



# American Journal of Tourism and Hospitality (AJTH)

ISSN: 2993-6519 (ONLINE)

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1 (2026)

PUBLISHED BY  
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

## Domestic tourism participation: The role of destination awareness and promotion

Joseph Ackon<sup>1\*</sup>, Adriana Narkwa Anderson<sup>1</sup>, Eudora Hagan<sup>1</sup>

### Article Information

**Received:** August 01, 2025

**Accepted:** December 01, 2025

**Published:** March 24, 2026

### Keywords

*Awareness, Destination,  
Domestic Tourism, Promotion,  
Push and Pull Motivation Theory*

### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of awareness and promotion of destinations in motivating university staff to participate in domestic tourism in Ghana. Guided by the Push–Pull Theory of motivation, the study adopted a quantitative research approach using a descriptive cross-sectional design. Data was collected from 303 respondents selected through stratified random sampling and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U, and Kruskal-Wallis tests. Findings revealed that awareness and promotional efforts, particularly through digital platforms, social media influencers, traditional media, and destination events, significantly enhance motivation to participate in domestic tourism. However, the influence of these factors varied by income level, indicating that affordability remains a major determinant of participation. While gender, age, marital status, and educational level showed no significant differences, income was found to significantly affect awareness and promotional responsiveness. The study concludes that strengthening tourism promotion through strategic digital and traditional media campaigns, coupled with affordable travel packages, can effectively increase domestic tourism participation among university staff.

### INTRODUCTION

Domestic tourism involves trips by citizens away from their normal environment but within national borders, lasting no more than twelve consecutive months and undertaken for business, leisure or other reasons (Boniface *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, Zeng and Wang (2021) highlighted that domestic tourism not only provides recreation but also stimulates local economies by redistributing income and sustaining services in rural areas. Motivational factors also shape participation in domestic tourism. More than any other industry, tourism is reliant on its surroundings because it is the primary resource and factor that draws tourist (Ismael & Menes, 2025). Petroman *et al.* (2021) stressed that factors such as gender, education, occupation, travel purpose, pricing and transport options influence individual decisions to travel. This is supported by Li *et al.* (2016) and Le-Klähn *et al.* (2015) who observed that domestic tourism accounts for up to 70% of tourism revenue. In Ghana, greater participation could therefore provide employment, improve living standards and enhance the development of tourist attractions (Eslami *et al.*, 2019; Kabote, 2020). Therefore, every effort and hindrance to greater domestic tourism participation must be explored. This study, focuses on staff at Takoradi Technical University (TTU) in Ghana, to examine the role of awareness and promotion in motivating TTU staff to participate in domestic tourism. The findings are expected to inform stakeholders to come up with strategies to boost domestic tourism through targeted and inclusive interventions

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Tourism Destination

The idea of a tourism destination is commonly understood

as the location where travel culminates the final point of a journey. Aleksanyan (2020) described a destination as a defined geographic space that attracts visitors because of its natural landscapes, cultural heritage, or specialized activities. Similarly, Oppewal *et al.* (2015) explained that destinations are areas where tourists temporarily reside to experience distinctive features and services. Additionally, Abimbola *et al.* (2022) emphasized that destinations are geographically identifiable places that combine tourism resources, facilities and products under a recognizable identity, usually managed by relevant authorities or organizations. Furthermore, Morrison and Maxim (2021) outlined eight characteristics that define a tourism destination: (1) administrative limits geographically bound it, (2) it offers accommodation facilities, (3) it provides a mix of tourism products, (4) it has marketing initiatives in place, (5) a management or coordinating structure exists, (6) it holds a clear image in the minds of tourists, (7) it is regulated through laws and policies, and (8) it involves multiple stakeholders. Destinations thus act as focal points where tourists interact with people, places and environments outside their usual residence. Perceptions of the experience and resources available in these locations influence the flow of visitors from origin regions to host regions.

Building on this, Morrison (2020) emphasized that the concepts of “destination mix” and “destination product” are closely related, identifying four key components: physical products (attractions, infrastructure, and transportation), people (local residents offering hospitality and services), packages (tourism bundles and programmes available for purchase), and programmes (festivals, events, and organized activities). Abimbola *et al.*

<sup>1</sup> Ghana

\*Corresponding author's e-mail: [ackonj6@gmail.com](mailto:ackonj6@gmail.com)

(2022) also highlighted the “four As” model; Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary services as critical elements of a functioning destination. For competitiveness and sustainability, all these components must operate together to create a cohesive visitor experience.

### **Motivation of Domestic Tourism Participation**

In tourism studies, motivation is generally understood as the set of internal and external drivers that influence individuals to travel and participate in tourism activities (Yousaf *et al.*, 2018). Gilmeanu (2015) explained it as a need that prompts individuals to act in ways that achieve satisfaction. In the context of domestic tourism, motivation arises from psychological, social and practical factors, which are commonly categorized into push and pull elements (Baniya & Paudel, 2016). Understanding why people choose to travel or prefer one destination over another has long been a central concern in tourism studies. Baniya and Paudel (2016), drawing on Cohen (1972) and Gnoth (1997), noted that travel motivation has been widely examined across disciplines such as sociology, psychology and anthropology. Rojas *et al.* (2023) added that Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1954, 1970), although later revised by other scholars, has been extensively applied to explain motivations in tourism.

A review of the literature shows that travel motivation has often been analyzed through two broad dimensions: internal forces that encourage individuals to travel (push factors) and external attributes of destinations that attract visitors (pull factors) (Baniya & Paudel, 2016). Push factors are largely psychological and personal. Giddy (2018) identified examples such as the need to escape routine, reduce work-related stress, rest, and rejuvenate. Domestic tourists may also be motivated by curiosity, a desire for adventure, cultural learning, or strengthening social and family ties (Otoo, 2019). These motivations are rooted in emotional and personal needs, often leading individuals to seek novelty and change. Pull factors, on the other hand, refer to destination-specific features that influence travel decisions (Baniya *et al.*, 2017). These include attractive natural landscapes like beaches, mountains and wildlife reserves, as well as convenience and affordability. Domestic travel is often seen as less stressful because it eliminates challenges such as visa acquisition, currency exchange, and language barriers (Ramsey *et al.*, 2024). Other pull elements include government initiatives, promotional campaigns, seasonal discounts, and the availability of affordable packages (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2018). Collectively, push and pull factors work together to inspire participation in domestic tourism. Consequently, Yoo *et al.* (2018) emphasized that motivations are shaped by the interplay of psychological needs, personal preferences and destination attributes and recognizing these helps stakeholders design experiences that align with travellers’ expectations.

In addition to these factors, socio-demographic and contextual variables also influence domestic tourism participation. Bakare (2020) pointed out that age, gender,

education, occupation, purpose of visit, and availability of necessary facilities play important roles in shaping motivation. Environmental, cultural, religious, and political considerations also matter, as highlighted by Soldatenko and Backer (2019). Supply-side elements further determine the appeal of destinations. According to Mahamadu and Salia (2020), these include the development of tourism resources, infrastructure quality, accommodation options and environmental standards. Accessibility is particularly significant, as it determines how easily travellers can overcome barriers related to distance, time, cost and convenience (Næss, 2018).

### **Awareness and Promotion of Tourism Destinations**

Awareness and promotion are key factors that shape people’s willingness to engage in domestic tourism. Litheko and Potgieter (2016) described awareness as the extent of knowledge individuals possess about tourism opportunities within their country. When people are well-informed about available attractions and experiences, they are more inclined to participate in domestic tourism, making awareness a direct driver of participation. Antón *et al.* (2017) argued that awareness is a precursor to travel interest, as individuals tend to choose destinations they already know. Workplace initiatives, such as conferences and excursions organized in different regions, can also increase staff awareness of domestic tourism destinations. Hence, within educational institutions like Takoradi Technical University, awareness is influenced by a range of conditions that affect staff participation in local travel. Promotion remains one of the most important tools for building awareness. Bakari (2021) highlighted that promotional strategies and marketing initiatives play a vital role in increasing public knowledge of domestic tourism.

In recent years, digital platforms have played a particularly influential role. Al-Romeedy and Singh (2025) observed that digital platforms are effective in delivering real-time, user-friendly travel content that enhances awareness and engagement. Similarly, Anuar *et al.* (2021) highlighted that digital influencers act as virtual tour guides, building trust and destination appeal among their followers. In line with this, Zhang *et al.* (2018) emphasized that experiential content shared online through photos, videos and reviews creates emotional connections to destinations, which increases participation. Traditional media also remains significant in shaping tourism awareness. Dhiman (2023) noted that television has long been an influential medium for showcasing cultural festivals, scenic spots and tourist attractions. Likewise, Zeqiri *et al.* (2025); Reverte and Luque (2022) emphasized that television, radio and print media continue to be vital channels for promoting tourism, especially in regions where digital access remains limited. Adu-Ampong and Adams (2020) observed that poorly coordinated and irregular promotion efforts by government agencies in Ghana hinder the effectiveness of tourism awareness campaigns, pointing to the importance of consistency and strategy

in institutional promotion. Events are also seen to contribute significantly to raising awareness. Rogers and Davidson (2015) noted that exhibitions and fairs provide platforms for domestic destinations, hotels and tourism businesses to showcase their offerings. In support of this, Li *et al.* (2025) argued that interactive destination events foster personal connections with tourists and enhance intent to visit destinations.

The visual and cultural appeal of tourism promotions is also central to building awareness. Meenakshi *et al.* (2024) found that visually attractive tourism advertisements strongly influence consumer decision-making by triggering emotional recall. Similarly, Boadi (2024) highlighted that showcasing cultural and natural heritage assets in advertisements is particularly effective in stimulating domestic travel interest. Economic considerations further shape awareness and response to promotional campaigns. Wara *et al.* (2022) showed that discounted travel packages play a critical role in encouraging domestic tourism participation, as affordability is a key motivator for potential travellers. Van-Chau and He (2024) added that seasonal promotional offers often serve as decisive factors in influencing travel decisions, although their effectiveness varies across individuals. Loyalty and reward schemes have also been explored to influence participation, though Hanna *et al.* (2016) argued that their success depends heavily on timing and perceived value. Finally, word-of-mouth continues to be one of the most effective ways of raising awareness and influencing domestic tourism decisions. Litvin *et al.* (2018) argued that personal travel experiences create lasting impressions, which often translate into recommendations for others. Positive travel experiences encourage repeat visits and stimulate new participation (Chen, 2020; Shaibu, 2025). Suo and Huang (2023) likewise emphasized that recommendations from trusted friends and family create authenticity and reliability, which makes individuals more likely to engage in domestic tourism.

### Theoretical Framework

#### Push-Pull Factors Theory in the context of Domestic Tourism

Jacobsen (2016) cited Dann (1977), in his influential work *Anomie, Ego-Enhancement and Tourism* as first to introduce the Push and Pull Theory of Travel Motivation. Subsequent contributions by Crompton (1979) and Baloglu and Uysal (1996) further advanced the framework, establishing it as a cornerstone in studies of tourism motivation. The Push–Pull Motivation Theory is an established model for understanding what drives people to travel. It categorizes influencing factors into two groups: push factors and pull factors. This framework is useful for explaining the motivations behind domestic travel decisions. Push factors are internal psychological drivers that encourage people to leave their usual surroundings. These include the need to relax, break away from routine, seek adventure or pursue personal growth. Essentially, push factors represent the personal desires

and internal needs that inspire travel.

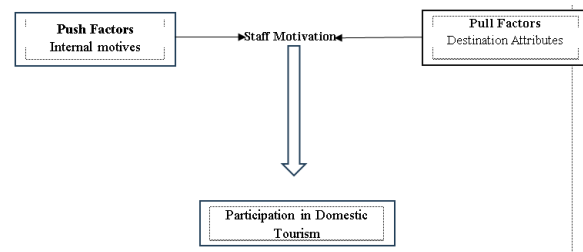
On the other hand, pull factors are external elements related to the destination that draw tourists in. These include aspects such as scenic beauty, cultural attractions, special events, affordability and accessibility. Pull factors influence the choice of destination by highlighting its unique features and offerings. In domestic tourism, push and pull factors work together to shape travel choices. For instance, a desire to escape daily life (push factor) might lead someone to select a destination with a tranquil environment and natural scenery (pull factor). Similarly, the wish for self-development could drive a person to visit a place known for cultural and heritage experiences. By understanding how these factors interact, tourism planners and marketers can better design experiences, target specific tourist groups and promote destinations to align with the needs of domestic travellers.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrated by Figure 1 explains how the push and pull factors influence tourists' motivation and behaviour. The push factors represent internal psychological needs that drive individuals to travel, such as the desire for relaxation, adventure, social interaction, and escape from daily routines. In contrast, the pull factors refer to the external attributes of a destination that attract visitors, including natural attractions, cultural heritage, hospitality, and accessibility. Together, these factors shape tourists' overall motivation, influencing their destination choice, level of satisfaction, and future behavioural intentions such as revisiting or recommending the destination for domestic tourism participation.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach, using a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Takoradi Technical University (TTU), located in Ghana's Western



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of factors influencing Domestic Tourism Participation

Region, served as the study area. The institution was purposefully selected due to its proximity of respondents to the research and diverse workforce; comprising both academic and non-academic staff. The target population included all teaching and non-teaching staff at TTU. These individuals were considered ideal for the study

because of their relative access to income, education, and information factors that theoretically position them to engage in domestic tourism. To ensure fair representation and eliminate bias, a stratified random sampling technique was used. The population was first divided into two strata: academic and administrative (non-teaching) staff, after which random sampling was conducted within each group. A total sample of 303 respondents were selected for the study. The sample size was calculated from a population of 799, using Yamane (1968) formula, with a margin of error of 5%. Data was collected through structured questionnaires, which were divided into sections: demographic information, role of awareness and promotion of destination in motivating staff participation, level of participation. The items in the questionnaire were primarily closed ended and measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “strongly Agree and later collapsed to a 3-point Likert scale (Agree, Neutral and Disagree). This format allowed for accuracy and reliability of the responses.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed by tourism and research experts and was pre-tested among a small group of respondents for clarity and relevance. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.725, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency. The data collection process was carried out in person by the researchers, with the help of trained research assistants. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and asked of their consent before completing the questionnaire. Ethical standards, including voluntary participation and anonymity, were strictly observed throughout the process. After data collection, responses were coded and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 27). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to analyse the responses. In addition, the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis H Test were conducted to identify underlying dimensions within the awareness and promotion of destinations.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Staff

Table 1 presents a description of the socio-demographic characteristics of staff. These include gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, staff category and income range. These characteristics help explain differences as well as similarities in the respondents’ answers to address issues in the study. The results from Table 1, revealed that out of the 303 respondents, males dominated (F-188, 62%), indicating that more males participated in the study. Gender has been articulated as influencing travel behaviour, especially for males who are described as often more willing to engage in recreational travel due to greater independence and fewer household restrictions,

while women may participate less due to domestic responsibilities (Bakare, 2020). This may suggest a higher likelihood of domestic tourism participation among male staff at TTU.

With regards to the age group, majority (F-126, 41.6%) of

**Table 1: Socio- Demographic characteristics of Staff**

Variable	Frequency (303)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	188	62.0
Female	115	38.0
Total	303	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
25 - 35	126	41.6
36 - 46	72	23.8
47 - 57	91	30.0
58 and above	14	4.6
Total	303	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	104	34.3
Married	180	59.4
Widowed	9	3.0
Other	10	3.3
Total	303	100.0
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
HND	7	2.3
Degree	91	30.0
Master's Degree	155	51.2
PhD	50	16.5
Total	303	100.0
<b>Staff Category</b>		
Teaching	133	43.9
Non -Teaching	170	56.1
Total	303	100.0
<b>Income Range</b>		
Below 3,000	34	11.0
3,000- 5,999	37	12.0
6,000 – 8,999	62	21.0
9,000- 11,999	95	31.0
12,000 and above	75	25.0
Total	303	100.0

Source: Field data, 2025

the respondents fell within the ages 25–35 years, while a smaller percentage (F-14, 4.6%) were aged 58 and above. As noted by Marques *et al.* (2025), Kim and Kim (2020) and Maghrifani *et al.* (2024), age influences tourism motivations and travel behaviour. While it constraints older individuals who may seek relaxation, younger ones

might prioritize adventure and exploration. The age range in this study suggests that TTU staff are within the active workforce and capable of participating in domestic tourism given the appropriate motivation. A significant portion (F-180, 59.4%) of the respondents were married, while (F-104, 34.3%) were single. The results imply that marital status may influence the respondents' participation in tourism. As asserted by Kara (2016), marital status can influence tourism choices, while married individuals travel more for family-related tourism, single individuals are often more spontaneous in their tourism decisions. The results on educational qualification show that about half (F-155, 51.2%) of the respondents had Masters Degrees, followed by those with Bachelor's degrees (F- 91, 30.0%) and PhDs (F- 50, 16.5%). Higher educational levels have been positively correlated with tourism participation, as educated individuals tend to value leisure and have broader awareness of tourism opportunities (Bernini & Cracolici, 2016; Ma *et al.*, 2018). High level of education among TTU staff suggests a knowledgeable group likely to understand and appreciate the benefits of domestic tourism participation.

The staff category revealed a slightly higher percentage (F-170, 56.1%) of non-teaching staff as against teaching staff (F-133, 43.9%) as shown in Table 1. This balanced distribution indicates that both academic and administrative/support staff are well represented in the study. Ray and Pana-Cryan (2021) cited that work demands and flexibility often vary between these groups, which may affect their availability and willingness to engage in domestic tourism. Hence, the different work schedules of the staff might influence their travel decisions.

Regarding monthly income of the respondents, F- 95 (31.0%) earned between 9,000–11,999 Ghana cedis, F-75, (25.0%) earned 12,000 and above and a smaller proportion (F-34, 11.0%) earned lower income. Income is a critical determinant in tourism participation. According to Kim and Kim (2020) and Phan *et al.* (2025) individuals with higher income are more likely to engage in tourism activities due to affordability and access to travel options. The result implies that a significant portion of TTU staff

may have sufficient income to support participation in domestic tourism.

### Influence of Awareness and Promotion of Destinations in Motivating TTU Staff to Participate in Domestic Tourism

This section examines the influence of awareness and promotion of destinations in motivating Takoradi Technical University staff to participate in domestic tourism. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means and standard deviations, while reliability score was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha. Respondents provided their perspectives on various awareness and promotional indicators, which are presented in Table 2. The results showed more respondents acknowledging the usefulness of digital platforms in receiving tourism information. Specifically, 71.6% of the respondents agreed that social media platforms provide useful information about domestic tourism opportunities. This item recorded a mean score of 2.59 with a standard deviation of 0.708, indicating a generally positive perception, though with some moderate variation in responses. These findings buttress Al-Romeedy and Singh (2025)'s observation that digital platforms are effective in delivering real-time, user-friendly travel content that enhances awareness and engagement with tourism offerings.

Furthermore, F-235 (77.6%) of the respondents agreed that destination influencers and travel bloggers motivate them to explore destinations, with a mean score of 2.73 and a low standard deviation of 0.539 suggesting a high level of consistency in how respondents perceived the influence of social media personalities. Along the same line of these results, Anuar *et al.* (2021) emphasized that digital influencers act as virtual tour guides, building trust and destination appeal among followers. Using social media as an advertising platform for a product marketing (Hossain *et al.*, 2025).

With regard to how travel experiences influence travel decisions, 72.9% of the respondents agreed that seeing travel experiences shared on social media encouraged them to participate in domestic tourism. This item

**Table 2:** Awareness and Promotion of Destination in Motivating Staff to Participate in Domestic Tourism

Awareness/ Promotion Item	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
	F	%	F	%				
Social media provides travel information	217	(71.6%)	47	(15.5%)	39 (12.9%)	2.59	0.708	
Travel experiences encourage me	221	(72.9%)	63	(20.8%)	19 (6.3%)	2.67	0.591	
Destination influencers motivate me	235	(77.6%)	54	(17.8%)	14 (4.6%)	2.73	0.539	
I follow tourism pages/groups	125	(41.3%)	98	(32.3%)	80 (26.4%)	2.15	0.810	

Promotions influence my decisions	198 (65.3%)	62 (20.5%)	43 (14.2%)	2.51	0.732	
TV, radio & print media increase awareness	215 (71.0%)	70 (23.1%)	18 (5.9%)	2.65	0.589	
Government/tourism agencies promote domestic tourism	141 (46.5%)	51 (16.8%)	111 (36.6%)	2.10	0.908	
Destinations events encourage exploration	179 (59.1%)	63 (20.8%)	61 (20.1%)	2.39	0.802	0.725
Attractive ads make me more likely to visit destinations	227 (74.9%)	57 (18.8%)	19 (6.3%)	2.39	0.802	
Advertisement showing cultural/natural sites motivate me	227(74.9%)	50 (16.5%)	26 (8.6%)	2.66	0.629	
Discount packages encourage participation	175(57.8%)	85 (28.1%)	43 (14.2%)	2.44	0.729	
Seasonal fluctuations influence my travel decisions	149(49.2%)	106 (35.0%)	48 (15.8%)	2.33	0.735	
Limited-time deals make tourism more accessible	113(37.3%)	102 (33.7%)	88 (29.0%)	2.08	0.812	
Loyalty programs/reward schemes motivate travel	139(45.9%)	79 (26.1%)	85 (28.1%)	2.18	0.843	

Source: Filed data, 2025

recorded a mean of 2.67, the second-highest and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.591, indicating strong agreement with low variability. This implies that digital storytelling through photos, videos and reviews has a powerful impact on motivating staff to explore domestic destinations. According to Zhang *et al.* (2018), experiential content shared online emotionally connects individuals to destinations, increasing likelihood of participation. On the other hand, 41.3% of the respondents (F-125) agreed that they follow tourism-related pages and groups on various platforms to stay informed about domestic travel opportunities. The mean score of 2.15 and a standard deviation of 0.810, indicate diverse opinions. Most respondents follow tourism-related pages or groups but a significant proportion remain neutral 98 (32.3%) or do not engage at all 80 (26.4%). This indicates that while various platforms such as social media is a relevant platform for promoting tourism, there is still room to increase follower engagement and attract those who are currently disengaged.

Regarding promotional campaigns by destinations, F-198 (65.3%) of respondents agreed that such campaigns influence their decision to engage in domestic tourism. The mean score of 2.51 and standard deviation of 0.732, indicate a moderately positive impact with some variation in responses. These findings suggest that targeted marketing strategies such as sponsored posts, destination highlights and online contests can play a meaningful role in shaping travel decisions, aligning with Bakari's (2021)

arguments that emotionally compelling and informative promotional messages are effective in driving consumer interest and participation in tourism.

Traditional media still plays a significant role in shaping tourism decisions. Notably, F- 215 (71.0%) of the respondents agreed that advertisements on TV, radio and print media increase their awareness of domestic tourism opportunities. The mean score of 2.65 and a low standard deviation of 0.589, suggest a broad and consistent agreement among respondents on this issue. These findings echo the observations of Zeqiri *et al.* (2025) and Reverte and Luque (2022) on how mass media continues to be essential in promoting tourism, particularly in contexts where digital access remains uneven or limited. However, the perception about government and tourism agencies effectively promoting domestic tourism through advertisements was less favourable. Only 46.5% of respondents (F-141) agreed with this statement, while F-111 (36.6%) disagreed, resulting in a relatively low mean score of 2.10 and the highest standard deviation of 0.908. The wide variation in responses suggests that awareness efforts by public institutions are perceived by many as inconsistent or ineffective. This finding buttresses the work of Adu-Ampong (2020), who observed that poorly coordinated and irregular tourism promotion strategies in Ghana continue to hinder the growth of domestic tourism.

Again, Table 2 shows that majority (F-179, 59.1%) of respondents agreed that destination events encouraged

them to explore domestic destinations. A mean score of 2.39 and a standard deviation of 0.802 were recorded for this item. While the mean reflects a moderate level of agreement, the relatively high standard deviation suggests varied experiences and perceptions of such events among staff. In this regard, Huang and Lin (2025) emphasized that interactive tourism events foster personal connections and enhance individuals' intent to visit featured destinations. Similarly, a significant portion (F- 227, 74.9%) of the respondents agreed that they were more likely to visit a destination after seeing an attractive tourism advertisement. This item also recorded a mean score of 2.39 and a standard deviation of 0.802, reflecting a generally positive perception, though with some variation in how respondents rated its influence. This finding supports the argument of Meenakshi *et al.* (2024), who noted that visual appeal in tourism marketing significantly influences decision-making, particularly by triggering emotional recall and enhancing destination desirability. Advertisements that showcase Ghana's cultural and natural attractions received strong endorsement, with 74.9% of respondents (F- 227), agreeing that such content motivates them to engage in domestic tourism. The highest mean score of 2.66 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.629, indicate a broad appeal and consistent agreement among respondents on this issue. These results suggest that cultural and heritage-themed promotions are particularly effective in encouraging participation in domestic tourism. Hence, the results align with Boadi's (2024) perspective that the strategic promotion of cultural assets is essential for stimulating domestic travel interest among Ghanaians.

On the cost-based discounted travel packages, F-175, 57.8% of respondents agreed that discounted travel packages encouraged their participation in domestic tourism. This item recorded a mean score of 2.44 and a standard deviation of 0.729, indicating that price sensitivity plays a role in tourism participation, though to a moderate extent. The findings are consistent with Wara *et al.* (2022), who found out that perceived affordability significantly influences local travel decisions. With regard to how seasonal fluctuations influence travel decisions, F-149 (49.2%) of the respondents agreed, while F -106 (35.0%) remained neutral and (F-48 (15.8%) disagreed to this idea. This item showed a mean score of 2.33 and a standard deviation of 0.735 which portray that nearly half of the respondents find seasonal offers moderately influential in their travel decisions. However, the relatively high number of neutral responses suggests that a significant portion of staff may be indifferent or unconvinced about the value of seasonal fluctuations in line with the finding of Li *et al.* (2021), who noted that the effectiveness of seasonal fluctuations is a decider in making travel decisions.

'Limited-time deals make tourism more accessible' received the least agreement with the mean score of 2.08 and standard deviation of 0.812, suggesting that it was less effective in encouraging domestic tourism participation

among staff. Only 37.3% (F-113) of respondents agreed that such deals made domestic tourism more accessible. The high standard deviation also points to significant differences in how staff perceived the usefulness or practicality of time-limited offers. This could imply that short-term offers are not enough to drive participation, possibly because of staff scheduling or planning constraints. It reflects a need for flexible, well-publicized deals.

Finally, loyalty programmes and reward schemes were found to have limited impact on domestic tourism participation. 45.9% of the respondents (F -139) agreed that such programmes were effective, while the remaining responses reflected a mix of neutrality (F -79, 26.1%) and disagreement (F - 85, 28.1%). This item recorded a mean score of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 0.843, indicating considerable variation in staff perceptions. While some respondents saw value in loyalty initiatives, a significant portion (F-79, 26.1%) remained indifferent or unconvinced about their effectiveness. Regarding the same idea, Hanna *et al.* (2016) argued that the success of such promotional strategies often depends on the timing and the perceived value of the offers being presented. A Cronbach's Alpha of = 0.725 indicates acceptable internal reliability, meaning that the items consistently measure perceptions of awareness and promotional influence.

#### Participation Levels of Staff in Domestic Tourism

The study also assessed the participation levels of staff in domestic tourism. It was categorized into three groups: low, moderate and high participation. As shown in Figure 2, out of the 303 respondents, 90 (29.7%) reported low levels of participation, 120 (39.6%) indicated moderate participation, while 93 (30.7%) demonstrated high participation.

The findings suggest that moderate participation is the most common among respondents, representing almost 40% of the sample. This indicates that while many respondents engage in domestic tourism, their

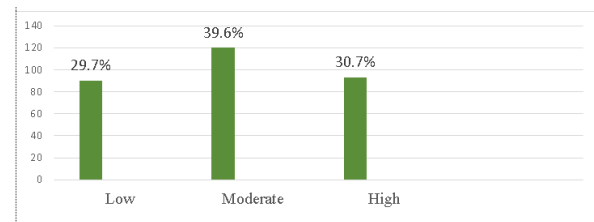


Figure 2: Participation Levels of Staff

participation is not consistent or intensive. A significant proportion (29.7%) also reported low participation, reflecting possible barriers including infrastructure development. This concern is echoed by Ofosua (2024), who identified poor road access to tourist sites as one of the most significant obstacles to tourism development

in Ghana. On the other hand, nearly one-third (30.7%) of respondents showed high participation, highlighting a group that is actively engaged in domestic tourism activities and likely more motivated or better resourced to overcome common constraints. These findings support the assertion of Wara *et al.* (2022) who perceived affordability to significantly influence local travel decisions.

**Influence of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Staff on Awareness and Promotion of Destinations**

To examine the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of staff and awareness of destinations, a

series of non-parametric tests were conducted, and the results are presented in Table 3. The Mann-Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference in awareness of destinations between male (mean rank = 144.29) and female respondents (mean rank = 162.16),  $U = 9360.5$ ,  $p = 0.083$ . Similarly, no significant difference was observed between teaching staff (mean rank = 153.53) and non-teaching staff (mean rank = 150.80),  $U = 11101.0$ ,  $p = 0.786$ . These results suggest that awareness of destinations is not strongly differentiated by gender or staff category. This supports Antón *et al.*'s (2017) argument that awareness is a general precursor to travel

**Table 3:** Influence of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of staff on Awareness and Promotion of Destination

Socio-demographic Characteristics	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P-value
Gender				
Male	188	144.29	9360.5	0.083
Female	115	162.16		
Staff				
Teaching	133	153.53	11101.0	0.786
Non-teaching	170	150.80		
			Kruskal Wallis H Test	P-value
Age	N	Mean Rank	$X^2(3)=5.924$	0.115
25-35 years	126	156.40		
36-46 years	72	133.95		
47-57 years	91	163.59		
58 years and above	14	129.93		
Marital status				
Single	104	155.01	$X^2(3)=4.948$	0.176
Married	180	146.11		
Widowed	9	183.78		
Other	10	198.10		
Educational Qualification				
HND	7	90.29	$X^2(3)=3.792$	0.285
Degree	91	151.40		
Master's Degree	155	155.57		
PhD	50	150.66		
Income Range				
Below 3,000	34	108.29	$X^2(4)=11.237$	0.024**
3000-5,999	37	164.12		
6000-8,999	62	167.35		
9000-11,999	95	151.61		
12,000 and above	75	153.63		

Source: Filed data, 2025

interest, not confined to specific demographic categories. Likewise, Litvin *et al.* (2018) and Suo and Huang (2023) emphasized that word-of-mouth and recommendations influence individuals broadly, regardless of gender or job roles.

The Kruskal-Wallis test further revealed no statistically significant difference in awareness and promotion of destinations across age groups,  $\chi^2(3) = 0.115$ . The mean ranks were: 25–35 years (156.40), 36–46 years (133.95), 47–57 years (163.59), and 58 years and above (129.93). Similarly, no significant differences ( $\chi^2(3) = 0.176$ ) were found across marital status categories, with mean ranks of 155.01 for single, 146.11 for married, 183.78 for widowed and 198.10 for other. These findings suggest that awareness is fairly distributed across different age groups and marital statuses. Litheko and Potgieter (2016) defined awareness as knowledge of tourism opportunities, which is not inherently age-dependent, while Shaibu (2025) and Chen *et al.* (2020) highlighted that positive experiences and repeat visits motivate participation across demographic lines, explaining why age and marital status did not produce significant differences.

Similarly, no significant differences ( $\chi^2(3) = 0.285$ ) were found across educational levels. The mean ranks were 90.29 for HND holders, 151.40 for degree holders, 155.57 for master's degree holders, and 150.66 for PhD holders. This suggests that awareness is comparable across education categories. Dhiman (2023), Zeqiri *et al.* (2025) and Reverte and Luque (2022) all argued that traditional and modern promotional channels effectively reach audiences regardless of educational background, which is consistent with this result. In contrast, a statistically significant difference ( $\chi^2(4) = 0.024$ ) was observed across income ranges. The mean ranks were 108.29 for respondents earning below 3,000, 164.12 for those earning 3,000–5,999, 167.35 for those earning 6,000–8,999, 151.61 for those earning 9,000–11,999, and 153.63 for those earning 12,000 and above. These results indicate that individuals in the lower income bracket had the lowest awareness, while middle-income earners (particularly the 6,000–8,999 range) demonstrated the highest awareness of destinations. This aligns with Wara *et al.* (2022) who found that affordability and discounted travel packages strongly influence domestic tourism participation. Li *et al.* (2021) similarly emphasized that promotional offers are most effective among individuals with adequate disposable income, while Hanna *et al.* (2016) noted that loyalty and reward schemes are most valuable to those with greater financial means. Boadi (2024) further highlighted that cultural promotions are most impactful when individuals possess the financial capacity to act upon them. These findings demonstrate that while socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, marital status and education do not significantly shape awareness of destinations, but income plays a critical role.

## CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates the role of awareness and

promotion of destinations in motivating Takoradi Technical University (TTU) staff to participate in domestic tourism. Awareness and promotion of destination efforts significantly impact domestic tourism interest among TTU staff. Promotional efforts such as posts from influencers, social media, traditional media such as television, radio, newspapers and travel discounts, cultural campaigns and organized events can enhance interest in domestic tourism. However, their influence varies depending on staff income level though not significantly by gender, age or education and staff category. This suggests that economic standing and job-related flexibility are more critical than personal demographics in shaping domestic tourism participation behaviour. Overall, the results point to a moderate level of participation in domestic tourism among staff of TTU. Although there is evidence of active involvement, the larger share of staff in the low and moderate participation categories opens the need for interventions that address barriers influencing participation. Strengthening awareness and promotion of destination campaigns, providing affordable tourism packages and improving infrastructure may help encourage greater participation in domestic tourism.

It is therefore recommended that Tourism authorities and destination marketers should strengthen the use of social media platforms, websites and digital influencers to reach potential staff with engaging and relatable content. The Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA) and private tour operators should collaborate to design affordable and flexible travel packages that cater for middle- and low-income earners, who represent a large segment of potential domestic travellers. Advertisements and campaigns should emphasize Ghana's cultural festivals, historical sites and natural attractions to foster national pride and stimulate local travel interest.

This study contributes to knowledge by providing empirical evidence on how destination awareness and promotion influence domestic tourism participation within the Ghanaian context, particularly among university staff. It extends the application of the Push–Pull Motivation Theory by demonstrating that while psychological and destination-related factors drive participation, economic capacity (income) moderates their effectiveness. The findings also contribute to literature on tourism marketing by highlighting the growing importance of digital platforms, social media influencers and event-based promotions in stimulating domestic travel interest.

The study focused solely on staff of Takoradi Technical University, which limits the generalizability of findings to other institutions or occupational groups in Ghana. It also relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias or overestimation of actual tourism participation levels. Future research should therefore be extended to other technical universities, to obtain a broader view of how awareness and promotion play out in motivating domestic tourism participation among staff of technical universities in Ghana.

## REFERENCES

- Abimbola, B. F., Olusola, A. B., & Ogunsusi, K. (2022). Perceived factors affecting the patronage of domestic tourism in Osun State, Nigeria. *Issue 2021, 4*, 733.
- Adu-Ampong, E. A., & Adams, E. A. (2020). "But you are also Ghanaian, you should know": Negotiating the insider-outsider research positionality in the fieldwork encounter. *Qualitative Inquiry, 26*(6), 583-592.
- Aleksanyan, G. P. (2020). The concept of tourism destination in the context of geographical space. *Proceedings of the YSU c: Geological and Geographical Sciences, 54* ( 3), 203-210.
- Al-Romeedy, B. S., & Singh, A. (2025). From Search to Stay: Mapping the Digital Journey of the Modern Traveler. In *Decoding Tourist Behavior in the Digital Era: Insights for Effective Marketing* (pp. 283-308). IGI Global.
- Antón, C., Camarero, C., & Laguna-García, M. (2017). Towards a new approach of destination loyalty drivers: Satisfaction, visit intensity and tourist motivations. *Current Issues in Tourism, 20*(3), 238-260.
- Anuar, F. I., Zaid, A. A. A., Zabidi, I. Z., & Kamal, S. N. J. A. (2021). Young tourists' trust in Instagram travel influencers and their intention to visit travel destinations. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 11*(16), 304-317.
- Bakare, K. O. (2020). Perceived influence of transportation services on tourism participation among travelers in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 9*(1), 1-13.
- Bakari, S. J. (2021). Challenges facing domestic tourism promotion-a case of Serengeti National Park-Tanzania. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality S, 3*.
- Baloglu, S., & Uysal, M. (1996). Market segments of push and pull motivations: A canonical correlation approach. *International journal of contemporary Hospitality Management, 8*(3), 32-38.
- Baniya, R., & Paudel, K. (2016). An analysis of push and pull travel motivations of domestic tourists in Nepal. *Journal of Management and Development Studies, 27*, 16-30.
- Bernini, C., & Cracolici, M. F. (2016). Is participation in the tourism market an opportunity for everyone? Some evidence from Italy. *Tourism economics, 22*(1), 57-79.
- Boadi, N. Y. W. A. (2024). The case for a public holiday for traditional worship and ancestral veneration in Ghana. *Journal of Indigenous and Shamanic Studies, 5*(1), 1-11.
- Boniface, B., Cooper, C., & Cooper, R. (2016). *Worldwide destinations: The geography of travel and tourism*. Routledge.
- Camilleri, M. A., & Camilleri, M. A. (2018). The tourism industry: An overview. In *The Tourism industry* (pp. 3-27). Springer
- Chen, X., Cheng, Z. F., & Kim, G. B. (2020). Make it memorable: Tourism experience, fun, recommendation and revisit intentions of Chinese outbound tourists. *Sustainability, 12*(5), 1904.
- Cohen, E. (1972). Toward a sociology of international tourism. *Social research, 164*-182.
- Crompton, J. L. (1979). Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of tourism research, 6*(4), 408-424.
- Dann, G. M. (1977). Anomie, ego-enhancement and tourism. *Annals of tourism research, 4*(4), 184-194.
- Dhiman, D. B. (2023). Unleashing the power of television broadcasting in the digital age: A critical review. SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4598192>.
- Eslami, S., Khalifah, Z., Mardani, A., Streimikiene, D., & Han, H. (2019). Community attachment, tourism impacts, quality of life and residents' support for sustainable tourism development. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 36*(9), 1061-1079.
- Giddy, J. K. (2018). Adventure tourism motivations: A push and pull factor approach. *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-economic Series, 42*, 47-58.
- Gilmeanu, R. (2015). Theoretical considerations on motivation at the work place, job satisfaction and individual performance. *Valabian Journal of economic studies, 6*(3), 69.
- Gnoth, J. (1997). Tourism motivation and expectation formation. *Annals of Tourism research, 24*(2), 283-304.
- Hanna, R. C., Swain, S. D., & Berger, P. D. (2016). Optimizing time-limited price promotions. *Journal of Marketing Analytics, 4*, 77-92.
- Huang, Y. C., & Lin, Y. H. (2025). Do you own Mazu's glorious sunlight? The mediating role of psychological ownership between authentic experiences and behavioural intentions. *Current Issues in Tourism, 28*(18), 3016-3030.
- Hossain, M. S., Sheikh, P., & Islam, P. (2025). The role of social media marketing in the tourism and hospitality industry: a study on Bangladesh. *American Journal of Tourism and Hospitality, 3*(1), 14-23.
- Ismael III, A., & Menes, C. C. (2025). Behind the Snow Experiences: Winter Stories of Tourists' Travel Motivation, Appreciation, and Challenges in Georgia and Armenia. *American Journal of Tourism and Hospitality, 3*(1), 48-66.
- Jacobsen, J. K. S. (2016). Graham MS Dann: The peripatetic who was pushed and pulled. *Anatolia, 27*(1), 111-119.
- Kabote, F. (2020). Contribution of domestic tourism to sustainable tourism development. In *Tourism*. IntechOpen.
- Kara, N. (2016). Demographic factors and preference for travel activities among tourists in Tanzania. *International Journal of Science Arts and Commerce, 1*(3), 9-26.
- Kim, M., & Kim, C. (2020). Lifestyle and travel motivation of the elderly in South Korea: baseline characteristics and the relationship between demographic factors. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration, 21*(2), 141-164.
- Le-Klähn, D. T., Roosen, J., Gerike, R., & Hall, C. M.

- (2015). Factors affecting tourists' public transport use and areas visited at destinations. *Tourism Geographies*, 17(5), 738-757.
- Li, H., Meng, F., & Zhang, Z. (2016). Non-participation of Domestic Tourism: Analyzing the Influence of Discouraging Factors. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 18(6), 567-578.
- Li, X., Gong, J., Gao, B., & Yuan, P. (2021). Impacts of COVID-19 on tourists' destination preferences: Evidence from China. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 90, 103258.
- Litheko, A. M., & Potgieter, M. (2016). Residents' awareness and support of tourism in Mahikeng, South Africa.
- Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2018). A retrospective view of electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(1), 313-325.
- Ma, A. T., Chow, A. S., Cheung, L. T., Lee, K. M., & Liu, S. (2018). Impacts of tourists' sociodemographic characteristics on the travel motivation and satisfaction: The case of protected areas in South China. *Sustainability*, 10(10), 3388.
- Maghrifani, D., Sneddon, J., & Liu, F. (2024). Personal values and travel motivations: the moderating effects of visit experience, gender and age. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 7(5), 3091-3109.
- Mahamadu, H., & Salia, A. M. (2020). Influence of tourism supply and demand elements in destination attractiveness: the case of the West Gonja District. *Journal of Tourism & Hospitality*, 9(4), 269-2167.
- Marques, J., Gomes, S., Ferreira, M., Rebuá, M., & Marques, H. (2025). Generation Z and Travel Motivations: The Impact of Age, Gender, and Residence. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(2), 82.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.
- Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and Personality* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.
- Meenakshi, N., Dhir, A., Mahto, R. V., Nicolau, J. L., & Kaur, P. (2024). Travelers' coping strategies in the backdrop of revenge tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 63(6), 1473-1489. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875231193596>
- Morrison, A. M. (2020). Marketing and managing city tourism destinations. In *Routledge Handbook of Tourism Cities* (pp. 135-161). Routledge.
- Morrison, A. M., & Maxim, C. (2021). *World tourism cities: a systematic approach to urban tourism*. Routledge.
- Næss, P., Peters, S., Stefansdottir, H., & Strand, A. (2018). Causality, not just correlation: Residential location, transport rationales and travel behavior across metropolitan contexts. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 69, 181-195.
- Ofosua, H. (2024). The Impact of Transportation on Accessible Tourism for Physically Challenged Individuals in Ghana.
- Oppewal, H., Huybers, T., & Crouch, G. I. (2015). Tourist destination and experience choice: A choice experimental analysis of decision sequence effects. *Tourism Management*, 48, 467-476.
- Otoo, F. E. (2019). An examination of senior and mature/senior diaspora tourists' travel motivations ( Doctoral dissertation). Vmhyftr654
- Petroman, I. M., Văduva, L., & Iancu, T. (2021). Factors That Motivate and Determine the Choice of Tourist Destinations. *Agricultural Management/*, 23(3).
- Phan, K. T., Chen, S. H., Pai, W. T., Lee, J. M., & Hsieh, C. J. (2025). How Travel-Related Factors and the Socioeconomic Characteristics of Tourists Shape Tourism Demand? New Evidence from the Role of Satisfaction. *SAGE Open*, 15(2),
- Ramsey, J. R., Zhang, Y., Lorenz, M. P., & Hosany, S. (2024). Travel Stress, Leisure Exploration, and Trip Satisfaction: The mediating role of travel adjustment. *Journal of Travel Research*.
- Ray, T. K., & Pana-Cryan, R. (2021). Work flexibility and work-related well-being. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(6), 3254.
- Reverte, F. G., & Luque, P. D. (2022). Digital divide in e-Tourism. In *Handbook of e-Tourism* (pp. 1785-1805). Springer.
- Rogers, T., & Davidson, R. (2015). *Marketing destinations and venues for conferences, conventions and business events*. Routledge.
- Rojas, M., Méndez, A., & Watkins-Fassler, K. (2023). The hierarchy of needs empirical examination of Maslow's theory and lessons for development. *World Development*, 165, 106185.
- Shaibu, H. (2025). Understanding leisure travelers' motives for repeat visits to the same destination.
- Soldatenko, D., & Backer, E. (2019). A content analysis of cross-cultural motivational studies in tourism relating to nationalities. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 38, 122-139.
- Suo, L., & Huang, Y. (2023). Brand Authenticity and Consumers' Willingness to Recommend by Word-of-Mouth: The Mediating Effect of Brand Attachment. *Journal of Community Development Research* 16(4), 73-90.
- Van Chau, D., & He, J. (2024). Machine learning innovations for proactive customer behavior prediction: A strategic tool for dynamic market adaptation.
- Wara, K. U., Jan, S., & Ihsan, A. (2022). Examining The Influence of Affordability and Accessibility on Tourist Delight. *Sarhad Journal of Management Sciences*, 8(1).
- Yamane, T. (1968) *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis*, London, Harper and Row.
- Yoo, C. K., Yoon, D., & Park, E. (2018). Tourist motivation: an integral approach to destination choices. *Tourism review*, 73(2), 169-185.
- Yousaf, A., Amin, I., & C Santos, J. A. (2018). Tourist's motivations to travel: A theoretical perspective on the

- existing literature. *Tourism and hospitality management*, 24(1), 197-211.
- Zeng, Z., & Wang, X. (2021). Effects of domestic tourism on urban-rural income inequality: Evidence from China. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 9009.
- Zeqiri, A., Ben Youssef, A., & Maherzi Zahar, T. (2025). The Role of Digital Tourism Platforms in Advancing Sustainable Development Goals in the Industry 4.0 Era. *Sustainability*, 17(8), 3482.
- Zhang, H., Li, L., Yang, Y., & Zhang, J. (2018). Why do domestic tourists choose to consume local food? The differential and non-monotonic moderating effects of subjective knowledge. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 10, 68-77.