 0 to

1, with 0.6 being suggested as the minimum value for a good FA. Furthermore, Bartlett's test of sphericity (4487.031) for this study was also very significant (p=0.00). This was further confirmed by the KMO index of 0.902 which indicated that the strength of the variables was high. Consequently, this shows it was appropriate to proceed with the factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). The threshold for including a variable in this study was 0.50, and the eigenvalues greater than one (Eigenvalue >1) were utilized as the criterion for extracting the dimensions (Williams et al., 2010).

Undoubtedly, Cronbach's alpha was used for testing the reliability of the scale used and the extent to which these variables contributed to explaining a dimension. A recommendation by Pallant (2005), posits that to ascertain the level at which all items under the construct effectively measure it, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient must be explained. Similarly, Pallant, (2005) recommends that for the appropriateness of the variables or items, Cronbach's alpha coefficient should be more than 0.7.

The result in Table 3 indicates that four (4) dimensions such as price fairness, price information, economic value, and attraction and service at the attraction sites collectively explained 65.72% of the perception visitors have about user fees at the various attractions in the Central Region of Ghana.

Table 3: Dimensions for Visitors' Perception of User Fees at Visitor Attraction

	Factor and observed variable	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)	Cronbach alpha
I	*Price fairness*		*8.644*	*37.58*	*0.891*
	I felt comfortable paying the attraction user fee charged here	.838			
	The attraction user fee/price is agreeable	.811			
	The price at this attraction is just/justified for what they offer here	.798			
	The price charged is fairly/honestly what I expected	.790			
	The price charged at the attraction was worth the encounter/experience I had here	.779			
	Due to the economic situation, I think the price charged here is appropriate to keep the attraction running	.707			
	There have been better-quality services at the destination	.548			
II	*Price information*		*3.002*	*13.05*	*0.874*
	I am aware of the prices of other attractions so I know what to expect at this attraction	.832			
	I had a fair knowledge of this attraction's price through the advertisement	.793			
	Information about attraction prices influenced me to choose this attraction	.768			
	I had price information on this attraction from family and friends	.765			
	I am well aware of the prices here before I came	.753			
	I am informed about this attraction's price by a travel agent/tour guide	.727			

Table 3: ***Continued***

III	*Economic value*		*2.013*	*8.75*	*0.885*
	The price paid for the experience is reasonable	.816			
	The price paid for additional services at the attraction is acceptable	.813			
	The experience at this attraction offered value for my money	.802			
	The visitor attraction experience or service is appropriately priced	.801			
IV	*Attraction and service*		*1.459*	*6.34*	*0.740*
	There is much information provided about the attraction and services at this attraction	.729			
	There are facilities available here that offer me the needed experience	.668			
	The restroom and resting areas are well-maintained at this attraction	.614			
	There are enough signages for easy direction, access and navigation through the attraction	.597			
	The attraction has enough activities to be performed here	.561			
	The attraction has enough souvenirs to buy or take home	.515			
	Total variance Explained			**65.72**	

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx. Chi-square) = 4487.031, p-value=0.000. Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.902.

To comprehend the interpretation of the results, the factors were subjected to a 'rotation' to be presented with components represented by several strongly loaded variables. Thus, the PCA in employing the varimax rotation reduced the twenty-three (23) variables to four (4) main grouped factors which accounted for the visitors' perceived fairness of the attraction user fees. Yet, one of the items was moved from its original state to a different factor because it fitted more under the new factor.

From Table 3, Factor I labelled as price fairness consisted of seven (7) items relating to issues of price fairness of user fees and how visitors feel about these fees at the visitor attractions. It consisted of items such as; comfortability, the user fee is agreeable, the user fee is justified for what they offer, the user fee being honestly what I expected, due to the economic situation, the user fee charged is appropriate, and quality service. The factor explained 8.64 (37.58%) of the total variance explained. The result appeared so because issues of fairness at the visitor attractions are imperative components when it comes to the pricing of the activities. Again, visitors consider this factor as an essential element that can influence their travel decision since there is no free activity at these attractions (Meidan, 1994; Xia, Monroe & Cox, 2004; Barros, 2017).

Factor II measured price information. This factor formed part of the perceptions visitors have about the attraction user fees. It explained whether the visitors had any information about prices before embarking on travels to the visitor attraction. It comprised items such as; awareness of the prices of other attractions and what to expect and fair knowledge of this attraction's price, heard price information for this attraction from friends and family, price information from a travel agent and/or tour guide and I was well informed of the price before I arrived. With an eigenvalue of 3.00, the factor accounted for 13.05% of the total variance explained. The price information is imperative for visitors to make an informed decision regarding travelling to tourist destinations (Meidan, 1994).

The third factor (III) was the Economic value. This factor comprised attributes such as the price paid for the experience is reasonable, the price paid for additional services at the attraction is acceptable, the experience at this attraction offered value for money, and the visitor attraction experience is appropriately priced (Table 3). With an eigenvalue of 2.01 which explained 8.75% of the total variance. This is an ideal factor because visitors who undertake some recreational activities and experience other services want value for their money (Wells & Prensky, 1996; Wright & Boorse, 2008). For example, visitors who paid to enjoy the activities such as bird watching and/or crocodile watching, must at the end of the day, have value for performing this activity.

Last but not least was Factor IV, labelled attraction and service. This resulted from the factor analysis of perceptions visitors have about the attractions and the services rendered at the attraction sites. Attraction and services are explained with an eigenvalue of 1.46 (6.34%) of variance in the visitors' perception of user fees at the visitor attraction. This factor consisted of items such as much information provided about the attraction and services, facilities available that offered me the needed experience, restroom and resting areas well maintained, enough signages for easy direction, access, and navigation through the attraction, enough activities to be performed, and finally, enough souvenirs to buy and take home (Table 3). For visitors, convenient places such as easy to access to souvenir shop, and easy access to food joints are a requirement for meeting their needs, essential facilities were used during their trips, as well as service which was a crucial part of the encounter they enjoyed at the destination (Roy, Hughes & Ritchie, 2009).

The eigenvalues for all four (4) uncorrelated factors decreased in magnitude from factor one to four (Factor I: 8.64, Factor II: 3.00, Factor III: 2.01, Factor IV: 1.46). On this ground, a claim be made that the FA technique successfully provided four (4) essentials of perceived fairness factors that explained visitors' perceptions of attraction user fees.

Visitors' Perception of Fairness of Attraction User Fees by Demographic Characteristics

Visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees have been acknowledged in the literature by several scholars (e.g. Ashworth & McShane, 2012; Gelbrich, 2011). In the context of this study, perceived price fairness as explained is how visitors feel about user fees charged at the attractions whether the fee is reasonable, and/or acceptable (Xia et al., 2004, p.1).

An independent sample t-test was conducted to test for differences in visitors' perceptions of attraction user fees across visitors' sex. Concerning the perception factors such as; attraction and service ($p=0.069$, $t=-1.825$), and price fairness ($p=0.067$, $t=-1.841$), there were no significant differences between male and female visitors' sex (Table 4). Both male and female visitors were indifferent to attraction and services and price fairness reasons for patronising the activities at the destinations. Yet, the independent-samples t-test indicates significant differences in the perception of price information ($p=0.043$, $t=-2.034$) and economic value ($p=0.028$, $t=-2.212$) across visitors' sex. Unlike the male visitors ($M=2.432$) who conceded that they were uncertain about the user fees for activities at the destinations, their female counterparts (M=2.595) were in agreement (Table 4). It suggests that female visitors are even becoming more interested in the economic value of what they paid at the attraction than their male counterparts.

There was a statistically significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level across attraction and service (p=0.007, t=-2.696), economic value (p=0.000, t=-4.744) and price fairness (p=0.029, t=2.193) among Ghanaians (M=2.31) and non-Ghanaian nationalities (M=2.483). Both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian nationalities were not certain. Whereas results in Table 4 revealed that price information (p=0.210, t=1.257) did not differ across respondents' nationalities. Marital status influenced respondents' perceptions about the user fees for activities at the attractions.

The independent-sample t-test shows significant differences in the economic value of user fees across visitors' marital status (p=0.040, t=-2.067). The singles (M=2.455) were uncertain about their perceptions of the user fees charged at the attraction, and the married (M=2.616) were in agreement. Conversely, no significant differences were observed in visitors' perception of user fees for attraction and services (p=0.916, t=-0.102), price information (p=0.592, t=0.536), price fairness (p=0.182, t=1.340) across visitors' marital status. This may be because visitors' marital status appears to have an influence on their perception of the economic value of user fees at the attraction.

Furthermore, the result suggests that there was a significant difference across the travel parties and their perceptions of attraction user fees. For instance, attraction and service (p=0.021, t=-2.320), and price fairness (p=0.000, t=-3.726). As a result, findings from Table 4 indicate that individual (M=2.301) and group visitors (M=2.456) to the attraction sites were uncertain about their perceptions of user fees. Additionally, there was a significant difference across visitor type and visitor perceptions about user fees (p=0.013, t=2.502). An indication of the mean scores also shows that there was uncertainty among the visitors (M=2.435) and their perceptions of user fees charged at the attraction sites. Again, the findings reveal that there was no significant difference among visitor types and how they feel about the prices they pay for the services at the attraction (p=0.553, t=0.594). Thus, visitors disagreed that whether or not they were first-time (M=1.845) or repeat visitors (M=1.796) it had nothing to do with their perceptions of the user fees charged at the attractions (Table 4).

Table 4: Visitors' Perception of Fairness of User Fees by Demographic Characteristics

Background Characteristics	Attraction and Service	Price Information	Economic Value	Price Fairness
Sex				
Male	2.323	1.749	2.432	2.253
Female	2.436	1.910	2.595	2.394
	P=0.069	*P*=0.043	*p*=0.028	*p*=0.067
	t=-1.825	*t*=-2.034	*t*=-2.212	*t*=-1.841
Nationality				
Ghanaian	2.319	1.865	2.392	2.384
Non-Ghanaian	2.483	1.761	2.725	2.210
	p=0.007	*p*=0.210	*p*=0.000	*p*=0.029
	t=-2.696	*t*=1.257	*t*=-4.744	*t*=2.193
Marital Status				
Single	2.375	1.844	2.455	2.361
Married	2.382	1.799	2.616	2.249
	p=0.916	*p*=0.592	*p*=0.040	*p*=0.182
	t=-0.102	*t*=0.536	*t*=-2.067	*t*=1.340
Travel Party				
Individual	2.301	1.759	2.465	2.172
Group	2.445	1.889	2.553	2.456
	p=0.021	*p*=0.105	*p*=0.239	*p*=0.000
	t=-2.320	*t*=-1.624	*t*=-1.181	*t*=-3.726
Visitor Type				
First Timer	2.435	1.845	2.555	2.410
Repeat	2.271	1.796	2.432	2.160
	p=0.013	*p*=0.553	*p*=0.129	*p*=0.003
	t=2.502	*t*=0.594	*t*=1.526	*t*=3.008

Table 4: *Continued*

Age				
Below 20	1.907	1.630	1.694	2.048
20-29	2.486	1.922	2.581	2.463
30-39	2.179	1.722	2.405	2.087
Above 40	2.461	1.722	2.613	2.343
	p=0.000	p=0.120	p=0.000	p=0.000
	F=9.228	F=1.963	F=7.008	F=6.641
Level of education				
JHS/Middle	2.083	1.917	3.000	1.857
SHS/Voc./Tech	2.160	1.580	2.090	2.223
First degree	2.356	1.863	2.504	2.280
Graduate/Postgraduate	2.446	1.836	2.581	2.393
	p=0.052	p=0.304	p=0.002	p=0.202
	F=2.598	F=1.215	F=5.037	F=1.547
Continent				
Africa	2.308	1.818	2.434	2.290
Europe	2.453	1.640	2.690	2.354
North America	2.653	2.108	2.676	2.405
Australia	2.417	1.833	3.000	2.929
Asia	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000
	p=0.004	p=0.012	p=0.026	p=0.423
	F=4.008	F=3.259	F=2.807	F=0.973
Purpose of travel				
Leisure	2.345	1.794	2.515	2.304
Education/research	2.406	1.801	2.485	2.310
Volunteering	2.573	2.333	2.719	2.670
Others	2.361	1.944	2.292	2.119
	p=0.391	p=0.025	p=0.475	p=0.164
	F=1.004	F=3.162	F=0.836	F=1.717
Employment status				
Employed	2.376	1.832	2.564	2.316
Unemployed	2.386	1.909	2.415	2.360
Self-employed	2.370	1.677	2.398	2.272
Retired	2.333	1.000	3.000	2.238
	p=0.997	p=0.074	p=0.126	p=0.919
	F=0.016	F=2.333	F=1.919	F=0.166
Income level				
Less than GHC 500	2.417	1.928	2.362	2.405
GHC 500 - 1000	2.191	1.696	2.294	2.252
GHC 1001 - 1500	2.356	1.793	2.450	2.460
Above GHC 2000	2.409	1.824	2.642	2.261
	p=0.174	p=0.433	p=0.002	p=0.195
	F=1.668	F=0.916	F=4.896	F=1.575

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022). Scale: Agreed= 2.5-3.0, Neutral= 1.5-2.49, and Disagreed= 1-1.49, Sig. level at ≤0.05.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test for the difference among visitors' perceptions of user fees charged for services at the attraction and their socio-demographic characteristics variables.

Table 4 indicates that respondents' perceptions about the user fees regarding attraction and services (p=0.000, F=9.228), economic value (p=0.000, F=7.008), and price fairness (p=0.000, F=6.641) the Turkey HSD post hoc indicates that the perceptions of respondents under age 20 (M= 1.09) differ significantly from those of 20-29 (M=2.48) and those above age 40 (M=2.46). This could imply that those age 20-29 and above 40 groups are more financially stable or value-oriented than those under age 20 because they fall within the working class in most countries including Ghana and therefore have better financial capacity. For economic value, differences were observed between respondents of age 40 and above (M= 2.61) and those under age 20 (M= 1.69) only. While of age 40 and above perceived value for money while those under age 20 did not. In terms of price fairness, difference occurred between respondents of age 40 and above (M= 2.34) and those of age 30 -39 (M= 2.08) although both groups show uncertainty but those of age 30-39 were more uncertain.

Furthermore, there was no statistically significant difference across visitors' levels of education (Group 1: JHS/Middle, Group 2: SHS/Voc./Tech) and their perceptions about the prices they paid for attractions and services (p=0.052, F=2.598), For the economic value, the Turkey HSD post hoc shows the perceptions of respondents with the educational level of SHS/Voc./Tech. (M= 2.09) differ significantly from that of postgraduates (M= 2.58).

The results also generally show that for all the visitors who achieved this level of educational attainment (Group 1: JHS/Middle, Group 2: SHS/Voc./Tech) across attraction and services, and price information were all in doubt as well as price fairness (Table 4). This could be that visitors' level of education might not be a reason that influenced their perceptions of price fairness of attractions. Again, visitors' level of education attained (Group 3: First degree, Group 5: Graduate/Post graduate degree) had no significant difference across their perceptions about the user fees as far as price information (p=0.304, F=1.215), and price fairness (p=0.202, F=1.547) are concerned. However, even though the statistical difference is not significant, it seems that visitors with higher education levels (both first-degree and graduate/postgraduate) tend to agree more with how the attraction managers set their prices, as evidenced by the slightly higher mean scores for both groups [First degree (M=2.504) and Graduate/Postgraduate degree (M=2.581)]. This could be because visitors' level of education does not have a significant impact on their perceptions of user fees in terms of price information and perceived value.

Additionally, a significant difference was observed among the continent of origin (Africa, Europe, North America, Australia, and Asia) and visitors' perceptions regarding the fees for attraction and services (p=0.004, F=4.008), price information (p=0.012, F=3.259), and economic value (p=0.026, F=2.807). With attraction and services, the Turkey HSD post hoc indicates that the perceptions of respondents from Africa (M= 2.30) differ significantly from those from Australia 20-29 (M= 2.65) and Asia (M= 3.00).

While Australia and Asia agreed that there is fairness in the prices charged for attraction and services, those from Africa were indecisive (Table 4).

With regard to price information, significant difference occurred between respondents from North America (M= 2.65) and those from Asia (M = 3.00). No other difference was observed. Also, the Turkey HSD post-hoc test again indicates difference in perception among respondents from North America (M= 2.67) and those from Africa (M= 2.43) for economic value for money. While those from North America indicates that they had value for money, those from Africa were uncertain. This can be attributable to the value-oriented nature travellers from the Western nations.

Respondents' perceptions of user fees across attraction and service (p=0.391, F=1.004), economic value (p=0.475, F=0.836), and price fairness (p=0.919, F=0.164) had no significant difference across their purpose of visit (leisure, education/research, volunteering, and others). The data indicates that the purpose of respondents' visits did not significantly influence their perceptions of user fees. The majority of respondents remained undecided in their perceptions, except for those who visited due to volunteerism, who leaned towards a specific perception (M=2.573). In contrast to the above results, Table 4 indicates that visitors' perceptions about whether they had some price information about the attraction before embarking on travels to the destination were significantly different across their purpose of visit (p=0.025, F=3.162). Evidence from the Turkey HSD post-hoc shows that respondents travelling for volunteering although were uncertain (M= 2.33) differ in their perceptions relative those who travelled for leisure (M= 1.79) (Table 4).

Similarly, the employment status of respondents had no impact on their perceptions of the user fees for attraction and service, price information, economic value and price fairness. There were no significant disparities in the perception across attraction and service (p=0.997, F=0.016), price information (p=0.074, F=2.333), economic value (p=0.126, F=1.919), and price fairness (p=0.919, F=0.166) as captured in this study. Thus, almost all visitors were unsure of their perceptions of prices charged for activities and services at the various attractions in the Central Region. This finding is consistent with an observation made by Cai et al., (2021) that the employment status of visitors also plays an important role in the visitors' decision to visit a specific attraction.

Lastly, Table 4 indicates that visitors' income level (Group 1: less than GHC 500; Group 2: GHC 500 – GHC 1000; Group 3: GHC 1001 – GHC 1500; Group 4: above GHC 2000) had no significant difference in visitors' perceptions of user fees across attraction and services (p=0.174, F=1.668), price information (p=0.433, F=0.916), and price fairness (p=0.195, F=1.575). From the survey, it can be deduced that respondents' income level had no impact on their perceptions of user fees at the attraction. Yet, visitors' perceptions of user fees on economic value were significant among their income level (p=0.002, F=4.896). Further verification of difference using the Turkey HSD post-hoc revealed that those with average income of GHC 2000 and above (M= 2.64) differed significantly from those between GHC 500 – GHC 1000 (M = 2.29) and those less GHC500. The results for other aspects through their mean scores proved that the respondents across attraction and services (M=2.417), and price fairness (M=2.362) were all in doubt about their perceptions regarding the user fees for services at the attractions while respondents across price information (M=1.928) disagreed (Table 4). Respondent's doubt about their perceptions regarding user fees for services at attractions might be influenced by a lack of clear communication or information about how those fees were determined and what they cover.

Factors that Influence Visitors' Perceptions of the Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees

The user fees for visitor attractions are a sensitive issue among both travellers and policy developers (Bernard et al., 2020). Various factors play a significant role in shaping visitors' decisions to undertake journeys to these destinations. The study focused on three specific factors, namely: knowledge and awareness of pricing, the quality of experiences, and the availability of quality services. This section of the study examined the extent to which visitors agreed, were undecided and/or disagreed with the factors that influenced the respondents' perceptions of fairness of visitor attraction user fees.

Visitors consider certain factors before visiting the attraction sites. Among these factors include their knowledge about the user fees, the experiences they wanted to create, and the quality of services they expected at these selected attractions. From Table 5, the results indicate that a majority (43.2%) of the visitors agreed that they were aware of the user fees before visiting the attraction sites as opposed to the respondents (33.8%) who disagreed with the fact that they knew the user fees. Price knowledge and awareness are defined as a visitor's ability to remember prices (Aalto-Setala &

Raijas, 2003). Whereas, 23.0% were undecided about the knowledge of the user fees charged at the visitor attractions.

Table 5: Factors that Influence Visitors' Perception of Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees

Variable Statement	**A**	**N**	**D**
Knowledge and Awareness of Price	*43.2*	*23.0*	*33.8*
There is a price difference between what I paid at the visitor attraction and what others paid (due to differences in age, and travel group size)	24.9	24.9	50.2
I know the price charged at this attraction is consistent with the current economic situation	42.5	22.6	34.9
The user fee charged at the attraction is not questionable at all	48.8	20.6	30.6
Considering all aspects, I think the attraction is not trying to make a lot of profit based on the prices charged here.	46.2	20.6	33.2
The prices offered at this attraction are currently the best prices available	47.2	27.6	25.2
The prices at the attraction are posted for all to see, and it is consistent with what must be charged over the periods	44.5	25.2	30.2
Looking at prices out there, the attraction is transparent with its price charges	48.5	19.3	32.2
Experiences	*69.1*	*13.7*	*17.2*
The visitor attraction experience is well-formed	78.1	13.3	8.6
I am happy with the price I paid for the experience I had at this attraction	68.8	13.3	17.9
The information I had beforehand made me satisfied with the price charged at the experience	52.5	16.9	30.6
I am satisfied with the overall experience of the visitor attraction and deserve to pay for this	77.1	11.3	11.6
Quality Service	*79.1*	*12.3*	*8.6*
The service/experience has an acceptable and standard quality	73.8	16.3	10.0
The service/experience was well-delivered	80.4	12.3	7.3
I think the treatment I received at the attraction was fair	83.1	8.3	8.6

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022).

Scale: Agreed= 2.5-3.0, Neutral =1.50-2.49, and Disagreed= 1-1.49

On the other hand, the result shows that 50.2% of the respondents disagreed with the fact that there was a price difference between what they paid as compared to what others also paid at the visitor attraction (due to age differences, and travel group size). This may be because some visitors were not aware of the prices charged per individual so they disagreed with the issue of price differences in what they and others pay for activities at the attraction sites. This finding contradicts Xia, Monroe, and Cox's (2004) observations that visitors' knowledge and awareness of rates charged for services at similar or other attraction sites are critical since they form a major part of their travel decision-making. Yet, the finding is consistent with Kim et al.'s (2009) affirmation that visitors' reactions to different prices may not be rational but rather triggered by behavioural aspects, such as perceptions, preferences and information access to the services. This pattern of the result may also be explained that because visitors are price sensitive, perceiving and reacting to product prices in different ways has become part of them (Xia et al., 2004).

While 48.8% of the respondents agreed that the user fee charged at the attraction was not questionable at all, 48.5% of the respondents perceived that looking at the prices out there, the attraction is transparent with its price charges. Other respondents (47.2%) agreed that the prices offered at the attraction are currently the best prices available, considering all aspects, 46.2% of the respondents think the attraction is not trying to make a lot of profit based on the prices charged here at the attraction sites. Specifically, 44.5% of the visitors agreed that the prices at the attraction are posted for all to see, and 42.5% of the respondents agreed they know the price charged at the attraction is consistent with the current economic situation (Table 5).

Concerning experiences, it is one of the factors that contribute positively to visitors' expectations at the destination pre-, during, and post-visit (Kempiak et al., 2017). From Table 5, the results indicate that more than half (78.1%) of the respondents agreed the experience at the attraction was well-formed. This may be because visitors had their expectations met which was interpreted as the experience was well-formed. Again, 77.1% of the subjects agreed that they were satisfied with the overall experience at the visitor attraction and deserved to pay for it.

While 68.8% of the visitors agreed they were happy with the price they paid for the experience they had at the attraction, 52.5% of the respondents were in agreement that the information they had beforehand made them satisfied with the price charged at the attractions. Overall, visitors agreed that experience was one of the factors that influenced them to visit the attraction sites in the region. The revelation in this study is consistent with the conclusion made by Kempiak et al., (2017) that experience contributes to and/or forms the greatest part of visitors' moment at the tourist destination.

From Table 5, the outcome of the study indicates that a vast majority of the respondents (83.1%) perceived the quality of service and/or treatment they received at the attraction was fair. Furthermore, 80.4% of the visitors perceived the quality of service was well delivered, and another 73.8% perceived the service offered at the attraction has an acceptable and standard quality. On the whole, all respondents perceived that the quality of services rendered to them at the visitor attraction was the best. This could be that visitors were able to pay for the desired services and/or activities, irrespective of how much was charged at the attraction sites. This finding is consistent with

Lindberg's (1998) conclusion that the introduction of user fees for activities at the attraction will lead to a rise in the level of service quality for visitors. Yet, others also argue that the same introduction of user fees will lead to a decrease in the number of visitors to these attraction sites. The types of visitor attractions in the Central Region of Ghana are very unique and therefore, attract lots of visitors irrespective of where the respondents come from.

Factors that Influence Visitors' Perceptions of Fairness of Attraction User Fees by Demographic Characteristics

This section of the analysis looks at establishing whether or not there are factors that influence visitors to travel differently across their various background characteristics. A Likert scale type of statement was used to measure factors that influenced them to travel to tourist destinations. The five-point Likert scale was collapsed into a three-point Likert scale (disagree, neutral, agree). That is, "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were recoded to have disagreed, and "strongly agree" and "agree" were also recoded as agree. The collapse of the scale into a three-point Likert scale was prudent. The reason is that such re-categorisation will enhance the analysis of the data and easier to interpret the results. Accordingly, Amuquandoh**,** (2010), and Adam and Amuquandoh, (2013) who in their studies employed the five Likert scale collapsed the response sections into a three-point Likert scale without distorting the quality of the data.

Additionally, two statistical tools were employed for analysing the results of the study. The tools include the independent samples t-test and One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The independent samples t-test was used in cases where the independent variables had only two categories such as sex, marital status, nationality, travel party, and visitor type in Table 6. Whereas ANOVA was used for those with more than two categorical variables.

An independent samples t-test was performed to compare the variables that influence visitors to travel to tourism destinations in the Central Region. This tool was used to compare the mean scores for these categorical variables. As regards knowledge and awareness of price, a statistically significant difference existed between male visitors and their female counterparts ($p=0.000$; $t=-4.050$) likewise in their experiences ($p=0.002$; $t=-3.052$) at the destinations. This could be because male and female visitors were different in terms of their perceptions of the factors that influenced the pricing of activities. However, as established by literature, knowledge and awareness are two main factors that influenced pricing fairness perceptions, especially when the visitors are well-informed (Tax, Brown & Chandrashekaran, 1998; Mathies & Gudergan, 2007; Lancaster et al., 2017).

Perhaps what might be regarded as a factor by male visitors may differ from that of their female counterparts. For quality service, there was no significant difference across visitors’ sex ($p=0.075$; $t=-1.786$). A review of the result indicates that both male and female visitors were uncertain when it comes to pricing issues regarding their knowledge and awareness (Table 6). Yet, the respondents ($M=2.76$) perceived that they enjoyed the quality services at the attraction. This could be a result of visitors' satisfaction with the quality services offered at the attractions, who acknowledged that the variables affected their impressions. This contradicts Rao and Monroe's (1988) observations that more informed consumers are less likely to base quality-related decisions on price or other extrinsic factors.

Table 6: Factors that influence Visitors' Perceptions of Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees by demographic characteristics

Background Characteristics	Knowledge and awareness	Experiences	Quality service
Sex			
Male	2.027	2.420	2.649
Female	2.313	2.622	2.762
	p=0.000*	*p*=0.002*	*p*=0.075
	t=-4.050	*t*=-3.052	*t*=-1.786
Nationality			
Ghanaian	2.155	2.449	2.620
Non-Ghanaian	2.187	2.644	2.855
	p=0.681	*p*=0.003*	*p*=0.000*
	t=-0.411	*t*=-2.995	*t*=-4.048
Marital Status			
Single	2.213	2.505	2.730
Married	2.081	2.545	2.657
	p=0.095	*p*=0.574	*p*=0.307
	t=1.680	*t*=-0.562	*t*=1.025
Travel Party			
Individual	2.134	2.463	2.664
Group	2.196	2.569	2.740
	p=0.393	*p*=0.116	*p*=0.232
	t=-0.856	*t*=-1.578	*t*=-1.197
Visitor Type			
First Timer	2.193	2.560	2.785
Repeat	2.117	2.443	2.557
	p=0.333	*p*=0.117	*p*=0.001*
	t=0.970	*t*=1.573	*t*=3.236
Age			
Below 20	2.079	2.667	2.593
20-29	2.270	2.556	2.761
30-39	2.043	2.426	2.627
Above 40	2.098	2.538	2.689
	p=0.041*	*p*=0.339	*p*=0.298
	F=2.785	*F*=1.125	*F*=1.232
Level of education			
JHS/Middle	2.393	2.625	2.917
SHS/Voc./Tech	2.194	2.430	2.547
First degree	2.144	2.464	2.659
Graduate/Postgraduate	2.177	2.585	2.770
	p=0.856	*p*=0.305	*p*=0.135
	F=0.257	*F*=1.212	*F*=1.865
Continent			
Africa	2.121	2.436	2.618
Europe	2.203	2.685	2.927
North America	2.324	2.730	2.874
Australia	3.000	3.000	3.000

Table 6: ***Continued***

Asia	**2.571**	**3.000**	**3.000**
	p=0.108	*p*=0.004*	*p*=0.238
	F=1.917	*F*=3.936	*F*=1.388
Purpose of travel			
Leisure	2.131	2.448	2.622
Education/research	2.190	2.615	2.813
Volunteering	2.491	2.734	3.000
Others	2.000	2.542	2.611
	p=0.144	*p*=0.056	*p*=0.005*
	F=1.816	*F*=2.550	*F*=4.376
Employment status			
Employed	2.157	2.529	2.702
Unemployed	2.237	2.484	2.700
Self-employed	2.067	2.531	2.708
Retired	2.000	2.667	2.889
	p=0.563	*p*=0.910	*p*=0.894
	F=0.682	*F*=0.181	*F*=0.115
Income level			
Less than GHC 500	2.269	2.549	2.692
GHC 500 - GHC 1000	2.013	2.243	2.539
GHC 1001-GHC 1500	2.149	2.472	2.733
Above GHC 2000	2.161	2.581	2.738
	p=0.278	*p*=0.020*	*p*=0.283
	F=1.290	*F*=3.343	*F*=1.275

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022). Scale: 1-1.49 = Disagree, 1.50-2.49 = Neutral, 2.5-3.0 = Agree, Sig. level at p≤ 0.05.

Concerning respondents' nationality, there was no significant difference across their nationality and knowledge and awareness (p=0.681; t=-0.411) as opposed to the significant difference that was noticed across respondents' experiences (p=0.003; t=-2.995), and quality service (p=0.000; t=-4.048). Additionally, visitors from Ghana were unsure of their understanding and awareness of the price (M=2.155) associated with both their experiences (M=2.449) and the attractions' offerings. However, as shown in Table 6, the non-Ghanaian visitors perceived that the visitor attraction provided them with quality services (M=2.855).

Respondents were aware that their judgments of price fairness and the calibre of the services they received at the destination varied depending on their country (Table 6). This could also be because visitors were not staying or visiting the attractions very often so the issue of pricing became a challenge any time they visited. Hence visitors may use the rates charged for activities as a measure of the quality of service rendered to them or the experience they had at the destinations. This finding is consistent with an observation made by Nagle and Holden (2002) that buyers are more inclined to use price as a measure of quality if they have less experience at the destination, attraction or facility.

Respondents' marital status did not differ significantly across their knowledge and awareness of price (p=0.095; t=1.680), experience (p=0.574; t=-0.562), and quality service (p=0.307; t=1.025). Table 6 further indicates that there was no significant difference between single and married couples. This shows that both single and married visitors were indifferent to the knowledge and awareness of the price, experiences, and quality services at the visitor attractions. While a critical review of the mean scores across knowledge and awareness (M=2.196) shows that visitors were in doubt about the factor that influenced their decision, a majority (M=2.730) of visitors concurred that experience and quality services encouraged them to visit and patronize the activities at the attractions (Table 6).

Similarly, the independent samples t-test established that there was no statistically significant difference across respondents' knowledge and awareness (p=0.393; t=-0.856), experiences (p=0.574; t=-1.578), and quality service (p=0.232; t=-1.197) and their travel party (Table 6). Again, the result shows that individual visitors across knowledge and awareness of the pricing (M=2.134) and experiences (M=2.463) were unsure and unaware of whether the factors affected their perceptions to visit the attraction or not. However, group visitors (M=2.740) concurred that experience and quality service were important considerations when deciding whether to take a tour to the visitor attractions. This finding confirms the observation made by Estelami, (1998) and Maxwell, (2008b) that customers use the ease of experience and quality services rendered to them as a cue for judging an attractions or facility's price.

Likewise, visitor type did not significantly influence their knowledge and awareness of the price (p=0.333; t=0.970), and experience (p=0.117; t=1.573) of travelling to the attraction sites in the Central region of Ghana. Table 6 shows that first-time visitors (M=2.193) and repeat visitors (M=2.117) were uncertain as to how much their knowledge and awareness or experiences influenced their decision to travel. As opposed to quality service (p=0.001; t=3.236) which the visitors believed had a statistically significant impact on their decision to travel. Furthermore, evidence indicates that first-time or repeat visitors across experiences (M=2.560), and quality service (M=2.785) agreed that these factors influenced their perceptions to visit the attractions. Thus, visitors have developed more interest in visiting these attraction sites for their experiences. This finding contradicts Estelami et al. (2001)'s observation that customers' understanding of prices may be influenced by environmental factors such as unemployment rates, the economic growth of a nation and the availability of pricing information.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test the differences that exist across the factors that influence respondents' perceptions of visitor attraction user fees. Respondents were grouped into four different age groups (Group 1: below 20; Group 2: 20-29; Group 3: 30-39; Group 4:

above 40). The result in Table 6 indicates that there was a statistical difference at $p \leq 0.05$ level across visitors' knowledge and awareness of price and their age groups (*p*=0.041, *F*= 2.785). Indication from the Turkey HSD post-hoc shows that respondents between respondents of age 20-29 (M= 2.27) differ in their perceptions relative to those between age 30-39 (M= 2.04) and 40 and above (M= 2.09).

Conversely, there was no statistical difference between experience (p= 0.333; F= 1.125) and quality service (p=0.298; F1.232) across respondents' age. Respondents in these age categories did not have any varying views about their decisions to visit the attractions. Unlike the knowledge and awareness where respondents were indecisive, regarding experience (M= 2.667) and quality services (M=2.761), visitors agreed that these factors influenced their decisions to travel.

The level of education attained by visitors had no significant impact on all the factors (knowledge and awareness, experience and quality service) that influenced their decision to visit the attractions in the Central Region. For example, visitors were divided into four (4) groups based on their educational qualifications (Group 1: JHS/Middle; Group 2: SHS/Voc./Tech; Group 3: First degree; Group 4: Graduate/Postgraduate). There was no significant difference in the perceptions across the factors; knowledge and awareness of price (*p*=0.856; F=0.257), experience (p=0.305; F= 1.212), and quality service (p= 0.135; F= 1.865). Thus, visitors with varying educational attainment had no differences in their travel decisions.

A critical review of the mean scores shows that respondents across the various levels of educational qualification regarding knowledge and awareness of price were unable to either agree or disagree when it comes to their travel decisions to various attractions in the Central region. Conversely, concerning quality service, all visitors across the level of education conceded that there was a significant influence on their travel decisions to patronize the activities at the destinations (Table 6).

Again, there was no statistically significant difference across respondents' knowledge and awareness of the price charged at the attraction (p=0.108; F=1.917), and quality service (p=0.238; F= 1.388) and their continent of origin. Thus, respondents' continents of origin did not influence their ability to travel. There was a significant difference across visitors' continent of origin and experience (p=0.004; F= 3.936). The Turkey HSD post-hoc test signifies that visitor from Africa (M= 2.12) and Europe (M= 2.20), differ in their perceptions relative to those from Asia (M= 3.00). While those from Asia perceived quality services as commensurate with the prices charged at the attractions, those from Africa and Europe were indifferent.

One of the theories (utilitarian theory) which underpinned this study, suggests that the rightness or wrongness of an action should be determined by the overall happiness or well-being it produces. It therefore came to the fore that visitors agreed that exceptional services encouraged them to explore the distinctive attraction sites after the cost-benefit analysis. These visitor attractions may have provided the best services to meet respondents' expectations. This finding contradicts Hung et al., (2010) and Reid and Bojanic, (2009)'s conclusions that any unmet expectation results in perceived unfairness.

In line with the conceptual framework guiding the study, the travel characteristics were analysed. Further verification of the result reveals there was no statistically significant difference across knowledge and awareness which influenced visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees and their purpose of travel ($p=0.144$; $F= 1.816$). Also, experience ($p=0.056$; $F= 2.550$) did not influence visitors' perceptions of fairness of attraction user fees and their purpose of travel.

On the other hand, there was a statistically significant difference across quality service and visitors' purpose of travel ($p=0.005$; $F= 4.376$). The Turkey HSD post-hoc results show that those who travelled for education/research ($M= 2.81$) perceived the prices at the attraction as appropriately fair for the quality of services offered compared to those who travelled for leisure ($M= 2.62$) and other purposes ($M= 2.61$) (Table 6). The travel characteristics have been noted in similar studies to have influenced visitors' perception and attitude towards attraction pricing (e.g. McCarville, Reiling & White, 1996; Chung et al., 2011).

Similarly, no statistically significant difference was observed across respondents' employment status and factors such as knowledge and awareness ($p=0.563$; $F= 0.682$), experience ($p=0.910$; $F= 0.181$) and quality service ($p=0.894$; $F= 0.115$) as displayed in Table 6. The mean scores for groups across respondents' employment status [employed ($M=2.702$); unemployed ($M= 2.700$); self-employed ($M= 2.708$); retired ($M= 2.7889$)] show that visitors agreed they were certain that their perceptions influenced them to visit the various attraction sites in the Central region. Therefore, all visitors who were employed agreed they were influenced by the quality service as well as enjoyed the best treatments at the attraction sites. In addition, retired visitors (M=2.667) agreed they had good experiences at the tourist destinations (Table 6). This finding is consistent with an observation made by Cai et al., (2021) that the employment status of visitors also plays a crucial role in the visitors' decision to visit a specific attraction.

As depicted in Table 6, no statistically significant difference was observed across knowledge and awareness of price (p=0.278; F=1.290), and quality service (p=0.283; F= 1.275) as well as the general income level of the visitors who visited the various attractions in the region. From Table 6, it is evident that a statistically significant difference exists across visitors' experience (p=0.020; F= 3.343) based on income levels. The Turkey HSD post-hoc test indicates that those with higher income (above GHC 2000) (M= 2.73) differ significantly with their perception compared those with GHC 500 - GHC 1000 (M= 2.53). The results revealed that while those with above GHC 2000 consider the attraction prices in the Central Region as fair based on their experiences, those with income levels of GHC 500 - GHC 1000 were indifferent. This could be that those with higher income level see these attraction fees as not significant enough to affect their finances and content with the experience they had from it.

Visitors' Post-Purchase Intentions towards Attractions in the Central Region

According to Wang et al. (2006) and Zeithmal et al. (1996), post-purchase intention refers to how visitors feel, think, and act after engaging with the services and goods at the attraction. A study conducted by Zeithaml et al., (1996), suggests that visitors' post-purchase intentions influence their loyalty, commitment, and/or switch to a different product or brand. Chen and Chen, (2005) also state that visitors' ability to recommend the attraction to others can be used to predict they will be long-term visitors and bring stable profits to the attractions.

Table 7: User Fees and Post-Purchase Intentions at Visitor Attractions

Statements	A	N	D
Post-Purchase Intentions	*78.6*	*12.4*	*9.0*
I think I will always visit this visitor attraction again	69.4	14.6	15.9
I will spread positive word-of-mouth about this attraction	84.7	9.0	6.3
I will always recommend this attraction to others for the experience	87.0	8.0	5.0
At any time, I will choose this attraction among other available attractions	73.1	17.9	9.0

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022).

Scale: Agree= 2.5-3.0, Neutral= 1.50-2.49, and Disagree=1-1.49

In the conceptual framework guiding the study, visitors' post-purchase intentions concerning pricing issues of activities at the visitor attraction sites were examined (Table 7). The result indicates that almost 80% of the respondents have positive post-purchase intentions towards visitor attractions in the Central region of Ghana. To be more specific, based on the pricing of the activities, a majority (87.0%) of the respondents concurred that they would always recommend this attraction in the Central region to friends, families, as well as relatives for experiences in the future. This is confirmed by Abubakar and Mavondo's (2014) finding that if the individual's appraisal of the activity reveals that the person has accomplished the anticipated objective, then, what follows is a coping reaction (for example, wanting to buy the product again) to maintain or raise the level of satisfaction. This could be because visitors were pleased with the quality services rendered to them.

Additionally, 84.7% of the visitors agreed that they would spread positive word-of-mouth about this attraction. This may be because visitors were treated well at the various attraction sites and their intentions could be positive. Such positive feelings could be converted or led to a repeat purchase (behaviour) in the future. This confirms the observation by Harrison and Shaw (2004), that when consumers are satisfied with the services rendered their intentions translate into post-purchase behaviours.

Specifically, 73.1% of the respondents also admitted that at any time, they would choose this attraction among others for the experiences and 69.4% of the visitors agreed that they would always visit the same attraction again. This could be explained that visitors' expectations towards the attractions were met hence, they may visit these attractions again in the future as repeat visitors (Schuhmam, 2012; Abubakar & Mavondo, 2014). In other words, a moment of fulfilment in visitors' lives would lead to a recommendation, and/or spreading of positive word-of-mouth about the attractions they visited. Overall, the result generally indicates that based on the pricing issues for activities, visitors agreed their post-purchase intentions for the visitor attractions were positive.

Visitors' Post-Purchase Intentions by Background Characteristics

This section of the analysis examined the differences that exist across visitors' post-purchase intentions (PPIs) at the visitor attraction sites and their background characteristics in the Central Region.

Table 8: Post-purchase Intentions by Background Characteristics

Background Characteristics	Post-purchase intentions	*P*-value	*t/F*-value
Sex		0.009*	-2.622
Male	2.627		
Female	2.767		
Nationality		0.458	-0.743
Ghanaian	2.680		
Non-Ghanaian	2.722		
Marital Status		0.212	1.252
Single	2.722		
Married	2.646		
Travel Party		0.008*	-2.668
Individual	2.618		
Group	2.764		
Visitor Type		0.061	1.886
First Time	2.736		
Repeat	2.620		
Age		0.168	1.694
Below 20	2.806		
20-29	2.742		
30-39	2.604		
Above 40	2.692		
Level of Education		0.029*	3.052
JHS/Middle	3.000		
SHS/Voc./Tech.	2.530		
First degree	2.647		
Graduate/postgraduate	2.763		
Purpose of Travel		0.201	1.554
Leisure	2.649		
Education/research	2.773		
Volunteering	2.703		
Others	2.792		
Employment Status		0.894	0.203
Employed	2.698		
Unemployed	2.671		
Self-employed	2.727		
Retired	2.833		
Income Level		0.663	0.529
Less than GHC 500	2.687		
GHC 500 – 1000	2.757		
GHC 1001 – 1500	2.628		
Above GHC 2000	2.705		

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022). Scale: Agree= 2.50-3.0, Neutral= 1.50-2.49, and Disagree= 1-1.49

The result in Table 8 shows that a statistically significant difference existed across visitors' background characteristic (sex) and their post-purchase intentions (p=0.009; t=-2.622) towards the attractions in the Central Region. This indicates that male visitors' post-purchase intentions for visiting the attractions in the future did not match that of their female counterparts. A review of the mean scores however shows that both male (M=2.63) and female (M=2.77) visitors agreed they were influenced by their PPIs towards these attraction sites. Also, visitors' perceptions of the user fees charged for activities did not influence their PPIs towards the attractions. In addition, there was no statistically significant difference across visitors' nationality and their PPIs (p=0.458; t=-0.743). As depicted in Table 8, further verification of the result shows that Ghanaian (M=2.680) and non-Ghanaian visitors (M=2.722) agreed they were influenced by their PPIs to visit the attractions.

There was also no statistically significant difference across visitor's marital status and their post-purchase intentions (p=0.212; t=1.252). Conversely, the mean scores of single visitors (M=2.722) and married couples (M=2.646) show that they agreed their marital statuses influenced their PPIs towards attractions. This could further be explained because the single and married visitors have a higher mean score showing that they have enough travel time (Table 8). Visitors' travel party did differ significantly from their post-purchase intentions (p=0.008; t=-2.668) towards the various attractions visited in the region (Table 8). It can be seen from a comparison of the mean scores for both individual (M=2.618) and group visitors (M=2.764) that they were influenced by their post-purchase intentions.

With respect to visitor types as shown in Table 8, there was no significant difference between whether the visitor is a first-time or repeat visitor across their post-purchase intentions (p=0.061; t=1.886). As it stands, visitors' intentions towards visiting these attractions did not differ. Although evidence of the mean scores shows that first-time visitors (M=2.736) and repeat visitors (M=2.620) agreed they were influenced by their post-purchase intentions.

Evidence from Table 8 suggests that there was no statistically significant difference across visitors' background element, age and post-purchase intentions (p=0.168; F=1.694). As stated earlier, visitors' age did not differ when it came to their PPIs towards attractions in the Central region. However, a review of the mean scores across all the age groups (Group 1: M=2.806; Group 2: M=2.742; Group 3: M=2.604; Group 4: M=2.692) shows that respondents agreed with the fact that visitors' age influenced their post-purchase intentions. Those below age 20 had the highest mean score which could mean that because their visits to the attractions were sponsored, they were satisfied with the experiences offered at the sites and would want to visit the same place as repeat visitors (Abubakar & Mavondo, 2014).

Conversely, respondents' level of education significantly did differ across their post-purchase intentions (p=0.029; F=3.052). The evidence in Table 8 shows that respondents have varied post-purchase intentions towards the attractions. Accordingly, the mean scores across visitors' level of educational groups [Group 1(JHS/Middle): M=3.000; Group 2(SHS/Voc./Tech.): M=2.530; Group 3(First degree): M=2.647; Group 4(Graduate/postgraduate): M=2.763] reviewed show that respondents agreed that their level of education influenced their post-purchase intentions for attractions they visited.

On the other hand, the purpose of travel did not significantly differ across respondents' PPIs (p=0.201; F=1.554). As depicted in Table 8, a verification of the mean scores for leisure (M=2.649), education/research (M=2.773), volunteering (M=2.703) and others (M=2.792) shows that all respondents admitted their purpose of travel influenced their post-purchase intentions towards the attractions they visited. This may be because visitors' expectations were met at the attractions. Besides, visitors' perceptions were not different from their purpose of travel.

Again, there was no statistically significant difference across respondents' employment status and their post-purchase intentions (p=0.894; F=0.203). Respondents' intentions for the attractions did not differ due to their employment status (Table 8). As confirmed by the results in Table 8, a review of their average scores for their employment status, employed (M=2.698); unemployed (M=2.671); self-employed (M=2.727) and retired visitors (M=2.833) shows that visitors agreed with the decision that influenced their PPIs for attractions they visited.

Lastly, there was no statistically significant difference observed across visitors' income level and their post-purchase intentions (p=0.663; F=0.529). Thus, income level among visitors was not the reason for their PPIs towards attractions. Perhaps, this could be that visitors enjoyed the quality services and experiences offered to them at the attractions. Also, the mean scores for the income groups (Group 1: M=2.687; Group 2: M=2.757; Group 3: M=2.628; Group 4: M=2.705) prove that they agreed that their income statuses among them influenced their post-purchase intentions to visit these attractions (Table 8).

Chapter Summary

Most visitors to the attraction sites in the Central region were young, active and educated. These visitors mostly came for leisure activities, education/research and volunteering purposes. Eight factors influenced the reasons for pricing activities at the attractions. Also, four main dimensions (attraction and service, price information, economic value, and price fairness) influenced visitors' perceptions of attraction user fees towards attractions in the region. Visitors' perceptions of fairness of attraction user fees influenced them to visit the attractions as well as their intentions to make a repeat visit in the future, even though visitors lack price information about the attractions they visited.

Moreover, some differences were established across price information, economic value, attraction and service, price fairness, knowledge and awareness, experience, and quality service. Perceptions of user fees were influenced by the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors. Visitors' perceptions of user fees were also influenced by the experience they had at the attractions as well as visitors' post-purchase intentions towards visitor attractions in the region.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study examined the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees in the Central Region of Ghana. It focused on the bases of pricing policy at the selected visitor attractions, visitors' perceptions of fairness of attraction user fees, factors influencing visitors' perceptions of fairness of attraction user fees and visitors' post-purchase behavioural intentions at the destination area. The concluding part of this study presents the summary of the main findings in consonance with the stated objectives and draws conclusions on the findings and makes related recommendations.

Summary of the Study

Studies on the perceived fairness of user fees have gained popularity over the years across the globe (e.g. More & Stevens, 2000; Chung et al., 2011). This has become prudent because visitors' perceptions of how much they pay to participate in tourism recreational activities are important since many of these visitors have become price sensitive. For this reason, the study was to examine the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees in the Central Region of Ghana and specifically sought to:

- explore the bases of pricing policies of visitor attractions in the Central region;
- examine visitors' perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees in the Central region;

- analyse the factors that influence visitors' perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees in the Central region; and
- examine visitors' post-purchase intentions towards visitor attraction user fees in the Central region.

The study examines the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees in the region using a conceptual framework. The framework identifies five main elements: pricing policy, price fairness judgement, visitor characteristics, and post-purchase intentions. The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional research design, using a mixed method for data collection and analysis. Questionnaires were administered to 384 visitor attraction users and 5 managers, with a member from the Ghana Tourism Authority Central Regional branch assisting with all five active visitor attractions in the Central region. The data was edited, coded, and analyzed using SPSS version 22. Inferential analyses used factorial analysis to group variables, while one-way analysis of variance and independent-sample t-test were used to test for differences between visitors' perceptions of visitor attraction user fees and their socio-demographic profile of characteristics. ANOVA and T-test were also employed to analyze the difference between visitors' perceptions of user fees and their post-purchase intentions.

Main Findings of the Study

Based on the specific objectives of the study, the main findings were as follows:

Eight main themes underlined the pricing policies which constituted the visitor attraction user fees for activities in the region. These issues were market segmentation, competition, activity-based pricing, economic trends, cost of operation, seasons, feedback and stakeholder consultation. The study also revealed that visitors engaged in these key activities at the visitor attractions; ritual baths, listening to slave history, boat riding, canopy walkway, crocodile watching, bird watching, and swimming. The study also found that at private attractions, managers are those who determined the user fees for activities while stakeholders (committee). Moreover, tourists to the attractions do not want the user fees be a composite (bundled) price.

The study found that four main factors accounted for the perceived fairness of visitor attraction user fees: perceived value (37.58%), price information (13.55%), economic value (8.75%), and attraction and services (6.34%). These factors explained 65.72% of the total variance. However, price information was not a critical factor, as visitors were not privileged to have this information before visiting the attractions;

Visitors also consider all these other factors to be influencing their perceptions about attraction price fairness, including quality services (79.1%), experiences (69.1%), and knowledge and awareness of price (43.2%). Besides, 87% of visitors would recommend the attraction to others, and 84.7% would spread positive word-of-mouth about it. 73.1% of respondents would choose the attraction among other available attractions, and 69.4% would visit the attraction again. Thus, visitors are likely to choose the same attractions due to fair prices and quality services. In the end, visitors showed a positive reaction towards visiting the visitor attractions in the region.

Conclusions

Based on the objectives and the ensuing findings from the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

A myriad of factors forms the bases for pricing policies of visitor attractions in the Central Region. However, private attractions involve their staff in decision-making, leveraging first-hand visitor insights and stakeholder engagement to set prices. In contrast, public attractions acknowledge these determinants but do not engage their managers in deciding activity rates.

It is concluded that user fees charged for activities at the visitor attraction sites in the region were largely perceived by visitors as fair. Furthermore, visitors perceived that the factors that influenced them to visit the attraction sites was the fairness of the attraction user fees for activities in the region. This was because the user fees were moderately fixed.

Finally, it is concluded that visitors were positive about the user fees for activities and indicated that they will repeat their visit. Additionally, they are willing to recommend the visitor attraction to others for the experience, and as well choose these attractions among other available visitor attractions. Almost all visitors are likely to choose the same attractions due to the fairness of the prices of activities, and quality services they enjoyed at the destination.

Recommendations

Based on the main findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

Encourage both private and public attractions to actively involve their managers and staff in the decision-making process related to pricing. Stakeholder consultation should be prioritized, involving input from managers, staff, visitors, and other relevant parties. This collaborative approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives and factors influencing pricing policies.

Develop and implement ongoing programs to enhance visitors' knowledge and awareness of pricing structures, economic trends, and the value they receive. This could include informative materials, guided tours, or digital platforms that help visitors understand the various elements influencing pricing, fostering transparency and informed decision-making.

Emphasize the importance of quality services as a key factor in determining fair pricing. Encourage attractions to regularly assess and improve the quality of services provided to visitors. Implement feedback mechanisms to gather insights on visitor experiences and perceptions, allowing attractions to make data-driven decisions to enhance the overall visitor experience.

Acknowledge and leverage the impact of seasonality on visitor attractions in the Central region. Develop flexible and dynamic pricing strategies that take into account peak and off-peak periods. By offering special promotions or adjusting prices based on seasonal demand, attractions can optimize revenue and ensure that visitors continue to perceive the pricing as fair and reasonable throughout the year.

Suggestions for Future Research

The study examined the bases behind pricing strategies, how visitors perceive attraction user fees, what influences visitors' perceptions of attraction user fees, and how visitors behave after purchasing various kinds of activities at the attraction sites in the Central region. The implications of visitors' willingness to pay attraction user fees at other attractions in Ghana can be further explored in a qualitative study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Profile of Interviewees/Study Participants

A. Attraction managers Engaged in the Study

Code	Sex	Age	Years engaged	Highest qualification	Position occupied
A1	M	49	15	Tertiary	Principal
A2	M	55	8 months	Postgraduate	Asst. General Manager
A3	M	51	17	First degree	Officer in charge
A4	M	31	3	First degree	F. Asst. manager
A5	M	40	3	First degree	Facilities manager

Source: Fieldwork, Ahiagbah, (2022).

M= Male, Asst.=Assistant Manager, F. Asst.= Facilities Assistant Manager

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

The researcher is a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) student researching on **Perceived Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees in Central Region, Ghana.** This research is part of the requirement for the award of an MPhil degree in Tourism at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. I would be very glad if you could spend a few minutes of your time answering this questionnaire. I guarantee that all responses provided would be strictly anonymous, handled in confidence, and used for academic purposes only. Please, do try to answer every question on the instrument and **Tick (√)** the appropriate responses.

If you have any questions or reservations, please feel free to contact the researcher on **0201356268 or** e-mail**:** **hope.ahiagbah23@gmail.com.** Thank you for agreeing to take part in a study.

Informed Consent

I have read the above introduction to the questionnaire and agree to complete the questionnaire under the stated conditions. Please tick, if you agree to participate in the study (   ).

SECTION A: VISITORS' GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ON ATTRACTION SITES

1. Name of attraction visited…………………………………………….
2. How did you hear about this attraction?
   a. Friends/Relatives [ ] b. Advertisements [ ] c. Internet/Social media [ ] d. Travel agencies [ ] e. others [ ]
3. What type(s) of activity have you engaged in?................................
   ………………………………………………………………………
4. What was/were your motivations for visiting this attraction?.......................................……………………………………
5. How was your experience at the visitor attraction?
   a. Satisfied [ ] b. Unsatisfied [ ]
6. Do you think the activities are under or overpriced?
   a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]
   If yes, what do you think should be done?..
7. Would you also want all the products/services to be priced as a single unit?
   a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]
8. What would you recommend about this attraction?..
9. Is your trip/travel sponsored? a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]
10. Overall, how will you rate the user fee/price for services at the visitor attraction?
   a. Very Unfair [ ] b. Unfair [ ] c. Fair [ ] d. Very Fair [ ]

SECTION B: VISITORS' PERCEPTIONS OF FAIRNESS OF ATTRACTION USER FEES

The following statements intend to measure the visitors' perceived fairness of user fees. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements by ticking **[√]** one of the five alternatives using the scale below where ***1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree***. Please tick only **ONE (1)** option for each statement.

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
	Attraction and services					
	The following statements are to measure the fairness of attraction and its services					
1	The attraction has enough activities to be performed here					
2	There have been better-quality services at the destination					
3	There are facilities available here that offered me the needed experiences					

4	There is much information provided about the attraction and services at this attraction					
5	The restroom and resting areas are well-maintained at this attraction					
6	There are enough signages for easy direction and access to the attraction and navigation through the attraction as well					
7	The attraction has enough souvenirs to buy or take home					
	Price information					
	The following statements are to measure the price information of visitors at the attraction					
8	I was well aware of the prices here before I came					
9	I had a fair knowledge of this attraction's price through advertisement					
10	I had price information on this attraction from family and friends					
11	I am informed about this attraction's price by a travel agent/tour guide					
12	I am aware of the prices of other attractions so I know what to expect at this attraction					
13	Information about attraction prices influenced me to choose this attraction					
	Economic value					
	The following statements are to measure the economic value of visitors at the attraction					
14	The visitor attraction experience or service is appropriately priced					
15	The price paid for additional services at the attraction is acceptable					
16	The price paid for the experience is reasonable					
17	The experience at this attraction offered value for my money					
	Price Fairness					
	The following statements are to measure the perceived price fairness of visitor attraction					
18	I felt comfortable paying the attraction fee charged here					
19	The attraction user fee/price here is agreeable					
20	The price at this attraction is just/justified for what they offer here					
21	Due to the economic situation, I think the price charged here is appropriate to keep the attraction running					
22	The price charged at the attraction is worth the encounter/experience I had here					
23	The price charged is fairly/honestly what I expected					

SECTION C. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE VISITORS' PERCEPTIONS OF FAIRNESS OF USER FEES

The following statements intend to measure the factors that influence visitors' perceptions of fairness of user fees. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements by ticking **[√]** one of the five alternatives using the scale below where ***1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree***. Please tick only **ONE (1)** option for each statement.

	Knowledge and Awareness of Price	1	2	3	4	5
	The following statements are to measure the knowledge and awareness of price of the visitors at the attraction					
24	There is a price difference between what I paid at the visitor attraction and what others paid (due to differences in age, and travel group size)					
25	I know the price charged at this attraction is consistent with the current economic situation					
26	The user fee charged at the attraction is not questionable at all					
27	Considering all aspects, I think the attraction is not trying to make a lot of profit based on the prices charged here.					
28	The prices offered at this attraction are currently the best prices available					
29	The prices at the attraction are posted for all to see, and it is consistent with what must be charged over the periods					
30	Looking at prices out there, the attraction is transparent with its prices charges					
	Experiences					
	The statements below are to measure the experiences visitors had at the attraction					
31	The visitor attraction experience is well-formed					
32	I am happy with the price I paid for the experience I had at this attraction					
33	The information I had beforehand made me satisfied with the price charged at the experience					
34	I am satisfied with the overall experience of the visitor attraction and deserve to pay for this					
	Quality service					
	The statements below intend to measure the quality service the visitors had at the attraction					
35	The service/experience has an acceptable and standard quality					
36	The service/experience is well delivered					
37	I think the treatment I received at the attraction was fair					

SECTION D: USER FEES AND POST-PURCHASE INTENTIONS AT ATTRACTIONS

The following statements intend to measure the post-purchase intentions of visitors. Please indicate your response by ticking **[√]** the boxes provided on how the under-listed statements apply to you. The responses range from **1-5** (***1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree***)

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
	Due to the prices of activities,					
1	I think I will always visit this visitor attraction again					
2	I will spread positive word-of-mouth about this attraction					
3	I will always recommend this attraction to others for the experience					
4	At any time, I will choose this attraction among other available attraction					

SECTION E: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Please indicate your response by ticking **[√]** the boxes provided.

11. Sex a. Male [ ] b. Female [ ]

12. Age

a. Below 20 [ ] c. 30-39 [ ]

b. 20-29 [ ] d. Above 40 [ ]

13. Highest level of education

a. JHS/Middle [ ] c. First degree [ ]

b. SHS/Voc./Tech. [ ] d. Graduate/Postgraduate [ ]

14. Marital status

a. Single [ ] b. Married [ ] c. Separated [ ] d. Divorced [ ] e. Widowed [ ]

15. Religious affiliation?

a. Christian [ ] b. Muslim [ ] c. Others [ ]

16. Employment status

a. Employed [ ] b. Unemployed [ ] c. Self-employed [ ]

17. Nationality a. Ghanaian [ ] b. Non-Ghanaian [ ]

18. Continent of origin………………..

a. Africa [ ] b. Europe [ ] c. North America [ ] d. Australia [ ]

e. South America [ ]

19. Income level

a. Less than GHC 500 [ ] c. GHC 1001-GHC 1500 [ ]

b. GHC 501-1000 [ ] d. Above GHC 2000 [ ]

20. Purpose of visit

a. Leisure [ ] b. Education/ research [ ]

c. Volunteering [ ] d. Others (Specify)………………..

21. Travel party a. Individual Traveler [ ] b. Group Traveler [ ]

22. What type of a visitor are you? a. First time visitor [ ]

b. Repeat visitor [ ]

THANK YOU

APPENDIX C

In-Depth Interview Guide

Bases of Pricing Policies at Visitor Attractions

Dear Sir/Madam,

It will be greatly appreciated if you could participate in research on the topic **"Perceived Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees in Central Region, Ghana"**. The purpose of this interview guide is to solicit information from the managers or site officers on the bases of pricing policies at visitor attractions in the Central Region. I guarantee that all responses provided would be strictly anonymous, handled in confidence, and used for academic purposes ONLY. Please, your participation in this study is voluntary but, your decision to participate will be highly appreciated. Thank you.

SECTION A

Pease provide the appropriate answers to the following questions

a) What activities do you have at the attraction?

b) What accounted for the pricing of the activities at the attraction priced?

c) What pricing policies or strategies are implemented at the attraction?

d) Who is responsible for regulating the pricing policies at the attraction?

e) Do you sometimes involve your employees or staff in decision-making especially when it comes to pricing?

f) Have the visitors complained about the user fees charged at the attraction?

g) What were some of the issues raised by the visitors?

h) Do you sometimes face challenges as a manager in charge of the attraction when it comes to pricing issues?

i) Overall, do you think the prices charged at the attraction are fair?

SECTION B

Background Information

1. Name of the attraction?
2. Your sex
3. Your age
4. How long have you been working at this attraction?
5. In what capacity are you working at this attraction?
6. Your marital status

APPENDIX D

Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309
E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh
OUR REF: IRB/C3/Vol.1/0057
YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0011497

3RD MARCH 2023

Mr Hope Ahiagbah
Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr Ahiagbah,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CHLS/2022/86)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research on **Perceived Fairness of Visitor Attraction User Fees in Central Region, Ghana.** This approval is valid from 3rd March 2023 to 2nd March 2024. You may apply for a renewal subject to the submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit a periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

Kofi F. Amuquandoh

Ag. Administrator

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST