Post-pandemic advertising and tourism studies in Africa

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ABSTRACT

Tourism studies in Africa are increasing in order to provide information and guide the sector. On 5 May 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as no longer a pandemic. Therefore, it is crucial for more research after the pandemic to reflect the effects of the pandemic in the post period particularly advertising as more nations need to attract as many tourists as possible to visit their destinations. This paper is motivated to explore tourism studies in Africa. The main objective is to explore post-pandemic advertising and tourism studies in Africa. The methodology deployed for this paper is the systematic literature review method. To address the main objective, this study poses the question "What are the post-pandemic types of advertising and topics of tourism studies in Africa?" The findings indicate that there are few studies in the post-pandemic addressing advertising and topics of tourism studies. The few existing studies have shown that social media advertising, internet advertising and exhibition are being used in the post-pandemic and topics such as promotion strategies and travel information have been covered but areas of artificial intelligence needs research to further understand its impact on advertising in the tourism industry within Africa.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the important pillars of many countries around the world including African nations (Ncube et al., 2021). On 5 May 2023, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as no longer a pandemic (Sarker et al., 2023; United Nations, 2023) which supports the return of travel and tourism to pre-pandemic levels. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2024) stated that in 2023, the continent of Africa managed to return to 95% of pre-pandemic tourist arrivals. Some of the reasons contributing to the return of tourists in the pre-pandemic levels are open travel policies and non-leisure attractions whilst challenges include the impact of technologies such as artificial intelligence in the tourism sector (World Economic Forum, 2024). On the other hand, tourism as a sector is highly dependent on studies to guide policies and decision making in the post-pandemic (Oktavio et al., 2021; Ranganai et al., 2023). In fact, Segota (2024) commented that issues related to topics covering advertising

particularly destination advertising is not adequate. Hence, more tourism studies are necessary including research in advertising. Moreover, Mkwizu (2024) advocated that in tourism, it is key to have collaborative research through co-authorship which can improve knowledge production and research output as well as encourage networking among scholars in the tourism field including topics on advertising.

Advertising is a concept that has caught the attention of many scholars. For example, Kerr & Richards (2020)'s definition of advertising refers to mediated communication which is either paid, owned or earned and is activated by an identifiable brand and intent on persuading the consumer to make some cognitive, affective, or behavior change, now or in the future. In this study, advertising is defined as the utilization of media to promote tourism attractions to potential visitors. Many nations have embarked on various advertising usage to attract tourists after the pandemic. Several studies, such as Rahim & Aziz (2023), have highlighted the use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram for advertising, while other researchers, including Mkwizu (2018, 2023b), have pointed out television (TV), and Gao et al. (2023) mentioned the role of artificial intelligence in advertising. Gao et al. (2023) noted that the advertising industry is currently facing both new opportunities and challenges. In China, for example, Yu & Natori (2020) highlighted that the emergence of 5G and artificial intelligence technologies calls for a redefinition of the advertising paradigm to reflect these advancements.

Yu & Natori (2020) recommended redefining advertising in the context of China's market, which reaches 400 million people. This highlights a gap in tourism studies addressing advertising types in the post-pandemic era, indicating the need for more research. Such studies are essential to understand both the opportunities and challenges in advertising, as well as to expand the literature on current advertising practices following the global pandemic, particularly in Africa. Similarly, Campbell et al. (2023) and Intiar et al. (2024) emphasized the need for diversity in advertising due to evolving consumer behavior in tourism-related products and services. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to further contribute to the literature on advertising in relation to tourism. This paper examines post-pandemic advertising and tourism studies in Africa through a systematic literature review, aiming to answer the question, "What are the post-pandemic types of advertising and topics of tourism studies in Africa?" The findings of this paper provide valuable insights for practitioners and destination marketing organizations, helping to enhance tourism advertising during the post-pandemic period.

2. METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) without including meta-analysis. Carrera-Rivera et al. (2022) define SLR as a method that follows a structured series

of steps to systematically organize the review. Similar approaches have been used in previous studies, such as Mkwizu (2023a), to explore marketing management issues. Additionally, studies like Khan et al. (2003) have outlined a step-by-step SLR process for research purposes. This study follows the SLR steps from Khan et al. (2003) and Mkwizu (2023a), which include: (a) framing the research question, (b) identifying relevant literature, (c) evaluating the quality of the studies, (d) summarizing the evidence, and (e) interpreting the findings.

In this paper, the framed question for review that addresses the main objective is "What are the post-pandemic types of advertising and topics of tourism studies in Africa?". This is followed by the second stage of SLR which involves the identification of relevant database by selecting two African journals that include published articles on tourism. The two selected African journals are African Journals Online (AJOL) and African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure (AJHTL). This paper used more than one database in order to have multiple databases as recommended by Bramer et al. (2017) and Ewald et al. (2022). Hence, this paper utilized more than one database when conducting a search for relevant journal articles on post-pandemic types of advertising and topics of tourism studies. The selection period of 2023 to 2024 is ideal since COVID-19 was declared not a pandemic in 2023 as stated by the United Nations (2023). In addition, the third step in SLR involves assessing the quality of studies which this paper ensured that only published journal articles are selected from AJOL and AJHTL. Book reviews in AJOL were not considered in order to main consistency on the use of journal articles only. The peer review process of the journal articles from AJOL and AJHTL validate the quality of studies relevant for the systematic review of this study.

The third stage of SLR for this paper involved using specific search terms to identify relevant journal articles that would address the study's objective and answer the research question. The search terms used were "Types of advertising" AND "Tourism studies in Africa." Studies from 2023 to 2024 were included based on the inclusion criteria, while duplicates, articles not directly related to tourism, and those from 2022 or earlier were excluded. Out of 180 journal articles from AJOL and 165 from AJHTL, five relevant articles were selected for review: two from AJOL and three from AJHTL (see Table 1). These articles were then processed through the summarization and interpretation stages of the SLR, as detailed in the findings and discussion section.

Table 1. Search Strategy and Screening for Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

No	Source	Search articles	Screening titles/abstracts/full text articles using inclusion/exclusion criteria	Reasons for exclusion	Included journal articles as relevant articles for review
1	Journal article (AJOL)	180	Included are only those journal articles from the period of 2023	• Do not cover the period of 2023 to 2024	2

No	Source	Search articles	Screening titles/abstracts/full text articles using inclusion/exclusion criteria	Reasons for exclusion	Included journal articles as relevant articles for review
			and 2024 using the search words.	• Duplications • Cover adverting but not in relation to tourism	
2	Journal article (AJHTL)	165	Included are only those journal articles from the period of 2023 and 2024 using the search words.	• Do not cover the period of 2023 to 2024. • Cover adverting but not in relation to tourism.	3

Source: Compilation by the Author (2024)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings in Table 2 reveal that research on types of advertising and tourism studies in the post-pandemic are few. Implying that this area of research has not received the scholarly attention adequately. Therefore, the existing literature in reference to types of advertising and tourism studies for the selected periods of 2023 and 2024 is still minimal despite the challenges by many nations in Africa to attract more tourists using advertising. This finding collaborates with past studies such as Segota (2024) which advocate for more studies on advertising in the field of tourism.

Table 2. Types of Advertising and Topics on Tourism Studies in Tanzania

No	Source	Source Type	Title/Location	Method	Findings
1	Madout & Bendjeroua (2023)	Journal article (AJOL)	The impact of international exhibition of tourism and travels "SITEV" on the improvement of Algerian tourism destination image	Quantitative and used PLS-SEM	Salon International du Tourisme et des Voyages (SITEV) improves Algeria tourism destination image but there is weakness of media coverage.
2	Nwagwu & Adeyemi (2024)	Journal article (AJOL)	Aspects of travel information behaviour of postgraduate students of a high education institution in Nigeria	Quantitative	Postgraduate students at the University of Ibadan have varied information needs, including those related to leisure. They rely on mobile devices, the Internet, social networks to access travel information.
3	Kisilu et al. (2023)	Journal article (AJHTL)	Influence of Strategic Tourism Promotion Practices on the Performance of Tour Operator Firms in	Quantitative and qualitative	Tour operator firms used recommendations from a friend or colleague as a

No	Source	Source Type	Title/Location	Method	Findings
			Nairobi City County, Kenya		strategic tourism promotion (67.2%) followed by advertising (45.0%).
4	Mametja et al. (2023)	Journal article (AJHTL)	The Adoption of Digital Technologies by Women-owned Tourism Microenterprises	Qualitative	Digital marketing usage for brand awareness and sales lead in the context of South Africa.
5	Myeni & Chili (2024)	Journal article (AJHTL)	The Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies of Tour Operators in the Promotion of Small Tourism Enterprises in KwaZulu-Natal	Quantitative	Promotion strategies have a significant positive impact on the business growth in the sales volume performance of small tourism enterprises. Advertising using promotional tools. Promotion strategies using social media.

Source: Compilation by the Author (2024)

Conversely, the study by Kisilu et al. (2023) in Table 2 indicates that advertising is used as a promotion strategy by tour operators in the tourism industry and mainly through social media which further implies that social media advertising is used in the context of Kenya as an Africa country. Similarly, in South Africa, the study by Myeni & Chili (2024) indicate the use of social media for promotion strategies. This shows that the use of social media for advertising also prevails in the context of tour operators in South Africa as an African country. In the context of Nigeria, the study by Nwagwu & Adeyemi (2024) reveal that most postgraduate students in higher education institutions when searching for travel and tourism information use internet and social networks. This implies that the tourism stakeholders should use social media advertising and internet advertising to reach postgraduates as potential tourists to visit various tourism attractions within Nigeria and thus boost the domestic tourism.

These findings support previous studies like Rahim & Aziz (2023) which mentioned that the use of social media in advertising through various social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. However, in the context of Algeria, the study by Madout & Bendjeroua (2023) shows that the use of exhibition for travel and tourism to improve the destination image exists but has weaknesses in terms of media coverage. This implies that in the context of Algeria, exhibitions and particularly the exhibition called "SITEV" receives weak media coverage suggesting that more studies are needed in order to provide insights on the type or types of advertising that can be applicable in the post-pandemic for purposes of improving the destination image of Algeria. This finding is in line with Segota (2024) that studies on advertising are needed particularly those in the area of destination advertising which can also help to improve the destination image for tourism purposes.

Interestingly, the types of advertising in relation to topics of tourism studies shows that the targeted topics of concern revolve around "digital technologies", "promotion strategies", "effectiveness of marketing", "promotion practices", "performance", "travel information", and "international exhibition of travel and tourism". The topics on tourism studies from the relevant reviewed studies have mainly sampled views from women-owned tourism microenterprises, tour operators, postgraduates and exhibitors. This implies that opinions from other population samples such as families, teachers, lecturers, academicians, domestic tourists, and international tourists are needed in order to engage more research in the area of advertising in tourism studies. This finding aligns with Segota (2024) that research in advertising is inadequate. Although the topics of digital technologies is mentioned, the coverage was on digital marketing and less on artificial intelligence which implies that more research on tourism studies is needed in Africa to understand the impact of artificial intelligence in advertising as advocated by World Economic Forum (2024) as well as emulating from previous literature that have embarked on exploring artificial intelligence in advertising such as the study by Yu & Natori (2020) in China.

In addition, the alternating use of quantitative and qualitative methods exists in tourism studies as indicated in the studies by Kisilu et al. (2023), Madout & Bendjeroua (2023), Mametja et al. (2023), Myeni & Chili (2024), Nwagwu & Adeyemi (2024), and Oktavio et al. (2024). This implies that the scholars of these tourism studies apply quantitative and qualitative methods to contribute the needed knowledge and research production in the field of tourism. Similarly, the scholars of these tourism studies are co-authors which implies that in the post-pandemic there is collaboration among tourism scholars which supports the study by Mkwizu (2024) that advocate for collaborative research through co-authorship.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper's main objective is to explore advertising and tourism studies in Africa using a systematic literature review. In particular, this paper explored the types of advertising and topics of tourism studies in Africa. The findings showed that in general, there were few studies on advertising and tourism studies in Africa. Additionally, the types of advertising are mostly social media advertising, internet advertising, and through exhibition for the post-pandemic in the context of the reviewed literature in African countries namely Algeria, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. In relation to topics of tourism studies, the findings have shown that the covered topics were digital technologies, promotion strategies, effectiveness of marketing, promotion practices, performance, travel information and international exhibition of travel and tourism. In these topics, the findings further indicate that in conducting the research for these tourism

studies there was the use of quantitative and qualitative studies with co-authorship among scholars. The outcome of this study has practical implications.

Practical Implications

The practical implications are for the practitioners especially in the tourism sector such as higher education institutions that carry out teaching and learning activities in tourism to encourage more tourism studies in terms of topic coverage and issues related to the area of advertising. The areas of coverage to include the impact of artificial intelligence on advertising in the post-pandemic. The destination marketing organizations can also use the findings of this study to improve and engage various types of advertising to attract tourists to destinations and thus boost both international and domestic tourism.

Contribution of This Study

This paper contributes to knowledge on the areas of advertising and tourism studies in the context of Africa in the post-pandemic. This study further highlights that there are few scholarly tourism studies on advertising and that the practical implications have been provided to assist practitioners in the tourism sector. The practical implication will particularly help in the post-pandemic to encourage more research studies and widen the topic coverage in tourism studies especially the impact of artificial intelligence on advertising.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

The limitation is in the use of systematic literature review to obtain information for review purposes. The reviewed literature offered relevant insights on the topic for the mentioned African countries namely Algeria, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. Therefore, this study can explicitly state that the limitation is on the use of journal articles which were sourced from multiple databases but limited to two journals only for the systematic literature review which relies solely on secondary sources of data. Hence, the suggestion is for future research and particularly in the post-pandemic should aim for primary sources of data through conducting cross-sectional design studies to further understand the patterns in the types of advertising and tourism studies in countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia within Africa and beyond. In addition, future studies should aim to cover issues related to artificial intelligence in advertising as a promotion strategy to improve tourist numbers in visiting a destiny endowed with tourist attractions hence adding knowledge to destination advertising studies.

Conflicts of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest and no funds received for writing this manuscript.

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