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TOPIC

**STATE SPONSORED TOURISM ATTRACTIONS AS A VEHICLE FOR
ECONOMIC GROWTH: THE CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
PERFORMANCE IN LESOTHO**

By

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Statement of originality

I, the undersigned, confirm that this research is my own work and was done while I was a student at Botho University as partial completion of my Masters in Business Administration (MBA) Degree. I confirm that any concepts of other people have been completely recognised using the Harvard referencing style.

Dedication

I devote this research to my loving family, and friends. I am continually grateful for the support and motivation.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express thanks to my supervisor, Professor Olumide Jaiyeoba, for the guidance and leadership that he provided during my study. The constructive criticism that he continuously contributed with made it easier for me to graft on this dissertation. His words of inspiration, endurance, and tolerance contributed a lot to the accomplishment of my work.

I would furthermore like to show gratitude the students that played a part in the study — the research participants — who sacrificed their time and effort to respond to my questions. Their contribution resulted in the attainment of this work.

Abbreviations and acronyms

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

GDP: Gross domestic product

ICTs: Information communication technologies

LTDC: Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation

MTEC: Ministry of Tourism Environment and Culture

SA: South Africa

SADC: Southern African Development Community

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TDC: Tourism Development Corporation

UNWTO: World Tourism Organisation

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Definition of terms

Economy: The state of a country in relation to the production and consumption of services and goods and the money supply.

Gross domestic product: The measure of value and size of a nation's economy. It is noted as the total value of all the goods plus services produced during a specific time period, usually a year.

Tourism: The action of persons staying one or more nights (but not more than a year) away from their normal setting for purposes such as holidays, business, visiting relatives and friends, and any other.

Tourist: It is defined by the World Tourism Organisation as "a visitor whose length of visit is at least one night and whose main purpose of visit may be classified under one of the three following groups: (a) professional and business (b) holidays and leisure (c) other tourism purpose."

Inbound tourist: A foreigner visiting another country for purpose of tourism.

Sustainable tourism: Tourism that ensures that present and future generations benefit from tourism activities.

Attractions: Things tourists regularly like to see or even do.

Abstract

The tourism industry has developed remarkably since the Second World War to turn out to be the world's major economic activity. Moreover, tourism has become one of the greatest vital pushers for economic development in numerous countries. Most literature highlights that tourism carries the growth of economies of numerous countries. Tourism does not only contribute to the positive stimulation of the economy, but it also generates employment and revenue. Lesotho is rich in tourist attractions ranging from skiing, hiking, fly fishing, rock painting, rock art, bird watching, dinosaur bone fossils, and many more, but few research studies highlight the plight of Lesotho's tourism attractions. Therefore, this study investigated why Lesotho's attractions are not attracting a significantly incremental number of tourist arrivals on a year-to-year basis, and whether the state has the ability to mobilise more international visitors to its tourist attractions and ensure tourism-driven economic growth. For this study, convenience sampling was used to gather data by interviewing 30 participants in each of the 11 villages of the Qacha's Nek district, one of the 10 districts of Lesotho. Each of the interviewees was helped to fill in a questionnaire that the researcher analysed and drew conclusions on whether the Lesotho possess the potential to have more inbound arrivals to its attractions and if government could play a significant role towards boosting the economy through tourism. The results highlighted that Lesotho has the potential to attract a significantly high number of inbound tourist arrivals owing to the nation's rich cultural diversity and unique scenery, but the state and relevant authorities should address issues of concern such as vandalism and lack of security at attraction sites, poor roads, lack of signage on roads, and the deterioration of tourist attractions. The study recommends that for Lesotho's attractions to experience increased international visitor arrivals, issues such as security, accessibility, accommodation, and upgrading of infrastructure should be addressed.

1 Chapter 1-Background of the study

1.1 Introduction

Countless times, it has been stated that countries rich in tourism attractions are more likely to achieve economic stability due to the mass of international inbound visitors who contribute to the increase of a nation's gross domestic product (GDP). Doswell (2004) posits that the tourism industry has matured remarkably ever since the Second World War to develop in to the world's biggest economic activity. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) forecasted that there will be 1.4 billion visitor arrivals worldwide by 2020; however, this figure was reached in 2018 (Hunter, 2019). Tourism is one of the vital drivers of economic progression in numerous countries. Therefore, tourism actions are taken to be some of the main sources of economic development. Khali, Kakar, and Waliullah (2008), thus, contend that tourism additions foreign exchange earnings that are coming from trade in commodities and, at times, finances the import of capital goods that are essential for the growth of the manufacturing sector for a nation's economy. As a result, countries continually need to bolster their tourism attractions for economic expansion and to gain a competitive advantage over competitors.

Tourism attractions are the key pullers of tourists to destinations of interest, and an increased number of inbound tourist arrivals have been noted to lead to economic growth. Tourist attractions have been observed to be a driving force towards the elevation of economic growth such that also countries with just one or two of tourism products and services still attract tourists and consequently stimulate their economies.

Lesotho is rich in tourist attractions that range from waterfalls, wetlands, dinosaur foot prints, dinosaur fossils, rock climbing, ice climbing, fly fishing, Bushmen paintings, hot springs, rock art, national parks, and many more. Also, Lesotho is the single country in Africa where one can ski on natural snow, and this is because of the spectacular weather and snow fall it experiences mostly in winter.

Most countries with abundant tourist attractions tend to have an influx of tourists, which subsequently boosts economic growth. However, Lesotho is currently

experiencing few tourist arrivals, yet it possesses abundant attractions. In Mpaki's article (2019), the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) stated that the country had witnessed 1.2 million tourist arrivals for the year 2018 (3.1 percent jump from 2017). Comparatively, Morris (2018) states that Rwanda, which is just about the same size as Lesotho, but with only one-dimensional tourism, reached the same figures in 2017 — mostly from issuance of gorilla permits (96 per day at a cost of US\$1,500) and permits for visiting the Volcano National Park (US\$1,600). Moreover, the Mountain Kingdom is suffering a serious unemployment crisis despite the nation's rich tourism attractions that could be maximised to generate jobs and boost the economy.

The (MTEC) and LTDC, which are accountable for the marketing of Lesotho's tourism sector, provide technical support by sketching up tourism development plans for priority zones and identifying opportunities for the private sector to invest in. The LTDC also surprisingly highlights that the most regularly cited motives by tourists for visiting Lesotho are not the attractions. According to the LTDC (2006), visitors to Lesotho noted motives such as visiting friends and family (61.2 percent), visiting for holiday purposes (27.5 percent), and visiting for business (10.49 percent), even though the nation has abundant tourist attractions but few visitors frequent the attraction sites.

Therefore, this study was designed to investigate the worrying negative correlation between Lesotho's abundant tourist attractions, rich cultural diversity, and unique scenery against the poor visitor arrivals, high unemployment rate, and the poor performing economy. Another worrying issue is the state's failure to intervene and ensure that Lesotho's economy is boosted through sustainable tourism.

1.2 Background

Tourism is a key economic booster. According to Tourism Growth (2019), the tourism sector of South Africa (SA) — directly and indirectly — contributed, in 2017, about 8.9 percent of the country's GDP, which translates to R412.5 billion. In the same year, SA's tourism industry was responsible for creating 1.5 million jobs (approximately 10 percent of the total labour force of the country). Tourist attractions are the major pullers of tourists to destinations of interest, and an increased number

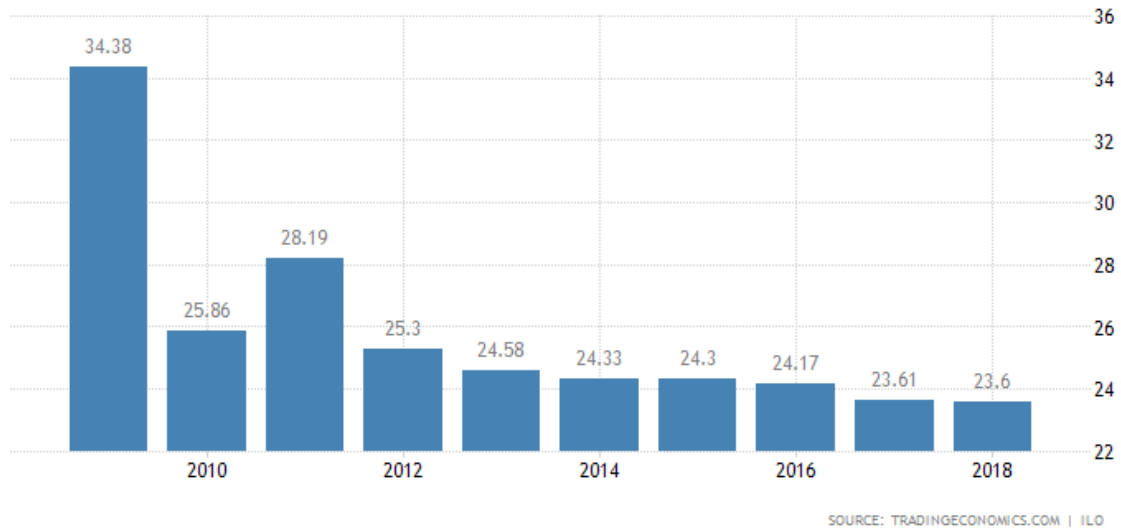
of inbound tourist arrivals has been noted to lead to economic growth. Tourism attractions have been observed to be the driving force towards the advancement of economic development in such that also countries with one or two of tourism products and services still attract tourists and consequently stimulate their economies. For example, there is a massive market for coffee tourism, which entails connecting coffee enthusiasts (tourists) to coffee farms, farmers, and communities. CEO of Uganda Tourism Board, Stephen Asiimwe, highlighted some of the benefits of coffee tourism, stating that there are incremental earnings and global exposure for both farmers and those in the hospitality and tourism industries when customers, who are covered in terms of transport and accommodation, visit coffee farms to gain a first-hand experience of the farming and production processes of coffee (Reinstein, 2018). Also, Anbalagan and Lovelock (2014) say that coffee tourism gives a supplementary attraction for Rwanda's one-dimensional tourism (the gorilla tourism) by lengthening the period of stay of visitors; consequently, the tourists spend more money during their prolonged stay. Furthermore, Rwanda's tourism is the major foreign exchange payee, yet it only has a handful of tourism attractions that numerous experience an influx of tourist arrivals, who spend lavishly and stay for prolonged periods of time.

Lesotho, being different from countries such as Rwanda, is one of the countries rich in tourist attractions that ranges from: national parks, dinosaur fossils, waterfalls, rock art, wetlands, dinosaur foot prints, rock climbing, hot springs, ice climbing, fly fishing, Bushmen paintings, and countless more. Like it has been stated before, Lesotho is the single country in Africa where one can ski on natural snow, and this is owing to the remarkable climate and snow fall it experiences mostly in winter.

Most countries with abundant tourist attractions tend to have an influx of tourists, which subsequently boosts economic growth. However, Lesotho is currently experiencing few tourist arrivals yet it possesses abundant of attractions. Comparatively, Morris (2018) states that Rwanda, which is just about the same size as Lesotho, but with only one-dimensional tourism, reached more tourism figures than Lesotho, this shows that there is something wrong that Lesotho is doing which Rwanda is doing correctly, remembering that it only makes revenue mostly from issuance of gorilla permits (96 per day at a cost of US\$1,500) and permits for visiting

the Volcano National Park (US\$1,600). Moreover, the Mountain Kingdom is facing a serious joblessness crisis, in spite of the nation’s amusing tourism attractions, which can generate jobs and boost the economy.

Fig 1: Lesotho unemployment scenario (% units)



Source: Trading Economics (<https://tradingeconomics.com/lesotho/unemployment-rate>) 2019

The unemployment rate in Lesotho appears to be falling but at a slow rate, though tourism has been noted in much literature to possess the likelihood to turn the tide of unemployment while fostering economic development. Katherine (2014) explains that countless regional authorities and governments show that tourism has provided solutions to problems connected to lost financial chances while at the same time generating jobs, especially in rural places.

The (MTEC) and LTDC, which are in charge of Lesotho’s tourism marketing sector, provide technical assistance by drawing up tourism expansion plans for main concern areas and identifying prospects for private sector investment. The LTDC also surprisingly highlights that the most frequently cited reasons by tourists for visiting Lesotho are not the attractions. According to the LTDC, visitors to Lesotho noted motives such as visiting friends and family (61.2 percent), visiting for holiday purposes (27.5 percent), and visiting for business (10.49 percent), yet the nation has abundant tourist attractions. Why is this the case? How can this gap be filled? Is the

state not playing a significant role to boost tourism in Lesotho? Is state-sponsored tourism the answer? As with most countries, for Lesotho to achieve sustainable tourism performance, should it be highlighted that the state must concentrate on making it a point that its attractions get an avalanche of visitors? Judging from the experiences of other countries such as Rwanda, which receives more tourist arrivals than Lesotho, there would be a huge lift to the delicate economy of Lesotho if the state embarks on tourism-driven economic growth. That being said, it is imperative to comprehend the underlying factors for few tourist arrivals. Therefore, understanding the focal point of Lesotho's low number of visitors to tourism attractions and addressing the challenges would be key to boosting tourism in Lesotho. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) noted some of the reasons why the region is handicapped in terms of tourism the reasons are that, historically, governments have not placed appropriate attention on tourism, let alone budgeted for the industry's development owing to its several subsectors that the region has failed to accurately monitor to analyse and quantify the amount of economic activity due to tourism (SADC.int, n.d).

Suppose other reasons such as the lack of development of attraction sites affect tourist arrivals, then measures that include adding value to the resorts should be undertaken by the state, or the tourism governing body or private sector. For altogether these endeavours will help to solve the problems, the government should take advantage of the important strengths of Lesotho's tourist destinations and market the country extensively — both locally and internationally.

The aim of the research is to study why Lesotho's attractions are not performing as the literature reviews had expected.

The Lesotho attractions can help local communities profit, directly or indirectly, through the selling of handcrafts to tourists and employment of community members. Currently, the attractions are experiencing low tourist visits, yet there is no massive campaign by the Lesotho government and local private sector to restore or improve the state of the attractions. Furthermore, there is minimum or no regulation concerning the attractions such that some tourists who visit the attractions freely take some artefacts as souvenirs. In essence, the tourists are illegally "mining our gold."

Such behaviour and practices negatively affect the worth of Lesotho’s attractions, yet the policymakers are quiet about such unruly behaviour and are not forthcoming on designing a framework to prevent tourist vandalism — currently. Singh (2014) acknowledges the destructive nature of vandalism by inbound visitors to attractions, adding that it has an adverse effect on the visited location. Below, the table shows statistics concerning the Mountain Kingdom’s strength as a tourist destination.

Table 1: KEY STRENGTHS OF LESOTHO AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

	All	domestic	RSA	Europe
Base: adults	204	41	96	45
	%	%	%	%
Landscape/scenery	62	46	70	71
Cultural attractions	39	46	29	47
Historical attractions	23	51	2	22
Sports and adventure	20	10	26	16
Hospitality of the Basotho	47	46	70	71

Source: Tourist Survey, World Bank, 2006

The effort of the government, once more, in the pursuit for sustainable tourism performance should be studying the weaknesses of Lesotho as a tourism destination and then convert those weaknesses into strengths. The table below shows the weaknesses of Lesotho as a tourist destination.

Table 2: WEAKNESSES OF LESOTHO AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

	All	Domestic	RSA	Europe
	%	%	%	%
Base: adults	204	41	96	45
Air access	14	32	9	7
Difficulty to travel around	27	41	16	44

Quality of service	14	24	13	11
Standard of accommodation	14	15	15	16
Expensive	5	7	6	0

Source: Tourist Survey, World Bank, 2006

Since these determinants might be the Kingdom of Lesotho's critical victory factors, they should be looked into and addressed.

1.3 Problem Statement

Lesotho is sitting on a "gold mine" of attraction sites as it has a number of tourist attractions capable of addressing the country's unemployment debacle and boosting the economy if proper tourism strategies are implemented to ensure more visitor arrivals to the Mountain Kingdom. With regard to this information, the research problem was formulated: Why are Lesotho attractions experiencing low tourist visits, and why is the government not going all out to boost tourist-driven economic growth? One of the causes that one might think negatively affects sustainable tourism performance in Lesotho is the point that the Mountain Kingdom is a landlocked country that is completely bordered by SA to the point that Lesotho, as a destination for tourists, is unfamiliar and it still needs to be turned into a well-known destination (it is in the wilderness). However, this school of thought does not hold water in this day and age because the world has become a global village where such barriers can be circumvented by the strategic use of existent information technologies. Information technologies are a vital way of spearheading strategic operational management as information dissemination stimulates tourism. In reviewing tourism literature, Bethapudi (2013) states that, globally, information communication technologies (ICTs) play a vital part in the transformation of the tourism industry. In addition, ICTs 'bring benefits in encouraging and strengthening the tourism industry's approach and procedures' (Bethapudi, 2013).

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives were to:

- Determine the state of tourist attractions
- Determine the factors leading to poor visitor arrivals to Lesotho attractions
- Examine factors that lure tourists to Lesotho
- Examine what the government can do to boost tourism

1.5 Significance of the study

According to Tourism Growth (2019), tourism contributes — directly and indirectly to a country's GDP, and also creates jobs. This implies that the high unemployment rate (which stands at 36 percent) in the Lesotho society could be reduced and foreign currency earnings could be improved through boosting tourism in an appropriate and sustainable manner. Also, the government is best place to improve and secure tourist attractions and educate Basotho about the importance of the sites through engaging both the private sector and host communities of attraction sites. Furthermore, ensuring that Basotho understand and appreciate the prospective and worth of our nation's attractions, it will assistance the country discover latent markets for the attractions that Lesotho possess while, equally, preserving the Basotho cultural heritage. Therefore, the significance of the study is to understanding the constraints hindering Lesotho in its efforts to achieve tourism-driven economic growth, which would in turn assistance the country achieve a competitive advantage internationally in the tourism industry. For researchers, the study will assist them discover even more rewards from the critical and beneficial zones in the tourism industry. Thus, Lesotho will harness the fruits of the resultant economies of scale.

1.6 Scope of the study

Lesotho is made up of ten districts. However, the study was narrowed to only one district — Qacha's Nek — and the findings from this district were used to generalise the views of the population concerning the state of tourism in Lesotho. The district was selected because it has several tourist attractions, which are not being marketed well and properly maintained by the state or the tourism governing body. However, they are other visitor attractions located in other districts such as Quthing and Butha-Buthe that suffer the same fate. Nevertheless, due to time and financial constraints,

one district had to be selected. Furthermore, only questionnaires were used for data collection after gathering the database of Qacha's Nek's tourism attractions. The number of interviewed people depended on the population around the attraction sites and number of inbound foreign travellers to those sites, as noted during the data collection dates. Also, literature from different sources, which relates to the scope of the study, was collected and utilised to back up the research.

1.7 Limitation of the study

Given that only one district — Qacha's Nek — was used as the sample of the whole study, it should be noted that this decision possibly presented limitations for the research. Views from one district may, at times, not resonate with the perceptions of other districts. For example, people in districts such as Maseru — which has a comparatively high urban and peri-urban population owing to its capital city status — may share divergent views to those in the rural areas such as Qacha's Nek. Also, at times, those in rural areas share different hardships (lack of electricity, close water supply system, poor infrastructure, .) compared to those in urban and peri-urban zones, which is one aspect of society that influences community views — political, economic and many more. Therefore, the use of a sample district that is mostly rural, to an extent, negates the views of the urban population of Lesotho, which is a limitation to the study.

1.8 Summary

This chapter highlighted the importance of boosting tourism to consequently achieve economic growth for the nation, adding that increased visitor arrivals translate to increased foreign currency earnings, reduced unemployment rate, and infrastructure development. Also, community engagement of members of the society contributes towards preserving the Basotho cultural heritage. Given that Lesotho has a rich cultural heritage and unique scenery, which are the key strengths of Mountain Kingdom as a tourist target destination, MTEC and LTDC should maximise on the use of ICT's to market the country internationally and gain a competitive advantage in the tourism industry. However, the state ought to address issues such as poor infrastructure, security at attraction sites, and curb vandalism of sites to boost visitor arrivals.

2 Chapter 2-Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Inasmuch as tourism can have undesirable impacts — especially, when visitors have low regard for the local culture of the hosting nation, ranging from traditional weakening, environmental effects due to mass tourism, and other factors, but the world economy is largely stimulated by the growing of inbound tourists to visitor attractions. In general, the more authentic attractions a country possesses, the more visitors it gets. According to the UNWTO (2000), expenditures by 693 million international tourists traveling in 2001 totalled US\$462 billion, roughly US\$1.3 billion per day, worldwide. These statistics show that tourism can solve the international unemployment crisis if it is strategically applied with the right focus. Suppose, Lesotho could manage to get a substantial slice of the US\$1.3 billion per day, this would provide a major boost to the country's economy.

Khali, Kakar and Waliullah (2008) show that, worldwide, tourism attractions are taken to be one of the central sources of economic development. They argue that tourism attractions can be considered as the instrument of producing employment as well as revenue in together the formal and informal sector. Shan and Wilson (2001) also emphasised this in their empirical analysis, stating that South Korea's economic growth was mostly due to tourism expansion. However, it has been emphasised that the degree of tourism growth due to visitations to tourist attractions has to go hand-in-hand with the improvement of environmental security measures (Yuyan et al., 2017). Environmental protection measures may include, among others, strategies that mitigate property damage. In the process of alleviating property damage at attraction sites, host communities can be engaged in the surveillance of the attractions, which then creates jobs for the community members and also instils a sense of ownership among the members. In addition, host communities — both residents and businesses — are the most affected stakeholders by the outcome at the attraction sites; so, their level of engagement in environmental protection of attraction sites and operations has a bearing on the success/failure at a particular site and the tourism industry at large (Singh 2014: p.173-4).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The literature of the late 80s about state-sponsored tourism as a vehicle for economic growth, by Richter (1985), points out that the development of tourism attractions as a means of economic development is a sector that is not broadly understood or not even considered at all. Also, a survey of a period of 10 years of articles in the top journals show none existence of such articles. The most recent literature on related topics, mostly shows the importance of tourism attractions, problems caused by tourism, destination marketing and positioning, and so forth. For example, Katherine (2014), to name but a few, does not highlight, in-depth, why places rich in attractions are not visited and the role the state has to play to circumvent such a situation. Katherine (2014), only highlights that tourism offers an answer to the problems of a nation's economy and that the government and different authorities embrace the role tourism plays in driving the economy.

This research exists because, in the analysis of the literature the researcher has not so far come across such topic, there is no straight study on the topic as it is. Also, there is no study at all related to Lesotho's tourism in relation to the state, economy, and visitor attractions. The study will work as a step-by-step guide on what the state should do to drive the economy and ensure that the number of inbound tourists to attraction sites improves. The research will also highlight why Lesotho's attractions are not being visited as frequently as they should. This clearly shows that there is a missing link in the existing literature on Lesotho's tourism situation, hence this study. Moreover, most of the literature the researcher has encountered turns to generalise the matter.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Fig 2: Conceptual framework



2.4 Why places of attractions are visited

Manrai and Friedborn (2018) made fascinating themes why people visit most attractions. They discussed issues pertaining to destination competitiveness, arguing that competitive positioning is vital in relation to the performance of an individual attraction or its attributes while citing cultural tourism in Toronto, Canada and many other strategically positioned countries as examples.

Moreover, the other related factor to the visitation of attractions was that of marketing a destination to lure more visitors. Buhalis (2000) shares the same sentiments about the significance of competitive positioning, adding that it's a process that should be prioritised. However, what is intriguing is that Lesotho has an added advantage over other African countries when it comes to attracting tourists: snow-skiing travellers because of its mountainous nature and a climate that provides it with natural snow. Therefore, it can out-compete other African countries such as Morocco and Algeria that are manufactured snow in the Atlas Mountains when it comes to being the destination of priority for skiing. Despite Lesotho's "trump card" of possessing a natural ski resort, the number of tourist arrivals does not correlate with this attribute (Manrai and Friedborn, 2008). Moreover, Lesotho is marketing its attractions internationally through the LTDC, which is an internationally renowned institution.

2.5 The State and Tourism Attractions

It can be contended that for the tourism attractions to be capable to attract tourists the state has to be in the forefront because it is the main generator of revenue in many countries, particularly in developing countries. Richter (1985) states that tourism has been important to the state's economies long before governments accepted the role it played towards mobilising economic development. In nearly all the countries where the state is included in tourism, the economy advances. Yan and Wall (2002) report China as one of the most developed economies in the world. This could be attributed to, amongst other reasons, the government playing a primary role in mobilising tourism as a means of attracting foreign exchange; thus, stimulating economic growth.

Table 3. National economic and tourism growth indices in China, 1980-1995.

Year	International tourism receipts	GDP	Secondary industry value added
1980	100.0	100.0	100.0
1985	201.6	198.4	176.4
1990	358.1	410.5	352.1
1995	1,408.1	1,289.5	1,285.3

Source: China statistical year book, 1996; China tourism statistics year book 1996

2.6 Growth, organisation, and similarities between Lesotho’s tourism institutes and other tourism thriving countries

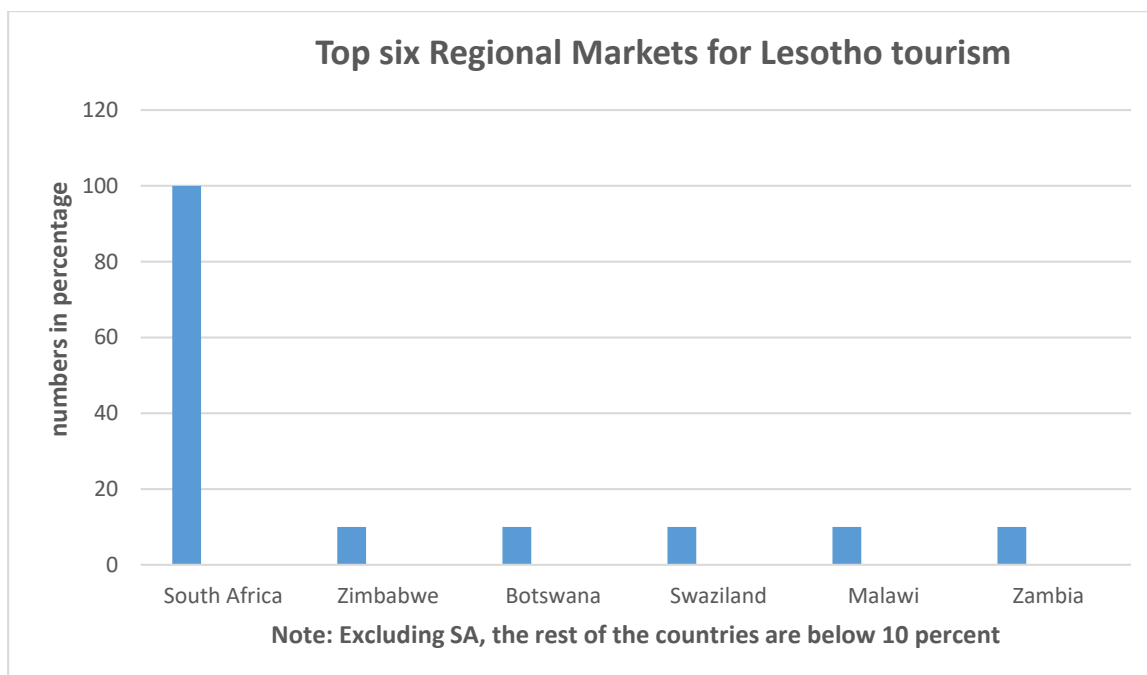
There are numerous resemblances between the LTDC and other African tourism corporates of booming tourism countries that are tasked with spearheading tourism-driven economic growth. These countries include Botswana and Kenya, to name but a few. Botswana and Kenya have made massive inroads in terms of attracting an incremental number of tourist arrivals, which in turn has furthered economic growth. However, the same cannot be said of Lesotho. Therefore, in this study, similarities will be drawn between the tourism of Lesotho and Malaysia in a quest to establish why Lesotho’s attractions are not being visited as frequently as they should when the Mountain Kingdom possesses a plethora of attractions. Also, the paper will investigate what the nation might be doing differently from other countries with international tourist destinations that are receiving an avalanche of inbound arrivals.

Marzuki (2010) cites that the government of Malaysia became seriously involved in tourism development in the 1960s and strategically developed rural areas to provide diversity for the national economy. Thereafter, Malaysia’s tourism industry radically became the second significant sector after the petroleum industry in the 1970s. The Malaysia government, by prioritising the tourism industry, established the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) and later incorporated it into the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Tourism in an effort to diversify its tourism base and to decrease the country’s reliance on a slim range of activities.

On the same note, like Malaysia, Lesotho followed suit by placing emphasis on the tourism sector when it created the LTDC. Still following in the footsteps of Malaysia, the country established the Ministry of Tourism, Environment, and Culture to expand and diversify tourism. Surprisingly, even after adopting similar measures as Malaysia (in the tourism framework), Lesotho is far from achieving tourism-driven economic. The nation is yet to reach its potential in that regard. This could probably be explained as a deficiency of political will by the Lesotho government, which was not the case with the Malaysia government.

Hudson (2006) highlights that places with attractive tourism attractions are the most popularly visited, citing the Waterfalls, in Zimbabwe, as one of the popular tourist attractions. Little to the knowledge of the international community, Lesotho has a number of such attractions. Excluding South Africa, as it completely surrounds Lesotho, all other African tourism markets are below 10 percent, and the top reasons for visiting Lesotho are employment, holiday, and business, so highlights the LTDC statistics (2015). Surprisingly, tourist attractions, which are plenty, are not the leading mobiliser of visitor arrivals in Lesotho. On the other hand, <https://www.Africa.com/> reports that the top 10 African travel destinations — one must visit and have numerous tourist attractions — include Botswana, Kenya, and **Lesotho**. The former two are being visited frequently by a large number of inbound arrivals, yet Lesotho is not experiencing the same response from international tourists.

Fig 3: Leading regional markets for Lesotho tourism



Source: Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation statistics, 2015

Therefore, A fresh research insight is necessary to investigate why Lesotho’s tourist attractions are not being visited as often as they should. Moreover, are the aspects of marketing Lesotho as a tourist destination being conducted “correctly” by the LTDC? The LTDC has been marketing Lesotho on different platforms such as the Internet, social media, television shows, and print media, but there has not been a significant upward change with regard to the number of inbound arrivals. Therefore, it is for this reason this research is of significance.

2.7 Related Literature (Subsections)

2.7.1 Tourism industry

According to Tribe (2009), there is no full agreement on the definition of tourism among researchers and professionals because the phenomenon is defined by scholars and institutions from various fields. However, tourism (a word derived from tour – travelling for pleasure, exploration, .) is defined by the UNWTO as the actions of people moving to and staying in settings, which are not their normal environment, for a timeframe that does not exceed a year for purposes of recreation, entertainment, pleasure, business, among others (Tribe, 2009: p. 44). Tourism has evolved from being traditionally termed a luxurious activity of the upper class and

simple travel to pure economics that is affected by the forces of supply and demand. Therefore, in this paper, tourism is considered in the reference given by the UNWTO. As such, tourism involves the movement of humans from place to place to engage in activities that benefits the host destination economically. That being said, the researcher does not negate aspects which encompass tourism as persons moving from one place to the next place for business commitments too. Tribe (2009) notes that some definitions of tourism 'eliminate the concept of tourism as the displacement encouraged by work or rewarded/remunerated activity.' However, despite the variations in the definition of tourism, numerous literatures acknowledge the positive economic aspects of tourism for the host nation. Wang, Zhang, and Lee (2012) assert that tourism leads to the development of various sectors of the economy while promoting the advancements of services such as global finance, cultural uniqueness, and entertainment, among others. Therefore, given that the tourism pertaining to this study has been defined, it is worth noting that the measure of the impact of tourism on a nation's economy can be deduced by analysing such determinants as tourism receipts and the number of foreign inbound tourist arrivals in a host country among others. The researcher's focus area for the study was Lesotho, and the assessment of the number of international tourist arrivals was used to gauge whether the tourism sector in the Mountain Kingdom is living up to its potential with regard to the industry's ability to significantly contribute towards economic growth.

2.7.2 Importance of attractions

According to Wellings and Crush (1983), Lesotho witnessed a rapid rise of international arrivals with regard to tourism; however, the nation suffered a downward spiral in terms of inbound tourist arrivals, length of stay, and bed occupancy due to its heavy reliance on South Africa to market the Mountain Kingdom's attractions. Another hindrance factor to Lesotho's tourism sector was the external control of its hotel industry, which Wellings and Crush (1983) note as a downswing corporate strategy. Nevertheless, Robinson and Phipps (2016) acknowledge that Lesotho is a country rich in cultural heritage, an element that is essential for boosting its tourism sector. In addition to the rich cultural heritage, Lesotho also possesses numerous attractions worth visiting, which is a critical factor to a nation's economy (McKercher, 2001). Highlighting on Urry's *The Tourist Gaze*,

Babu, Mishra and Parida (2008) emphasise that different kinds of technologies such as TV, radio, the Internet, etc., are not sufficient to provide a person with the same experience as they would get when they venture on a corporeal travel to an attraction site. In that regard, the proper and strategic management of attractions is of vital importance to a country's economic growth as tourism boosts the GDP, creates employment, and directly or indirectly caters for the livelihoods of host communities of the visited attraction sites when there is an influx of visitor arrivals to the attractions.

2.7.3 Background of Tourism in Lesotho

Owing to the number negative correlation between the number of attractions that Lesotho possess and the low international visitor arrivals to the Mountain Kingdom, the country's tourism industry is considered 'a sleeping giant,' as highlighted in Mpaki's article (2018). The author further stresses that because Lesotho has an "exceptional natural beauty of rugged and lofty mountains, the country should be experiencing numerous international visitor arrivals that would boost the economic activity of the nation. As has been the plight of Lesotho's tourism sector. Lesotho's natural scenery, high altitude, and rich cultural heritage have always been key factors in terms of attracting tourists. However, Mpaki's article also notes that the lack of proper organisational and strategic management by the relevant authorities is a drawback for the country's tourism industry, adding that community members are sparingly involved and politicians seldom attempt to formulate policies that promote tourism. Some of the notable attraction sites, according to Tourism Attractions In Lesotho (2017), are the Sehlabathebe National Park, Maletsunyane Waterfalls, Thaba Bosiu Mountain, Tse'hlanganyane National Park, Liphofung Nature Reserve, Lesotho Highlands, and the Royal Archives, Museum And Information Centre. However, Lesotho's tourism industry still ranks low on the world ratings. According to The Tourism Industry of Lesotho Tourism Essay (2018), Lesotho ranks as low as 180 out of 181 – lower than fellow Southern African Countries like Swaziland (Eswatini, which ranks 167). To improve Lesotho's tourism prospects and competitiveness, the LTDC – a parastatal – was tasked by the government to market Lesotho as a tourist destination. The LTDC, while attending international tourism exhibitions and conventions, have noted that for Lesotho to make inroads in the tourism fraternity, the country needs to be known better than before – internationally.

The LTDC also launched a webpage that facilitates travellers to know more about Lesotho (The Tourism Industry of Lesotho Tourism Essay, 2018).

Chapter 3-Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The study investigated why Lesotho's attractions are not attracting incremental but marginal numbers of tourists on a year-to-year basis when there should be a vast rise in arrivals based on the numerous attractions the nation possesses and the efforts of the LTDC to market Lesotho as a favourable destination. The research also established if this anomaly can be addressed through government-sponsored tourism, which is designed to drive the economic growth of the country. Thus, the assessed if sustainable tourism performance can be achieved in Lesotho and whether it should be state-sponsored? Last, the study also analysed whether Lesotho attractions have the potential to attract international markets.

3.2 Research orientation

For this study, both primary and secondary research were utilised. In addition, mixed method of research was used. This is because it involves both quantitative and qualitative data. Creswell (2014) indicates the importance of this kind of method, stating that a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a better and appropriate understanding of the research problem than applying either of the approaches individually. Therefore, both approaches will be used to achieve optimum results.

To explain further about both methods, a qualitative research allows the final report to be structurally flexible. Creswell (2014) demonstrates that the qualitative approach is mostly used to understand the implication in clusters attributed to social difficulties, and it involves developing questions, procedures and data collected from the participants setting, data enquiry inductively building from particulars to the general themes, and researchers building analyses of the meaning of the data. The quantitative method usually falls under empirical studies. Benz and Newman (1998) argue that it is the important method in research, and it is the method, regardless of theoretical changes, that has a common truth on which persons can agree on.

3.3 Research design

The primary research was conducted using questionnaires that were randomly distributed to people of different villages of the Qacha's Nek district of different genders, ages, and employment status (employed, unemployed, students, and retired). Randomly distributed questionnaires were used to collect data for analysis and validation. The secondary data used was based on recent literature related to the study. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) point out the importance of secondary data saying that it plays a vital role towards answering or moderately answering the research question.

As mentioned above, the study will base its conclusions using the quantitative method of research because it allows both the elastic and iterative approach. Also, the study will be based on the qualitative research approach because it attempts to find and form concepts that explain the connection between variables through qualitative elements of research. Thus, opinions and beliefs within the selected sample were also analysed to draw conclusions and recommendations.

As it has been stated in the conceptual framework in the literature review section, Lesotho has an added advantage over other African countries because of its diverse tourism attractions, unlike most counties with one dimensional tourism attraction. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to examine why Lesotho has not taken advantage of the competitive edge it possesses so that it may realise economic growth. A clear conceptual frame had to be developed to help examine data with regard to the three objectives so as to close the gap between potential and realisation of tourism-driven economic growth.

To improve the reliability of the study, the researcher increased the sample size of research. Secondary data further helped speed up the research work as it used the resources already available. The researcher's personal observations were also used as the main bases of formulating the hypothesis. When using the questionnaire approach, the investigator has to depend on the data provided by the respondents, which makes it an indirect method. Therefore, all these methods and concepts helped collect data in such a manner to accuracy, reliability, and dependability.

3.4 Sampling

A total of 330 people were interviewed from 11 villages of Qacha's Nek, which translates to 30 randomly selected people per village. The selected villages that represent the total sample size are Matebeng, Mavuka, Likhoeting, Melikane, Semenyane, Sehlathebe, Masuaneng, Mosaqane, Monyane, Ha Sekake, and Ha Noosi. As stated before, out of the 10 districts that make up Lesotho, Qacha's Nek was the target group due to time and budget constraints. However, this might affect the reliability and validity of the data.

3.6 Population

The views from the 11 villages of the district of Qacha's Nek, which has tourist attractions, were used to analyse the general opinions (on tourism-economic growth relationship) of the people of Lesotho: the population. Therefore, the population is Lesotho.

3.7 Sampling Technique

The villages of Qacha's Nek were partitioned into groups and a random sample was taken from each group and data was collected from each sampling component that was randomly sampled from each village group. Therefore, probability sampling was used as it helped decide which sampling pieces belonged to which group and the likelihood that each sample would be selected.

3.8 Sampling criteria

From the sample district of Qacha's Nek, respondents were selected in such a manner that each member had an equal chance of being selected. All genders had an equal chance of being selected and the researcher only chose people aged 16 and above. People of various economic status were selected — students, employed, unemployed, business people, and retired personnel.

3.9 Sampling frame

The sampling framework for this probability sampling, similar like the rest, will be the whole list of the population from which the sample will be drawn. Therefore, the

sampling framework involve all the people of the selected villages, regardless of their gender, age, or educational background.

3.10 Data collection procedures

By means of questionnaire approach in the form of interviewing the population from the sample, one research question was taken at a time until it is believed that various sources of the collected data were credible, reliable, and had valid answers. It was again ensured that the research questions link with the major significant questions. The mixing of data collection improved the research and reduced non-response errors. Lastly, secondary data was collected and analysed from various sources.

3.11 Interview Guide

The interview guide was linked to the research objectives to guide the study and cover areas likely to generate data that could address the relevant questions. The questions varied based on the three research objectives. The questionnaire below shows the type of questions asked.

3.12 Data analysis procedures

Primary data was collected using questionnaire, secondary data was gathered from journals, text books, eBooks, internet and personal quantitative approaches were used. The sample data was collected from 11 villages and 330 questionnaires were produced and they were distributed in random. To gather data efficiently and economically — based on the available resources — a questionnaire was used to collect information from the research participants. Therefore, the questionnaire method was employed, which further helped the researcher to standardise the structure of the questions in order to group data into variables easy for data analysis. With the questionnaire method, the collected data was observed (primary data) and secondary data, information related to the topic, was also used.

For the research to be disqualified or qualified to the research objectives all the research questions were made certain that they are measurable, clear and concise. To get the data analysis procedure process right before the collection of data, key

questions like time frame and costs were asked as they were going to affect the results. Data was then afterwards collected via observation and questionnaires.

The data was intensely analysed and manipulated using different approaches that include sticky notes and plotting it in scatter diagram to discovery variations, correlations and outliers which will help the researcher to focus the data analysis on the better answering of the research objectives. One other important tool used was the Microsoft Excel in the decision making. Finally, as the data was being interpreted, the researcher kept asking if the data was answering the original questions. Is it helping defending against some objectives? Also, if there are any limitations on the conclusions.

3.13 Credibility, transferability, and dependability

According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), credibility is comparable to the internal validity in a quantitative research. They also state that it is the participants who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results.

They further define transferability as the degree to which the results of a research can be used in generalising or be transferred to other settings or contexts. On dependability, Koetje and Moser (2018) argue that it includes the aspect of consistency, while providing an audit as an analogue.

3.14 Credibility

The strategy that the researcher adopted to ensure integrity of findings. In this case, a questionnaire was constructed in such a way that it could ask several, separate questions regarding the research objectives or the topic at hand. The questionnaire was also constructed in such a way that it encouraged participants to back up their statements with examples.

3.15 Transferability

The research aims to solve unemployment, reduce poverty, and involve the state more in the processes of speeding up economic growth through tourism. Should the resulting formula work, it will be easy for other researchers or even countries to adopt the methodology step-by-step to facilitate economic growth through tourism.

3.16 Dependability

For the dependability of the research, appropriate research processes were followed: all the 330 questionnaires, observation notes, draft papers, sticky notes, and dates of site visits were fully employed during the research process.

3.17 Ethical considerations

Before any data is collected, analysed, or reported, permission will be asked from the chief of the villages and from individuals from whom the information will be collected from, their names on all the questionnaires will be kept a secret, this is done out of respect for the rights of those who are going to be the subject of the research. Also, the behaviour of the researcher will be aligned with the social norms of the communities. The research participants will not in anyhow be subjected to any harm and their dignity will be prioritised also their privacy will not be invaded. The interviewer translated the questionnaire, which is written in English, to the participants in their native language to eliminate errors that might arise from the language barrier and to also ensure that the research subjects express their opinions as precisely as possible.

3.18 Voluntary participation and consent

Lavrakas (2008) states that voluntary participation is the act of subjects (humans) taking part in a research without duress, as stipulated by international and codes of conduct of scientific communities. The participants of the research were randomly selected in an ethical manner. None of the interviewees were coerced to take part in the study and no incentives such as cash were offered to the participants in an effort to gather their opinions for the research activity. Participants were at liberty to voluntarily provide information without a researcher-interviewee dependency relationship existing. Therefore, the study was carried out without any coercion by the researcher. Also, lot of effort was employed in the clarification of free-will participation. In order for the participants to freely provide information, the researcher paid attention to their socioeconomic and cultural circumstances such that they are compromised.

3.19 Confidentiality and anonymity

The names of questionnaire interviewees will remain anonymous in the research report for the importance of confidentiality. Only the age of the participants will be offered. Moreover, the researcher told the participants his full names, background and the reason of the study before interviews take place. Any information that the participants might find confidential the researcher promised to keep it away from any unauthorized people. All this was done to protect the privacy of the participants should need be.

Chapter 4-Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results

4.1 Introduction

There are a number of approaches that can help one analyse data and interpret the results — rather, turn data into information. Other researchers use sophisticated computer packages such as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) or the NVivo, a software package that processes text-based data for qualitative analysis. Others methods rely on more traditional manual techniques. Denscombe (2007) highlights that the analysis of data for quantitative purposes is not intrinsically associated with numbers as a method of analysis. According to Costello (2011, p.53), qualitative analysis uses numbers to derive conclusions while qualitative analysis ensures the ‘collecting and analysing of information in many forms, chiefly non-numeric.’ Both the qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this research because only using the quantitative approach just offers some interesting insight about the subject matter, yet it does not offer the full, in-depth topic (Costello, 2011 p.53). For this research, the data will be analysed in a traditional way. In the analysis of data, both qualitative and quantitative analysis will be used. For example, key words or phrases will be counted and then the frequencies will be analysed.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Note: The number of responses was higher than the sample number of villagers (330) as each interviewee provided more than one answer for each question. Therefore, the number of responses from participants were counted as opposed to counting the interviewed subjects in a category.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis table

Question 1:

1. Why are Lesotho attractions not attracting more tourists?	Number of times key words/phrases were used
What do you think of the current state of attractions?	
1. They need to be developed	204
2. They are slowly deteriorating	172

3. They will soon lose value/be vandalised.	84
4. They are not clean and without toilets.	215
5. Difficult to access	211
6. Very precious.	197
7. Vandalism makes them lose value.	192
8. No directional signage to access them.	187
9. No, the attractions are not secured.	194

Question 2:

2. Do you think the attractions have the potential to attract international tourists?	Number of times key words/phrases were used
1. Yes, they have a unique scenery	226
2. Yes, because of different bird species and rivers.	168
3. Yes, because of Lesotho's cultural diversity.	214
4. Yes, because of the cultural village.	92
5. Yes, because of the unique terrain.	174
6. Yes, but only if there is political will.	145
7. No, because they are not easily accessible.	182
Do you think the attractions are visited?	
1. Yes, but by few tourists due to social media coverage.	270
2. Yes, but tourists get lost due to lack of directional signage.	201
3. Yes, but mostly in summer because winter is harsh.	60
4. No, Lesotho is over shadowed by SA.	171
5. No, we are a landlocked country.	111

6. No, they are mostly accessible by 4x4 vehicles.	89
7. No, they are no tour guides.	55
8. No, the government is not doing enough to attract tourists.	108

Question 3:

3. What is the potential of the state to boost economic growth through tourism?	Number of times key words/phrases were used
Do you think the government needs to upgrade the state of tourist attractions?	
1. Yes, so that people can be employed at the sites.	
2. Yes, the government is slowly upgrading attractions.	112
3. Yes, so that they unleash the nations potential in the tourism industry.	179
4. Yes, it is their duty.	21
5. Yes, so that they can be properly monitored.	
6. Yes, but they have to incorporate local communities.	
7. Yes, the attractions are our “gold mines.”	54
8. Yes, for the sake of future generations.	104
9. No, they do not need an upgrade; rather, they need security guards.	71
10. No, only access roads need improvements.	
Do you know how Lesotho’s attractions can boost the economy?	291
1. Yes, they can create employment.	
2. Yes, they can increase the number of international	166

inbound arrivals.	
3. Yes, the country can earn foreign exchange.	44
4. Yes, they can improve the livelihoods of local communities.	210
5. Yes, they boost infrastructure development.	62
6. Yes, they can create more revenue for the country.	181
7. Yes, tourists book accommodation and may extend their stay in accommodation establishments.	49
Can employment be created through marketing Lesotho's tourist attractions?	
1. Yes, people can work as security guards at the attractions.	221
2. Yes, host community members can be involved in the running of the attractions.	167
3. Yes, people can be employed as tour guides.	30
4. Yes, tourists can taste local cuisines and that will help those in the food catering business.	199
5. Yes, tourists need transport; so, those in the transport business will benefit.	173
6. Yes, revenue can be generated by hosting cultural events for tourists.	114

4.3 Demographic Information

Silbiger (2005) makes it clear that demographic segmentation divides a population based on the sex, age, marital status, income, race, education, and ethnicity variables to reach a homogeneous group of people. The research in hand will not be selective, and it will include the population of Qacha's Nek regardless.

Table 5: Gender demographic table of respondents per village

Name of village	Total number of	Male	Female	Average age of
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	interviewees			interviewees
Matebeng	30	19	11	42
Mavuka	30	20	10	65
Likhuiting	30	16	14	55
Melikane	30	24	6	40
Semenyane	30	18	12	63
Sehlabathebe	30	27	3	55
Masuaneng	30	25	5	45
Masaquane	30	21	9	43
Monyane	30	23	7	59
Ha Sekake	30	14	16	48
Ha Noosi	30	16	14	52

Table 6: Demographics of interviewees per village for economic status

Village	Economic status			
	Unemployed	Employed	Students	Retired
Matebeng	13	10	7	0
Mavuka	15	11	4	0
Likhuiting	11	14	5	0
Melikane	15	12	3	0
Semenyane	15	9	2	4
Sehlabathebe	14	5	9	2
Masuaneng	16	13	1	0
Mosaqane	11	6	8	5
Monyane	14	9	4	3
Ha-Sekake	10	12	8	0
Ha-Noosi	7	11	6	6

4.4 Qualitative analysis

Among the 330 people who were interviewed from 11 villages (30 people per village) of Qacha's Nek on the research question of why Lesotho attractions are not attracting more tourists, the majority agreed that the attractions need to be upgraded in terms of ablutions and signage. Furthermore, they also agreed that there is need for security at the attractions — for both the tourists and to safeguard the attractions from vandalism. Last, they concurred that the attractions are inaccessible due to the

power road infrastructure and lack of sufficient signage, which enables international visitors to easily reach their desired destinations.

With regard to the second research question, which investigates the state’s potential to boost economic growth through tourism, the majority of the respondents agreed that the government possesses more resources than anyone else to monitor and improve local infrastructure and attraction sites. Therefore, the interviewees are of the sentiment that, if the government of Lesotho enhances the current status of local attraction sites, the nation’s potential to achieve tourism-driven economic growth can be harnessed by improving access to roads to attractions. Subsequently, this would result in boosting foreign exchange reserves for Lesotho and better lives for host communities and Basotho at large. According to the research participants, Lesotho has a unique scenario and a rich cultural heritage that is sufficient to lure an incremental number of inbound arrivals. Also, Lesotho’s attractions are prone to vandalism because of lack of community involvement and poor engagement of the state and private sector so much that tourists end up shunning the attractive local attractions. The research participants also point out that there is a potential in tourism economic growth, but there is no will power from the government and related stakeholders in the tourism sector. Therefore, if the government could engage the relevant stakeholders in its push to strategically ensure that the economy is boosted through tourism, issues such as unemployment could be alleviated. According to the interviewees, there are economic benefits to be reaped from advancing the tourism sector.

Table 7: Frequency - Attractions need to be developed

Village	Average Age per Village	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	17
Mavuka	65	28
Likhuiting	55	19
Melikane	40	15
Semenyane	63	22

Sehlabathebe	55	21
Masuaneng	45	16
Monyane	59	24
Ha Sekake	48	19
Ha Noosi	52	16
Mosaqane	43	14

Table 7 above reflects on the frequency of the 'yes' answer by interviewees with regard to the question whether they are of the opinion that Lesotho attractions need to be developed. The frequency of the 'yes' response was tabulated against the average age of the 30 participants of each village of Qacha's Nek. According to Table 7, the research participants from Mavuka strongly felt that the attractions need to be developed, as note by 28 out of 30 'yes' responses to the question. The village of Mosaqane was the only village with slightly less than half (14 out of 30) of the respondents who are of the opinion that the attractions need to be developed to boost visitor arrivals. Overall, 63.93% (211 of the 330 participants) of the respondents felt that it was necessary for the government to develop attraction sites to boost inbound tourist arrivals.

Table 8: Frequency - The attractions are slowly deteriorating

Village	Average Age per Village	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	13
Mavuka	65	20
Likhuiting	55	16
Melikane	40	9
Semenyane	63	23
Sehlabathebe	55	15
Masuaneng	45	6
Monyane	59	21
Ha Sekake	48	13
Ha Noosi	52	19
Mosaqane	43	17

Table 8 above highlights the respondents' concerns about the state of the attractions, with 52.12% of the interviewees noting that attractions receive low visitor arrivals because they are slowly deteriorating. A strikingly low number of respondents from the Masuaneng village shared the sentiment that the attractions were deteriorating while those from Semenyane strongly felt that the deteriorating state of attractions was the cause for low tourist visits to attractions. The data were tabulated based on the number of participants per village who gave the 'yes' response to the question.

Table 9: Frequency – Attractions are difficult to access/ poor roads

Village	Average Age per Village	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	19
Mavuka	65	21
Likhuiting	55	11
Melikane	40	18
Semenyane	63	24
Sehlabathebe	55	16
Masuaneng	45	22
Monyane	59	13
Ha Sekake	48	27
Ha Noosi	52	21
Mosaqane	43	19

On the aspect of whether attractions were getting low visitor arrivals due to poor road infrastructure or accessibility issues, Table 9 shows that 211 out of the 330 respondents cited poor roads as a hindrance to visitor arrivals.

Table 10: Frequency – No signage to access the attractions

Village	Average Age per Village	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	25

Mavuka	65	19
Likhuiting	55	16
Melikane	40	23
Semenyane	63	20
Sehlabathebe	55	21
Masuaneng	45	15
Monyane	59	20
Ha Sekake	48	18
Ha Noosi	52	13
Mosaqane	43	18

In Table 10, none of the villages recorded less than 50% when asked if lack of signage was a hinderance for tourists visiting attractions. All in all, 63.03% of the interviewed villagers were of the opinion that signage needed to be improved to boost tourist arrivals to attraction sites. The respondents from Matebeng had the strongest opinion (25) about signage while those from had the least (13).

Table 11: Frequency – Attractions are not secured / no security

Village	Average Age per Village	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	15
Mavuka	65	20
Likhuiting	55	16
Melikane	40	10
Semenyane	63	21
Sehlabathebe	55	19
Masuaneng	45	19
Monyane	59	26
Ha Sekake	48	18
Ha Noosi	52	13
Mosaqane	43	17

From Table 11, about 194 out of 330 (58.78%) respondents highlight that the attractions lacked security. Those from Monyane village strongly believed that the issue of security was a cause for concern in terms of attracting visitors to attractions. However, those from Melikane village (10) were of the opinion that security at attraction sites was not a stumbling block in terms of boosting visitor arrivals.

Question 2: What is the state’s potential to boost the economy through tourism?

Table 12: Frequency – People can be employed

Village	Average Age of Respondents	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	21
Mavuka	65	28
Likhuiting	55	25
Melikane	40	20
Semenyane	63	26
Sehlabathebe	55	28
Masuaneng	45	26
Monyane	59	25
Ha Sekake	48	24
Ha Noosi	52	26
Mosaqane	43	21

Table 12 above shows that at least 20 out of 30 (81.81%) respondents from each village highlight how tourism can create jobs if the state boosts the industry. All the villages gave at least a 66% ‘yes’ response to the issue of tourism’s potential to create employment.

Table 13: Frequency – The government can properly monitor the attractions

Village	Average Age of Respondents	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	20
Mavuka	65	1
Likhuiting	55	14

Melikane	40	22
Semenyane	63	19
Sehlabathebe	55	12
Masuaneng	45	17
Monyane	59	20
Ha Sekake	48	3
Ha Noosi	52	16
Mosaqane	43	21

Concerning the government's ability to monitor attractions, Table 13 notes that overall, the respondents were undecided as to whether the government was best place to monitor the attractions. Exactly 50% of the respondents thought the government alone could not monitor attraction sites. The result could have been influenced by the opinion that engaging the private sector and host community members would lead to better monitoring of sites.

Question 3: Lesotho's ability to attract the international tourists

Table 14: Frequency – Lesotho has a unique scenery

Village	Average Age of Respondents	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	19
Mavuka	65	24
Likhuiting	55	16
Melikane	40	11
Semenyane	63	27
Sehlabathebe	55	18
Masuaneng	45	23
Monyane	59	25
Ha Sekake	48	26
Ha Noosi	52	20
Mosaqane	43	17

In Table 14, an average of 20.55 (68.48%) participants highlighted that Lesotho's strength as a tourism destination was its unique scenery. The lowest number of respondents were noted from the village of Melikane while high figure was reported from Semenyane (27) for the above response. In that regard, at least two thirds of the interviewees appreciate the country's scenery as a potential boost for tourism and economic growth. Thus, Lesotho's unique scenery is a key pull factor for international tourists.

Table 15: Frequency – Vandalism affects visitor arrivals

Village	Average Age of Respondents	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	18
Mavuka	65	24
Likhuiting	55	12
Melikane	40	21
Semenyane	63	19
Sehlabathebe	55	28
Masuaneng	45	10
Monyane	59	25
Ha Sekake	48	9
Ha Noosi	52	11
Mosaqane	43	15

On the matter of vandalism, Table 15 notes a total of 192 out of 330 respondents who believe that vandalism is a cause for concern pertaining to poor tourist arrivals in the country. However, respondents from the Ha Sekake (9) least believe that vandalism is a hinderance to tourism while those from Sehlabathebe (28) strongly feel that vandalism negatively impacts on tourism. Therefore, the results support the view that the government and relevant authorities need to address the matter for Lesotho to experience a substantial incremental number of tourist arrivals.

Table 16: Frequency – Lesotho has a rich cultural diversity

Village	Average Age of Respondents	Response (Yes)
Matebeng	42	19
Mavuka	65	22
Likhuiting	55	14
Melikane	40	5
Semenyane	63	26
Sehlabathebe	55	21
Masuaneng	45	24
Monyane	59	19
Ha Sekake	48	11
Ha Noosi	52	17
Mosaqane	43	20

On the matter of the country's rich cultural diversity playing a key role towards luring tourists to Lesotho, Table 16 highlights that 60% of the interviewees agree to the notion. The results highlight one of Lesotho's strength as a tourist destination and its potential to be competitive in the tourism industry.

4.5 Quantitative Analysis

Table 17: Frequency of key words/phrases to research questions

Research questions	Total number of respondents	# of times Key words or phrases used	Number of villages
(1) Why are Lesotho Attractions not attracting more tourists?	330	Development needed: 250 No signage: 187 Difficult to access 211	11
(2) The ability	330	Unique scenery:	11

of Lesotho tourism attractions to attract international market		226. Cultural diversity: 214 Terrain: 207	
			11
(3) The potential of the state to boost economic growth through tourism attractions	330	Job creation: 211 Unleash their potential 179 Gov. can unleash tourism potential: 179	11

NB: Most participants mentioned all the key words or phrases in the questionnaire

Table 18: Why Lesotho Attractions are not attracting more tourists

Frequent responses	Village	Number of times key words/phrases were used
They need to be developed	Matebeng	17
	Mavuka	28
	Likhuiting	19
	Melikane	15
	Semenyane	22
	Sehlabathebe	21
	Masuaneng	16

	Monyane	24
	Ha-Sekake	19
	Ha-Noosi	16
	Mosaqane	14

They are slowly deteriorating	Matebeng	13
	Mavuka	20
	Likhuiting	16
	Melikane	9
	Semenyane	23
	Sehlabathebe	15
	Masuaneng	6
	Monyane	21
	Ha-Sekake	13
	Ha-Noosi	19

	Mosaqane	17
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Difficult to access/ poor roads	Matebeng	19
	Mavuka	21
	Likhuiting	11
	Melikane	18
	Semenyane	24
	Sehlabathebe	16
	Masuaneng	22
	Monyane	13
	Ha-Sekake	27
	Ha-Noosi	21
	Mosaqane	19

No signage to access them	Matebeng	25
	Mavuka	19
	Likhuiting	16

	Melikane	23
	Semenyane	20
	Sehlabathebe	21
	Masuaneng	15
	Monyane	20
	Ha-Sekake	18
	Ha-Noosi	13
	Mosaqane	18

Not secured / no security	Matebeng	15
	Mavuka	20
	Likhuiting	16
	Melikane	10
	Semenyane	21
	Sehlabathebe	19
	Masuaneng	19

	Monyane	26
	Ha-Sekake	18
	Ha-Noosi	13
	Mosaqane	17

Table 19: The state's potential to boost economic through tourism

People can be employed at the sites by the government	Matebeng	21
	Mavuka	28
	Likhuiting	25
	Melikane	20
	Semenyane	26
	Sehlabathebe	28
	Masuaneng	26
	Monyane	25
	Ha-Sekake	24
	Ha-Noosi	26
	Mosaqane	21

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Only the government can unleash the potential of the tourism industry	Matebeng	21
	Mavuka	19
	Likhuiting	12
	Melikane	18
	Semenyane	24
	Sehlabathebe	8
	Masuaneng	17
	Monyane	20
	Ha-Sekake	14
	Ha-Noosi	20
	Mosaqane	6

The Government can properly monitor the attractions	Matebeng	20
	Mavuka	1
	Likhuiting	14

	Melikane	22
	Semenyane	19
	Sehlabathebe	12
	Masuaneng	17
	Monyane	20
	Ha-Sekake	3
	Ha-Noosi	16
	Mosaqane	21

Government can corporate best with local communities	Matebeng	19
	Mavuka	15
	Likhuiting	2
	Melikane	13
	Semenyane	21
	Sehlabathebe	18
	Masuaneng	20
	Monyane	17

	Ha-Sekake	19
	Ha-Noosi	12
	Mosaqane	10

No, they only need access roads/ roads improvement	Matebeng	18
	Mavuka	20
	Likhuiting	13
	Melikane	16
	Semenyane	2
	Sehlabathebe	19
	Masuaneng	7
	Monyane	12
	Ha-Sekake	4
	Ha-Noosi	6
	Mosaqane	15

Table 20: Lesotho's ability to attract the international tourists

Yes, unique scenery	Matebeng	19
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	Mavuka	24
	Likhuiting	16
	Melikane	11
	Semenyane	27
	Sehlabathebe	18
	Masuaneng	23
	Monyane	25
	Ha-Sekake	26
	Ha-Noosi	20
	Mosaqane	17

Yes, but vandalism makes them lose value	Matebeng	18
	Mavuka	24
	Likhuiting	12
	Melikane	21
	Semenyane	19
	Sehlabathebe	28

	Masuaneng	10
	Monyane	25
	Ha-Sekake	9
	Ha-Noosi	11
	Mosaqane	15

Yes, reach cultural diversity	Matebeng	19
	Mavuka	22
	Likhuiting	14
	Melikane	5
	Semenyane	26
	Sehlabathebe	21
	Masuaneng	24
	Monyane	19
	Ha-Sekake	11
	Ha-Noosi	17
	Mosaqane	20

Yes, Unique terrain	Matebeng	18
	Mavuka	12
	Likhuiting	22
	Melikane	19
	Semenyane	17
	Sehlabathebe	10
	Masuaneng	21
	Monyane	4
	Ha-Sekake	16
	Ha-Noosi	21
	Mosaqane	14

Yes, but only if there is political will	Matebeng	11
	Mavuka	18
	Likhuiting	16
	Melikane	21
	Semenyane	12

	Sehlabathebe	2
	Masuaneng	17
	Monyane	14
	Ha-Sekake	10
	Ha-Noosi	6
	Mosaqane	15

No, they are not easy to access	Matebeng	16
	Mavuka	20
	Likhuiting	17
	Melikane	9
	Semenyane	23
	Sehlabathebe	11
	Masuaneng	18
	Monyane	14
	Ha-Sekake	25

	Ha-Noosi	12
	Mosaqane	22

4.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability relates to the extent to which our data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings. To archive this, the questionnaire was intensively checked for errors, but that alone was not sufficient enough on its own. To try gather more reliability, during data collection the researcher consistently interpreted the questionnaire to the participants for reliability. As it was stated in the sample, out of ten Districts only one was selected due to budget and time constrains and this might somehow affect the reliability.

4.7 Correlation

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) say that correlation, in simple terms, is the extent to which variables are related to each other. In the research, our data analysis shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the government boosting the economy through improving tourist attractions as over 80 percent out of 330 people are advocating for the government’s involvement to achieve tourism-driven economic growth. A weak relationship was noted.

In addition, there is a relationship between why Lesotho attractions are not visited and the inaccessibility of the attractions, and it is a strong relationship as over half of the people out of 330 are saying due to the inaccessibility of the attractions the tourists are not visiting the Mountain kingdom.

4.8 Regression

Regression analysis is a statistical method used to establish a relationship between variables of interest, where one variable is assigned as the explanatory variable

while the other variable(s) is/are denoted the dependent variable(s) (Utts and Heckard, 2007: pp. 157-9). This mathematical model, in its various forms, enables one to infer if a correlation exists between the variables under investigation. In this study, the researcher aims to establish if there is a relationship between the state boosting tourism and a resultant economic growth for Lesotho based on the interviewees' responses. For this study, the average age of the respondents (in Table 5) within the sampled district of Qacha's Nek will denote the independent variable to attempt to investigate the three research questions listed above. The frequency of words/phrases (Table 8, 9, and 10) used by the respondents to answer the research questions were used as the response variable. Fig. 3–12 below show the graphs that were derived from the regression analysis using Excel 2016, Microsoft Office programme.

Fig. 4: Attractions need to be developed



In Fig. 3, the frequency of the response that Lesotho’s attractions need to be developed to attract more international tourist arrivals. Average age of the respondents by village was used to plot the graph. From the regression data, a strong correlation ($r^2 = 0.7852$ or 78.6%) exists between the variables. In essence, this 78.6% variation implies a strong perception that for Lesotho to boost the number of inbound arrivals, the nation needs to improve the current state of the attractions. Therefore, the sample results can be used to depict the perceptions of the population. Fig. 4 below, which shows a correlation of 60.37%, reinforces the same opinions shared in Fig.3 — that Lesotho’s tourist attractions are deteriorating and they need to be upgraded.

Fig. 5: They are slowly deteriorating

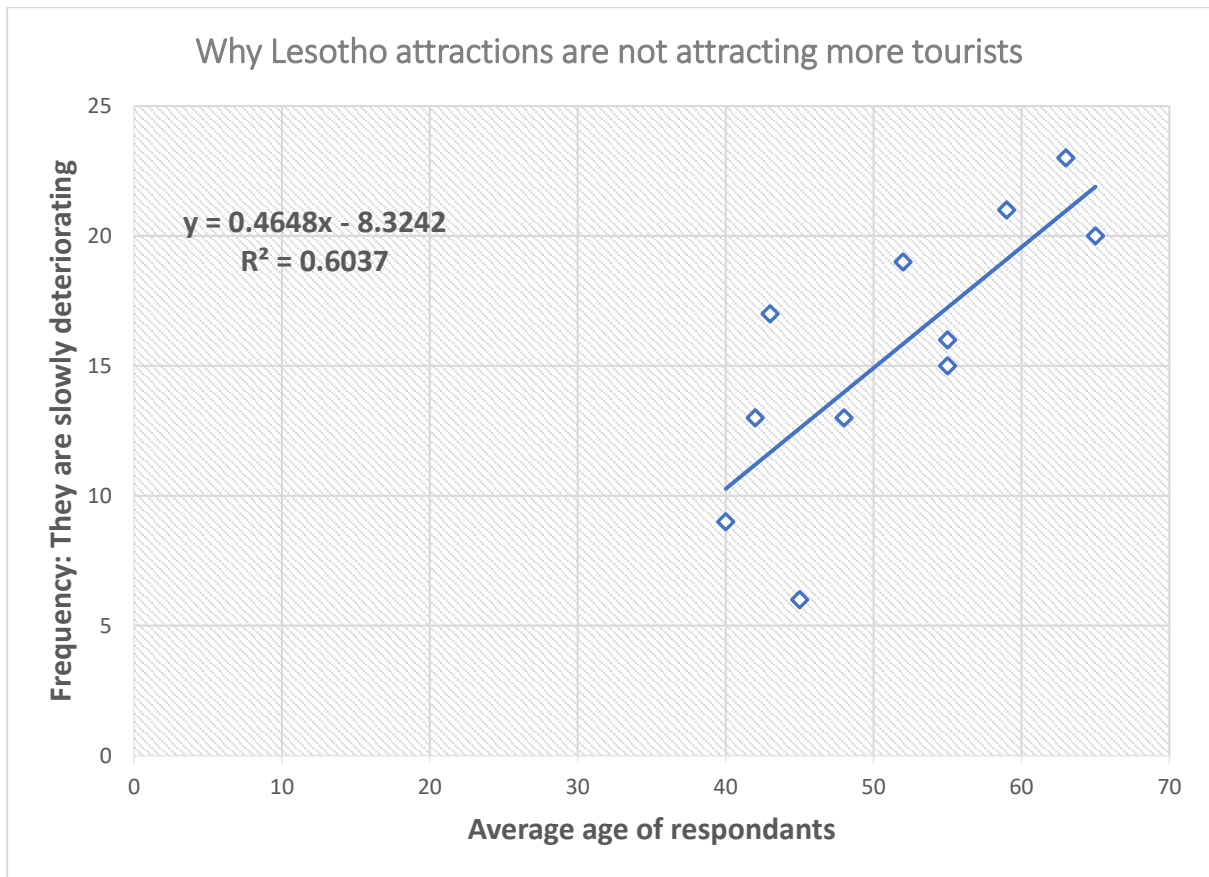
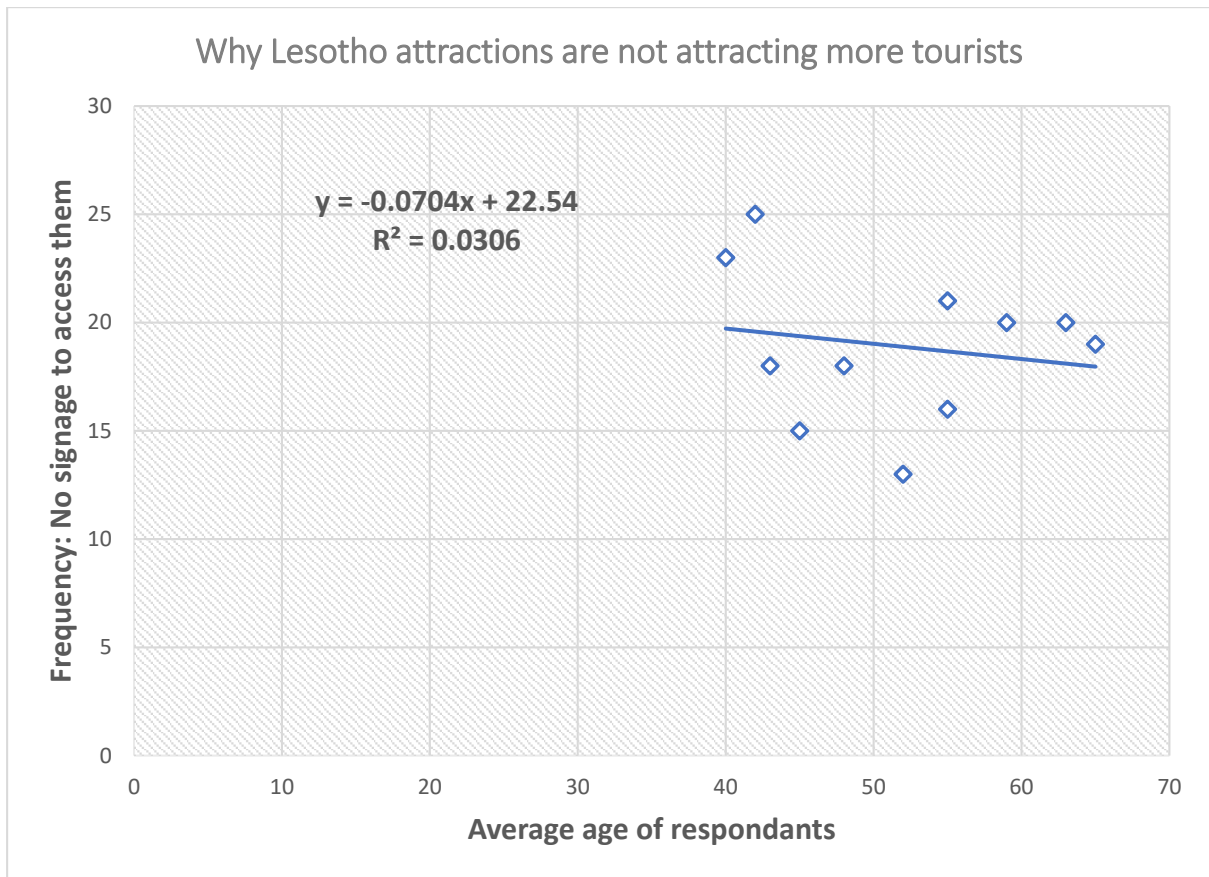


Fig. 6: Difficult to access/ poor roads



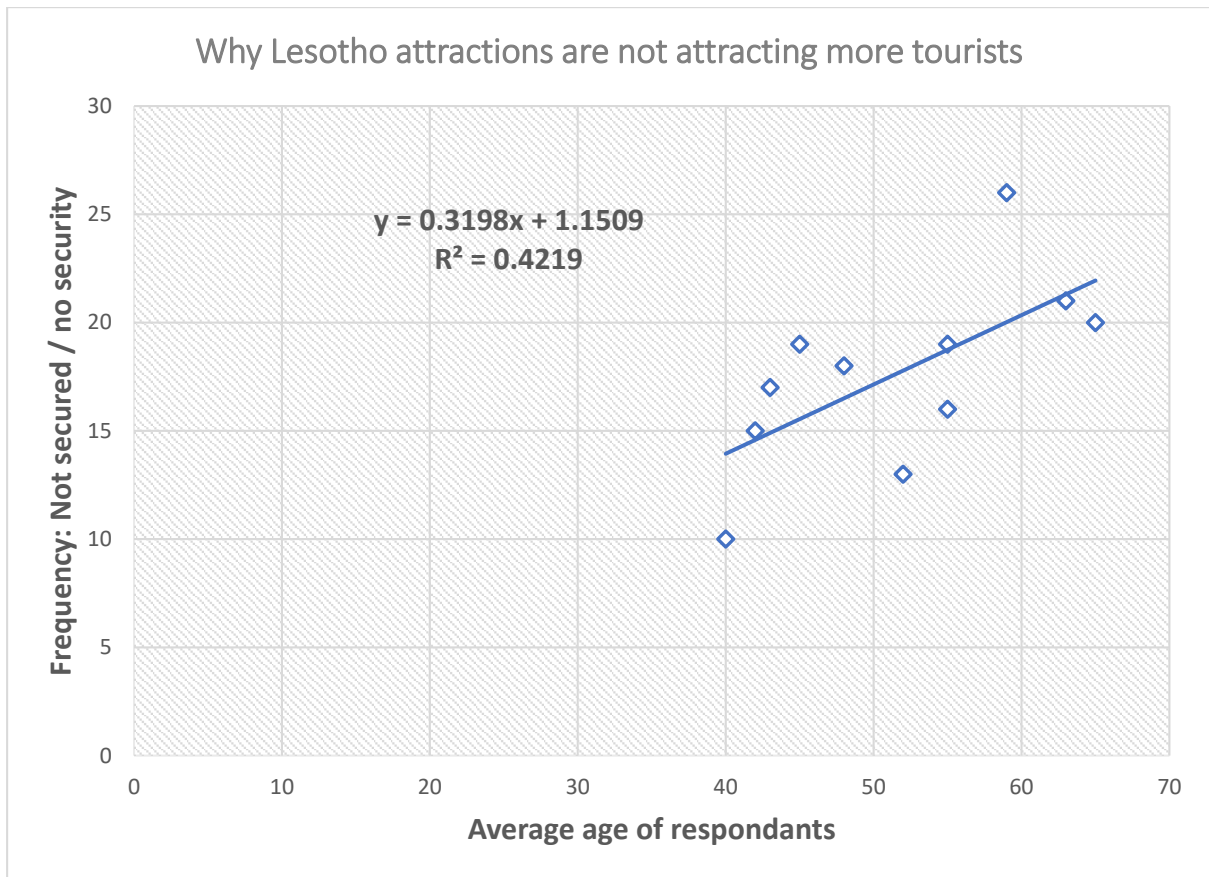
Fig. 5 analyses the accessibility of attraction and the road infrastructure. It can be noted that not many of the research participants are of the view that this issue is of hinderance to tourist arrivals, judging from the weak correlation ($r^2 = 0.0072$ or 0.72%). This weak correlation was mainly influenced by the opinions of those within the 50–60 age group. If we neglect the three results in the 50–60 age range, precisely those below the line-of-best-fit, we can establish a much stronger variation to the matter at hand.

Fig. 7: No signage to access them



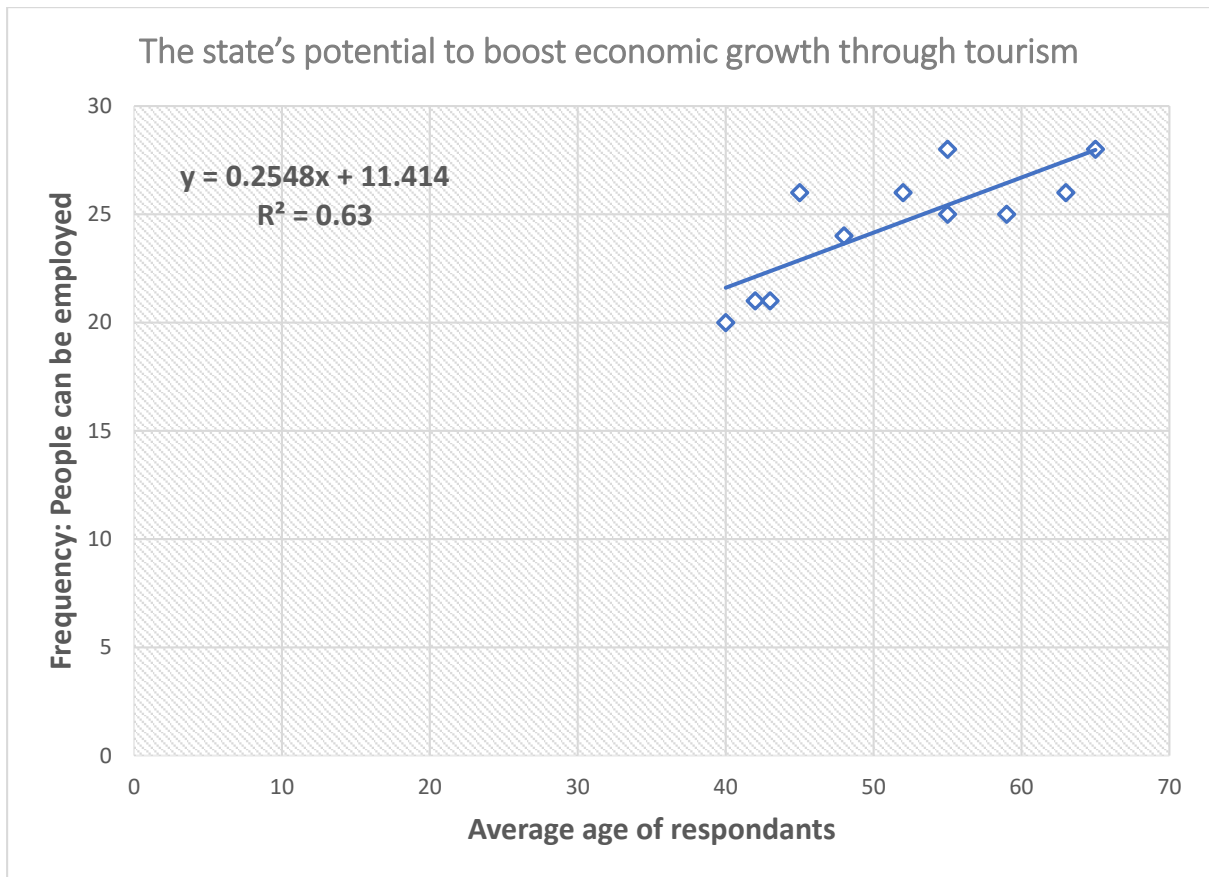
Concerning the lack of signage on roads as a probable cause for low tourist arrivals, Fig. 6 shows a weak relationship, which is depicted by a low correlation ($r^2 = 0.0306$ or 3.06%). However, most of the respondents tend to believe signage needs to be improved to boost visitor arrivals. This is noted by fact that there is a single point below the average frequency (15).

Fig. 8: Not secured/ no security



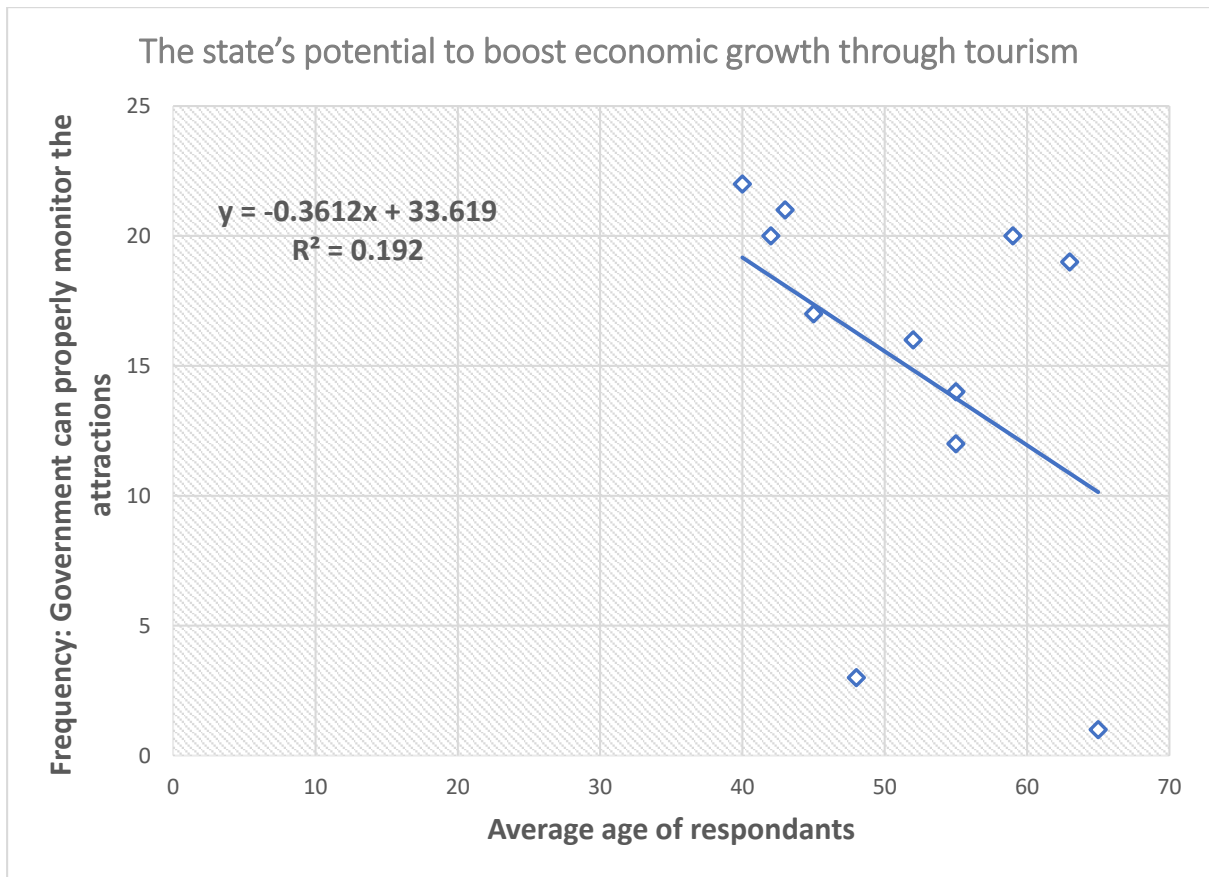
A correlation of 42.19% ($r^2 = 0.4219$), in Fig. 7, was observed while investigating the issue of security as a probable cause for low turnout at attractions. Judging from the correlation value, the researcher notes that it was an issue of concern among the interviewees.

Fig. 9: People can be employed



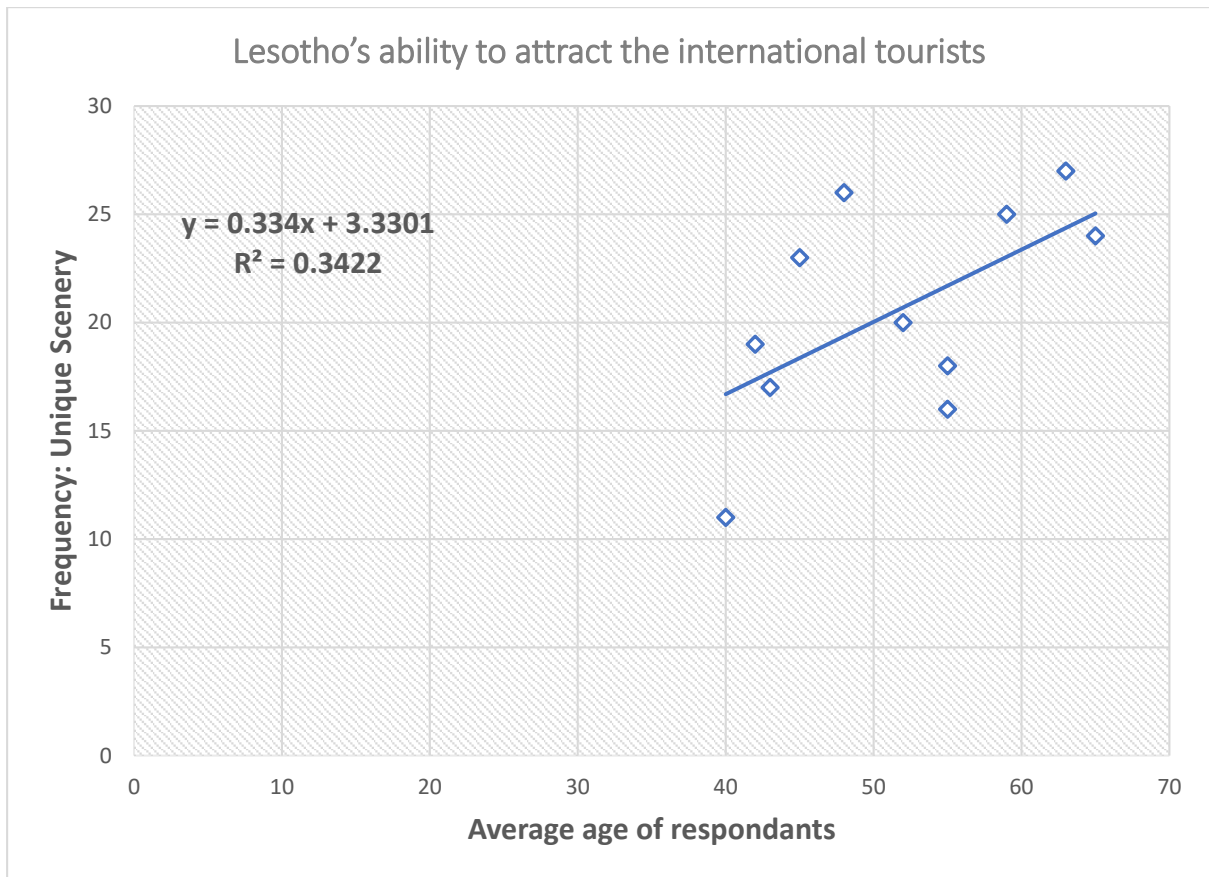
On the matter of employment creation, Fig. 8 shows a correlation value of 63% ($r^2 = 0.63$). This reflects a strong perception by the research participants that the government has the potential to create employment through tourism-driven economic growth.

Fig. 10: The government can properly monitor the attractions



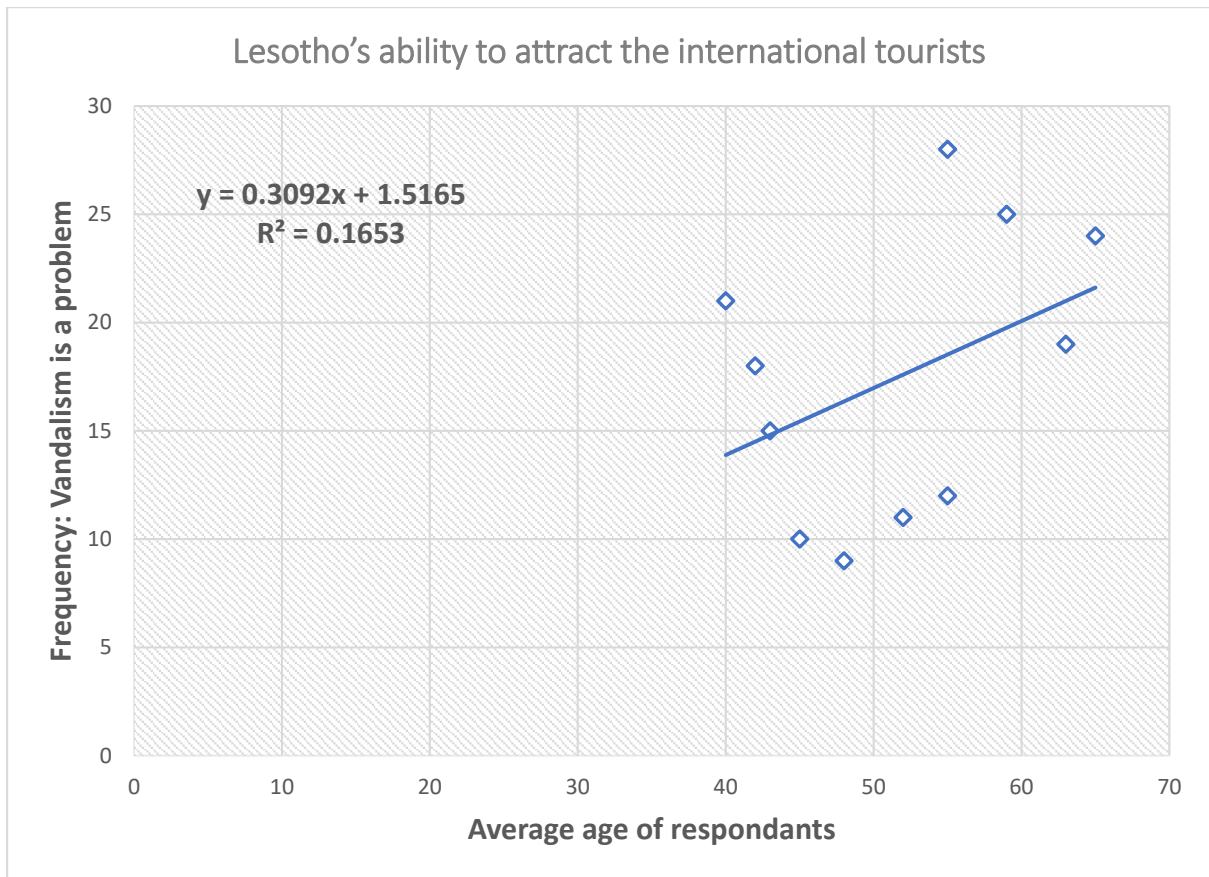
A negative correlation (judging from the slope of the graph) was observed in Fig. 9 concerning the government's ability to monitor tourist attractions with intent to improve the sites. Here, the correlation is weak ($r^2 = 19.2\%$ or 0.192) owing to the fact that other participants are of the opinion that it is not just the duty of the government to monitor attractions. Though the participants appreciate that the government has to play a role, they however strongly feel that a concerted effort that also involves the private sector and host communities of attraction sites would be the best way to monitor the sites. From these findings, the researcher perceives that if host communities are involved in monitoring attraction sites it would give them a sense of "ownership" of the tourist resorts; consequently, ensuring improved surveillance of the sites.

Fig. 11: Unique scenery



Lesotho's unique scenery is one of the reasons tourists visit the country. Fig. 10 shows a correlation of 34.22% ($r^2 = 0.322$) to that effect. A strong relationship exists when we do away with the outlier at average age 40.

Fig. 12: Vandalism is of concern



Vandalism was also noted to affect the value of Lesotho's attractions as seven of the points in Fig. 11 report at least an average score (≥ 15). The four points below average pulled the correlation value to 16.53% ($r^2 = 0.1653$). Therefore, vandalism of attractions can be noted as a factor that contributes to low visitor arrivals.

Fig. 13: Rich cultural diversity

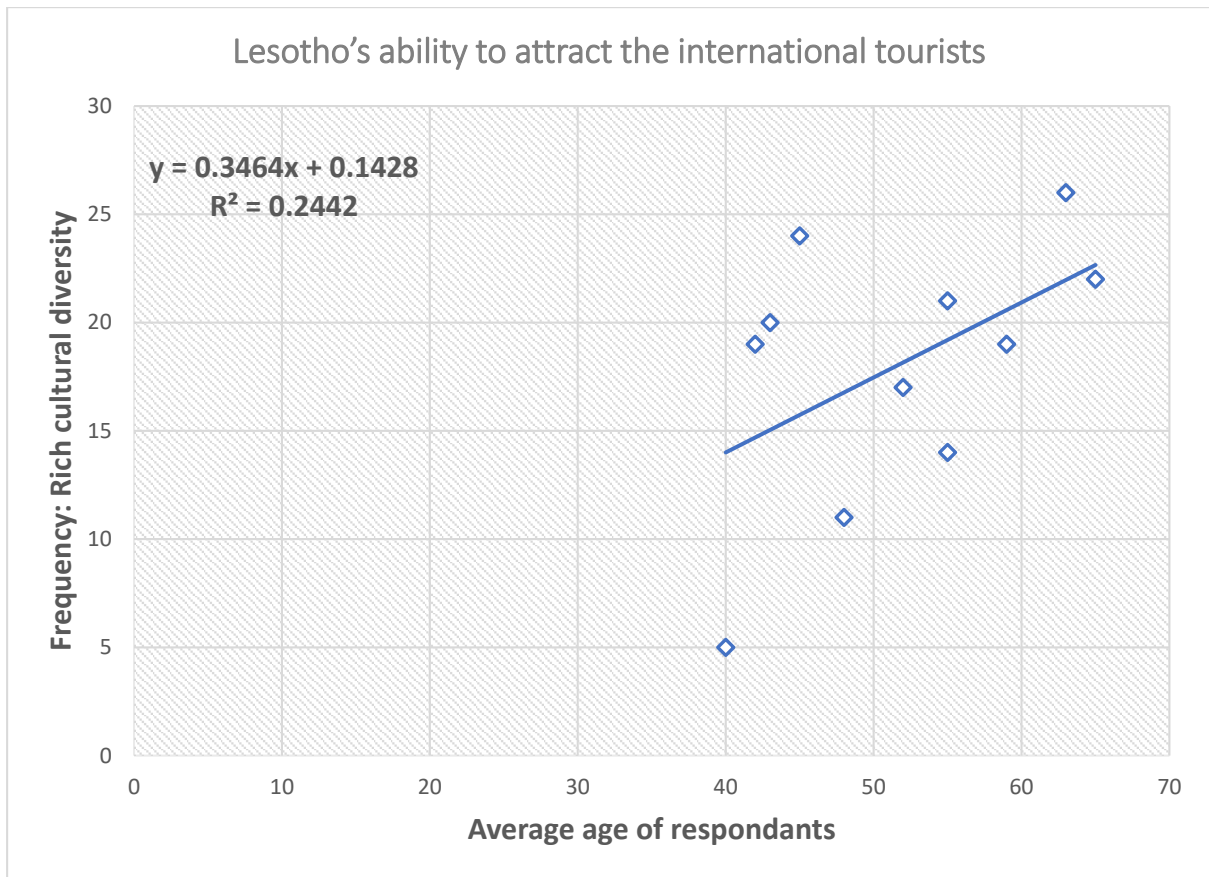


Fig. 12 shows the effect of Lesotho's cultural diversity as a pull factor for tourist. On this matter, most respondents believe that the nation's rich cultural diversity has the potential to lure tourists. The correlation for cultural diversity was observed at 24.42% ($r^2 = 0.2442$).

Chapter 5-Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

Lesotho has the potential to mobilise inbound visitor arrivals. According to the findings of this research, there are mainly four major challenges that need to be overcome for Lesotho to unleash its full potential in the tourism fraternity. First, the attractions need to be upgraded as they are bastardised. Water drips over the caves and the water causes fading of the rock paintings. There is also lack of rubbish bins to maintain cleanliness within the surrounding attraction sites, which is a turn off for tourists and an environmental hazard. Furthermore, the lack of safe drinking water is a concern.

Second, the attractions need security. It was observed that if host communities are not well trained to handle visitors, tourist may be harmed. If security guards are stationed at the sites they could also act as both pay-point personnel and overseers of the sites as, currently, some of the attractions are being visited free of charge (loss of revenue for the country). Also, other tourists are taking some of the artefacts as souvenirs, which makes the attractions lose value.

Third, the attractions need to be easily accessible. At the moment, most of the attractions lack signage that enables tourists to easily reach their desired destinations and some of the tourist endpoints are not accessible by non 4x4 vehicles because of the road infrastructure. Furthermore, there are also no essential services nearby the attraction sites, another loss of potential income for host communities. Last, the government should be the main driver of economic growth to boost Lesotho's economy because the state is financially capable of achieving that feat.

According to the analysis of the secondary data, the expensive Lesotho accommodation results in tourists opting to sleep in South Africa where accommodation costs less. As a consequence, tourists end up just visiting the country but not sleeping over, a loss of income for local accommodation businesses. At the same time, this has a massive impact on the visitation of local attractions since tourists might end up choosing to visit places in South Africa after their

sleepover. Lastly, there are few or no accommodation establishments close to the attractions which makes tourists reluctant to visit the attractions. Therefore, the government and public sector should invest more in accommodation close to the attractions and ensure that the prices for the accommodation are affordable compared to those of South Africa.

The government should again focus on educating more people about tourism, especially in the tourism sector and the host communities around attraction sites. The study discovered that there are many uneducated people yet education influences people's behaviour. The more people are educated, the more conscious, calculated, and premeditated decisions they are likely to make to boost tourism and, consequently, benefit from the attractions through jobs that are created by strategic tourism methods.

5.2 Discussion

The importance of this study, based on the findings of the research, is that if the state focuses on tourism-driven economic growth, the nation could alleviate the high unemployment rate (36 percent) in the country. Unemployment will be reduced drastically if the government boosts tourism in Lesotho because tourism is a cross-cutting sector — it stimulates GDP growth and creates employment in various other industries such as the artisan's industry. It also revitalises the cultural heritage of a nation. Building more accommodation facilities near the attractions and being aware of their prices compared to that of the competitors (South Africa) will attract more tourists in the country. This study will open gates for more research areas such as which tourist attractions the government can prioritise to boost economic growth.

5.3 Conclusion

The aim of the research was to determine the potential of the state to increase economic growth through boosting tourism and why are the Lesotho's attractions not attracting more tourist arrivals. These questions were asked because first, countries with almost similar attractions as Lesotho have increasingly become popular tourist destinations while Lesotho's inbound arrivals have stagnated. Second, Lesotho has the highest unemployment rates in the world, a situation that can be mitigated by state-propelled job creation via tourism-driven economic growth.

According to the WTO (2000), world expenditure per day by international tourists travel in 2001 estimated US\$1.3 billion, which implies that if Lesotho could bolster its tourism attractions tourism could be one of the main contributors to economic growth for the nation. Subsequently, tourism can generate employment locally and the government has a big part to play in that regard.

In an effort to address the research questions, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used and a method questionnaire was utilised to gather data from 11 villages of Qacha's Nek. Also, the sampling framework constituted randomly selected people from the villages and the findings produced roughly four outcomes. The four outcomes are as follows: Lesotho's attractions need to be upgraded, they need improved security, they are inaccessible, and the government can create employment through tourism, the Lesotho attractions are also found as of high value.

5.4 Recommendations

Security is essential. If security guards were stationed at the sites they could also act as both pay-point personnel and overseers of the sites. Currently, some of the attractions are being visited free of charge, which results in loss of revenue for the Lesotho. Also, some tourists take artefacts as souvenirs, which makes the attractions lose value. This problem would be mitigated if security guards were stationed at attraction sites. In that regard, the researcher recommends employing security personnel at all attraction sites.

There are few or no accommodation establishments close to some attractions, which makes tourists reluctant to visit the attractions. Therefore, the government and public sector should invest more in accommodation close to the attractions and ensure that the prices for the accommodation are affordable compared to those of South Africa.

The attractions need to be upgraded by the government as they are bastardised due to vandalism, to mention just a few. Water drips over the caves and the water causes fading of the rock paintings. There is also lack of rubbish bins to maintain cleanliness within the surrounding attraction sites, which is a turn off for tourists and an environmental hazard. Furthermore, the lack of safe drinking water is a concern.

Most of the attractions are not easily accessible by non 4x4 vehicles because of the poor road infrastructure and terrain. Also, most of the attractions lack signage that enables tourists to easily reach their desired destinations and some of the tourist endpoints are not accessible. Therefore, the government needs to improve the road infrastructure to improve the state of tourism in the country.

Also, the government and the private sector should focus on educating people about tourism, especially in the tourism sector and the host communities around the attraction sites. Such endeavours would go a long way to boost community-based tourism and ensure that community members feel the sense of ownership of the attraction sites — consequently, issues such as vandalism, theft, etc., would be kept at bay. Moreover, the more people are educated, the more conscious, calculated, and premeditated decisions they are likely to make to boost tourism and, consequently, benefit from the attractions through jobs that are created by strategic tourism methods.

5.5 Possible areas for further research

Due to budget and time constraints, the scope of this research was limited to only one of the 10 districts of Lesotho. Therefore, further research should be conducted to investigate the potential of tourism-driven economic growth in other districts to widen the scope of the study and minimise any errors that could have resulted from picking a single district as the sample of the population (subset of the population). According to scholars, the higher the sample scope the thinner the chances of mistakes, the greater the confidence level, the lower the uncertainty of the reported findings (Littler, n.d). That way, the selected sample best represents the true picture of the situation of the matter under investigation.

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7.0 Appendices

Research schedule

TASK	START DATE 2019	PERIOD
Data collection	Friday 8 th March	Two days
Data collection	Monday 11 th March	Two days
Data collection	Wednesday 13 th March	Two days
Data collection	Friday 15 th March	Two days
Data collection	Monday 1 st April	Two days
Data collection	Wednesday 3 rd April	Two days
Data collection	Friday 5 th April	Two days
Data collection	Monday 15 th April	Two days
Data collection	Wednesday 17 th April	Two days
Data collection	Monday 4 th March	Two days
Data collection	Wednesday 6 th March	Two days

Budget

DATES 2019	DESCRIPTIONS	AMOUNT
Sunday 3 th March	Trip from Maseru to Qacha's Nek	Transport M400 + lunch M150 + accommodation M500 = M1,050.00
Monday 4 th March	Transport and accommodation	Transport M150 + accommodation M500 = M650.00
Wednesday 6 th March	Transport and accommodation	Transport M150 + accommodation M500 = M650.00
Friday 8 th March	Transport and accommodation	Transport M150 x accommodation M500 = M650.00
Monday 11 th March	Transport and accommodation	Transport M150 x accommodation M500 = M650.00

8.0 Questionnaires

Full

Name

.....

Occupation

.....

Sex

Male []

Female []

Age

[10-19]

[20-29]

[30-39]

[40-49]

[50-59]

[60-69]

[70-80]

Do you have any interest in tourism attractions? Yes [] No []

Are you aware of Lesotho's tourism attractions? Yes [] No []

Do you find them attractive? Yes [] No []

How many times a year do you visit them? []

What do you think of their current state?

Do you think they have the potential to attract international markets? Yes [] No []

Why?.....

Do you think they are known internationally? Yes [] No []

Why

Do you think they are visited? Yes [] No [].

If NO, explain why you think they are not visited?

.....

.....

Do you know of the importance of Lesotho's tourism attractions in terms of boosting the economy? Yes [] No []

If yes, what is it?

.....

.....

.....

Can there be employment creation through Lesotho's tourism attractions?

Yes [] No []

If NO, explain why?

