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## Tourism Development in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges

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### Abstract

It is well documented in this literature of a nations importance in the development of tourism. Nigeria has made efforts just like other developing nations over the years to develop the tourism sector through programs and policies. Yet, the underdevelopment of the tourism sector is still alarming. In terms of its economical contribution to the nation among others, the tourism industry is not performing well. For example, the tourism sector contribution to the GDP is 34% and generates 20% employment compared to Morocco, South Africa and Kenya whose tourism sectors contributes 68%, 87% and 79% to GDP respectively. Issues and challenges could be impeding the development of the tourism sector in Nigeria. This paper, therefore, theoretically examines the issues and challenges of tourism development in Nigeria. The paper will be relevant to the development board and the national development planners.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Development, Gross National Product, Developing Countries

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the activity of people or a person traveling away from his or her home for business or pleasure. Aggressively, the tourism sector is typically large, necessitating adaptation for the needs and changes in the travelers desires. The creation of strategy and plans to promote a nations tourism over time has proved to be powerful and resilient economic activity and a basic contributor to economic development of nations by producing billions of dollars in exports and creating millions of jobs. Developing and growing tourism is often used as a substitute for other forms of growth in developing countries. Tourism industry has grown to be one of the largest industry globally and one of the fastest growing sectors economically, According to documentation by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Despite the global Covid-19 pandemic issues, political instability, economic crisis, xenophobic attacks, security and insurgency challenges withing the African region, most of the countries (Morocco, South Africa and Kenya) are still flourishing in their tourism sector, unlike Nigeria with the current rise in banditry and kidnapping that has

host the declining of domestic and international travelers. As tourism in Nigeria enters into a new era with the recent structural changes. developing the tourism 'industry' will includes government programs, policies and private sectors directly involved in tourism, such as the accommodation, catering, entertainment, recreation, transport and tourism-related services.

## **Tourism**

SOFRONOV (2018) Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing sectors, and for many countries, it is a significant source of foreign exchange and jobs. It is one of the most amazing economic and social phenomena to have ever occurred. The term "tour" comes from the Latin word "tornus," which means "a method for creating a circle." The transfer of people from their usual place of residence to another place (with the goal of returning) for a minimum of twenty-four hours to a maximum of six months for the sole purpose of leisure and enjoyment is referred to as tourism.

Mathieson & Wall (1982), Tourism also is a collection of activities performed by a person or a group of people who travels to a location outside of his or her normal environment for less than a year and whose primary purpose of travel is not to engage in a compensated activity within the destination. This is the most common interpretation of the term used in this article, and it encompasses both the vacation and business travel markets, but excludes migrant labour. In comparison to the WTO formulation, day trippers, who are a significant component of 'newcomer' domestic tourism. The behaviors and perceptions of tourists and visitors away from their home environment that are serviced by the travel and tourism industry and host destination are referred to as tourism, as a socioeconomic phenomenon.

A tourism product is the amount of all of these activities, experiences, and services.

Supply and demand can be used to characterize the tourism method. The aim of tourism planning should be to strike a balance between supply and demand. This necessitates not only an understanding of market characteristics and patterns, but also of the planning mechanism used to meet market demands. The demand side is often defined as tourists from core generating markets; the supply side includes all services, programmes, attractions, and land uses planned and managed for the visitors. Private industry, non-profit organisations, and the government can all have influence over these supply-side. To ensure the long-term growth and management of tourism-related capital, new and creative types of collaborations are emerging. Flows in resources such as money, labour, supplies, and tourist expenses into the destination, as well as lows in marketing, promotion, tourist artefacts, and experiences from the destination back into the tourist generating area, can be seen as being related on the supply and demand side. Furthermore, some tourist spending can be redirected back into visitor-generating areas by repatriation of profits by international tourism investors

and reimbursement for better goods and services offered to visitors at the destination. The major components of the supply side for planning purposes are various modes of transportation, tourism-related infrastructure, Tourist information, Marketing and promotion, The community of communities within the visitor's destination area, the political and institutional frameworks for enabling tourism, Hall (1994). Due to many factors intertwined with it and the presence of many industries contributing to its success, the tourism system is both competitive and complex. These variables and sectors are related to the provision of a tourist experience as well as the generation of revenue and markets in the tourism industry. Because of the competitive nature of the tourism industry, it is critical to monitor the external and internal environments of destinations on a regular basis and make adjustments as needed to ensure a stable and viable tourism industry. As a result, it is now widely recognised that tourism production cannot be conducted in isolation from the environment and local communities, nor can it be conducted without regard for the social and cultural implications of tourism.

### **Characteristic of tourism**

\* **The intangible;** Before purchasing, it cannot be touched, gripped, handled, seen, smelled, tasted, or heard. Tourism facilities are largely intangible, unlike goods, which can be touched and tested before purchase. Customers, on the other hand, use other clues to assess the facility, such as the appearance of the hotel entrance or the behaviour of the receptionist.

\* **The Distinction** Tourism services cannot be processed in the same way as physical goods can. An airline seat that is not sold on a specific night or day can never be sold again. There is no way to save unused space for later use. Spare seats on one plane, for example, cannot be moved to the next flight.

\* **The Heterogeneity/variability** in the outcome is introduced by the widespread participation of people in the development of a tourism service. There's a good chance that different people will react to the same question in slightly different ways (or even by the same person at different times). As a result, depending on his mood, the time of day, the day of the week, or the customer involved, the same employee can provide services of varying quality.

\* **The seasonality;** The market for most tourist destinations is characterised by "high," "shoulders," and "low" demand periods. high– The time or era, normally the holiday season, when demand is most likely to rise. There is a shoulder season in between the high and low seasons. low - off season, the most cost-effective time of year.

\* **Cross-connections** The facilities that make up a visitor's experience at a destination include lodging, transportation, and attractions. As a result, a state of "interdependence" develops. And if a single tourist purchases a package of items from many companies, the attractions would be useless if they are not accompanied by sufficient lodging.

\* **Fixed and variable** costs are the two types of costs. Fixed costs are costs that are unaffected by the number of customers received at any given time, while variable costs are costs that are unaffected by the number of customers and must be paid regardless.

\* **inseparability**; The tourism service customer is inextricably linked to service delivery because he is interested in it from the moment he requests it until he consumes the services delivered. Tourism services are inextricably linked to their providers. If the receptionist is unavailable, the hotel guest will not be able to receive counter service, and the receptionist will not be able to provide service if there is no guest.

On the basis of the intent of the visit and alternate modes of tourism, tourism has two forms and several types. Foreign and domestic tourism are two forms of tourism;

**Foreign tourism** refers to when people travel to another country. A valid passport, visa, health documents, foreign exchange, and other documents are required for travel to a foreign country. foreign tourism further divides into two types; Inbound Tourism and Outbound Tourism.

\* **Inbound tourism**; Tourism that comes in from outside the country, This applies to visitors from other countries visiting a specific country. When people travel outside of their host/native country to another country, it is referred to as inbound tourism for that country. When a tourist from England visits Nigeria, for example, it is considered inbound tourism since international tourists visit Nigeria.

\* **Outbound tourism**; Tourism in other countries, This applies to visitors who are traveling from their home country to another country. When tourists travel to a foreign area, they are engaging in outbound tourism for their own country, as they are leaving the country. When a tourist from England visits Nigeria, for example, it is considered outbound tourism for England and inbound tourism for Nigeria.

## **Domestic Tourism**

Domestic tourism refers to tourism conducted by citizens within their own country. Traveling within the same country is simpler since formal travel documents and time-consuming formalities such as mandatory health checks and foreign exchange are not required. When traveling within the country, a traveller is rarely confronted with language barriers or currency exchange issues.

## **Tourism Types**

Tourism takes many types depending on the intent of the visit and other factors. The following are examples of tourism types, they are as follows:

- \* Recreational or leisure tourism; this is a form of tourism that takes people away from the staleness of daily life. In this situation, people spend their free time hiking, going to the beach, and so on.
- \* Cultural; this tourism satisfies cultural and intellectual interest by allowing visitors to visit ancient monuments, historical or religious sites, and so on.
- \* Sports/Adventure: This category includes trips taken by people with the intention of playing golf, skiing, or hiking.
- \* health: People move to this category for medical care or to visit places with curative properties, such as hot springs, spa yoga, and so on.
- \* Convention tourism; this tourism is becoming a more important part of the travel industry. People travel domestically and internationally to attend conventions related to their industry, career, or hobby.
- \* Incentive Tourism: Large corporations offer holiday trips as rewards to dealers and salespeople who meet sales goals. This is a recent and growing trend in tourism. Instead of cash rewards or gifts, these are given instead, Hall (1994).

## **An overview of the tourism industry in Nigeria**

Nigeria, with a population of around 150 million people and a total area of 923768km<sup>2</sup> along the West African Gulf of Guinea, is a significant centre of biodiversity of tropical rainforest, coastal plains, mangrove, and Savannah zones geographically. The reality remains that Nigeria is a mono-economy dependent on petroleum oil, which generates over 80% of the country's foreign exchange while employing a very small labour force compared to the agricultural sector, which is Nigerians' primary occupation.

Nigerian tourism is still in its infancy, given the vast amount of untapped capital and the institutional framework that needs to be managed in order to compete favourably with other rapidly rising tourism destinations. Successive governments tried their hardest to have the industry on the national economic map, but it was unable to achieve exclusive status. Despite being rich in ecotourism and business tourism potentials and limited by figurative and factual analysis to plan growth, political will and legislation are still far from controlling the industry to keep up with both the national tourism policy and master plan implementation programme in accordance with the United Nations Framework on Sustainable Tourism Development efforts. The Nigerian government's involvement in tourism dates back to the 1960s, when the Obasanjo's regime established the Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB), now the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), through Decrees No. 54 of 1976, reviewed to Decree No. 86 of 1991, and granted it "preferred sector" status. Nigeria's tourism growth master plan dates back to 1982, with a tourism development programme that was first implemented in 1990. The government established the Federal Ministry of Tourism and Culture to further consolidate the search for quality service delivery in the tourism industry and to realise the dream of catching up with the global train in tourism growth. With the adoption of a Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan and the National Tourism Council, harnessing tourism resources and diversifying such to compete favorably with other major economic sector given its socio-economic and cultural wellbeing cannot be over emphasized. The Nigerian government, in its efforts to diversify the economy and, in particular, the tourism industry, has agreed to take steps to promote the travel and tourism sectors. The Presidential Council on Tourism, the Federal Ministry of Tourism and its Departments and Agencies, as well as State Tourism Committees and Local Tourism Committees, have all been formed in accordance with the provisions of the National Tourism Policy (NTP) of 2005, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) of 1992, and the Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan of 2002.

The opportunities and challenges that are exploited and tackled will determine the future of tourism in Nigeria. A restructured National Tourism Organization, Human Resources Development, and a new Convention Bureau all provide important opportunities. Implementing the Tourism Development Master Plan, as well as changing Nigeria's international profile, would be major challenges for the government and industry. Improving the product's consistence and Developing facilities and putting in place a rigorous training programme would necessitate a strong public-private partnership. If Nigeria's opportunities and potentials are fully realised, and the challenges are overcome, a significant investment in planned and strategic marketing of Nigeria as a desirable tourist destination would be needed, with positive and significant returns, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO).

## **Tourism development in Nigeria**

Oloidi Akintunde (2020) developing Nigeria tourism industry systematically, taking into account the global tourism market, the attractiveness of products and attractions within the African Sub-region, and indeed within Africa's North-South tourism axis. To improve the wide circulation of tourists within the tourism zones, a holistic approach to development is needed, taking into account all human environment, social, economic, and political factors. Tourism initiatives in their communities will be planned, created, and implemented with the participation of local communities. This is to ensure that local communities profit economically from tourism ventures operating in their regions, such as job creation and heritage protection. Local communities have not benefited from the tourism sector as a result of their lack of participation in the scheme. Local businesses and private organisations are discouraged from providing superstructure and material-technical infrastructure such as regular lodging, vacation resorts, amusement parks, restaurants, and casinos. These associated industries now function on the basis of benefit maximisation rather than the sector's strategy. the government and its tourism parastatals must recognise and register all tourism potentials and destinations in the country in order to properly improve, preserve, and promote them. Study and feasibility studies are not conducted to safeguard tourism potentials and the environment, and in many cases, the absence of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) causes irreversible damage to the community's cultural resources.

There is no denying that many countries have benefited from the enormous increase in tourism. Many countries are taking measures to gain a share of the ever-growing global tourism market. The fundamental justification for the establishment and creation of tourism is foreign exchange earnings, job opportunities, economic diversification, economic growth, wider economic and social development policy, and other factors, Sharpley & telfier ( 2002)

## **Sustainability**

Due to the expansive nature of the analytical context, which includes economics, environmental, and socio-cultural concerns, arriving at a clear definition for the term "Sustainability" has been a long journey, Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill (2005). The Brundtland Commission released their report in 1987 at the World Commission on Environment and Development, which was titled "Sustainable Development." The idea is considered one of the most popular of its kind, with a long shelf life. The definition was useful in shaping international agendas and attitudes toward economic, social, and environmental development (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 2004-05).

Sustaining development is "development that usually meets with the needs of the

present generations and not jeopardising the future of generations' ability to meet their own needs," according to the Brundtland Commission's study. Explaining concepts, as well as economic and social development, as well as environmental protection, were all overwhelmingly favoured. Policies aimed at enhancing people's economic and social well-being should not damage the environment, according to the concept. (Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations, 2004-05)

In the minds of the residents, however, maintaining environmental development in the community's immediate area becomes unquestionably important. It was so, determined by the residents for the sustainability of the environment naturally and economic structures, and communities and societies could be naturally dependent on the environment. This issue was not limited to the local community, but also spread internationally as part of broader global partnerships to protect the environment, "acting locally, thinking globally." Residents determine the natural and economic sustainability of the environment, and communities and societies will be naturally dependent on the environment. As a result, economic, sociocultural, and environmental sustainability are all three facets of long-term viability. Richards & Hall (2000)

### **Economic sustainability**

Beech & Chadwick (2006), economic sustainability occurs when a country's real production capital income rises, as calculated by changes in gross national product (GNP) over time. As a result of its sustained and rapid growth in the global economy, tourism is now considered a major component of the service economy. The economic aspect, on the other hand, relates to the upkeep and use of economic or productive capital in order to ensure their continuity. Economic capital should not be overused or depleted without substitution for long-term economic

Sustainability, Goodland (2014).

### **Socio-cultural sustainability**

The term "socio-cultural" entails two different words, social and culture. The word social is simply referred to as rank and status in a society. (Oxford Dictionaries 2014). Culture on the other hand, it "consists patterns of behaviour, the knowledge and the values that have been so acquired and transmitted through generations" Beech & Chadwick (2006). Socio-cultural sustainability is the act of maintaining and safeguarding the rank and status of the society and their culture for the present generation and the future generation. Under this aspect of sustainability, all living souls are said to be equal and no difference irrespective of the community they belong, the culture they practice, the language they speak, and whatever they do. Socio-cultural sustainability can be attained and achieved if there is mutual interest, tolerance, patience, love, honesty, discipline and ethics, general acceptable rules and regulation, law and information, Goodland (2014).



## Environmental sustainability

Beech & Chadwick (2006), “environment is defined as a relative concept, encompassing different contexts including the cultural, social, political and economic”. However, high-quality natural environment is essential for tourism development which is subject to the maintenance. It is noted that, the number of users of natural resources is partly negative impacts of tourism which is also a reason for environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability, “carrying capacity analysis” this technique was introduced and defined by the World Tourism Organization as being “fundamental to environmental protection and sustainable development. It is therefore, refers to the maximum utilization of any tourist destination or site without establishing or causing any negative effects on; the resources, reducing visitor satisfaction, or contributing inauspicious impact upon the society, economy and culture of the area. Carrying ability limits are difficult to measure at times, but they are critical in tourism and leisure planning.

## Tourism development policy

A collection of regulations, laws, guidelines, directives, and other policies governing tourism can be described as follows: growth, promotion, goals, and strategies that provide a foundation for the Long-term tourism growth and everyday life are directly impacted by collective and individual decisions. It is decided to participate in activities within a given destination. Hall (1994) The tourism policy-making process is based on the form of government, its political commitment to tourism growth, and the structure of tourism organisations and the stage at which the tourism industry is developing. Tourism is a growing industry. Policies are primarily developed as a mechanism for managing the tourism industry's growth.

The thrust of the National Tourism Policy is to establish sustainable tourism by leveraging heritage diversity as the foundation for marketing and promoting domestic and international tourism within the confines of the World Tourism Market, and to place Nigeria as a major tourist destination in Africa through international tourism development and domestic tourism promotion. Nigerians will be encouraged to spend their vacations in Nigeria and learn more about the region. The thrust also suggested that the Harmattan Holiday season be declared from November to January. The policy also aims to turn Nigeria into a regional airline hub, coordinating and facilitating air travel to all parts of Africa, as well as integrating all black people, especially those of Nigerian descent, Oloidi, Akintunde (2020).

## The key goals of the Tourism Policy

Nigeria's cultural heritage must be preserved and nurtured as a source of domestic

socioeconomic development. To encourage community and public cooperation in the development of tourism, To generate foreign currency, increase income distribution, alleviate poverty, and create jobs, To promote strategic alignment, positive foreign ties, and mutual understanding, To ensure that tourism services are provided in an environmentally responsible manner.

### **Policy guidelines**

These policy goals can be met by implementing the following measures:

- \* encouraging private sector investment, both domestic and international, by offering an incentive package capable of attracting such investment;
- \* The three levels of government, in partnership with the private sector, identify and designate tourist attractions for the purpose of tourism growth and promotion.
- \* promoting a welcoming atmosphere for international visitors to Nigeria
- \* the creation of an effective organisation for the planning, growth, promotion, and marketing of tourism both within and outside the country, with clearly specified roles for the three levels of government

### **The Policies Implementation Plans**

The above policy guidelines must be met by including the following:

- \* infrastructure facilities (by the government) at tourist hotspots to speed up tourism development;
- \* State government land concessions and easy access to land for tourism development; offering fiscal and other incentives to potential tourism investors, such as tax rebates and soft loans with long moratorium periods;
- \* providing government joint venture opportunities; and control/regulations regulating the conduct/operation of the industry, demarcation of Nigeria into major tourism growth zones and facilitation through publicity and vigorous marketing activities, as well as simplifying the issuance of visas to intending tourists.

### **Institutional Setting**

The policy also established an institutional structure with implementation organs from the three tiers of government for the effective implementation of the above strategies:

- \* **At the federal level** —The Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism (FMCT) is in charge of strategy, financing nationally focused tourism ventures, and maintaining direct tourism relations with state governments. In foreign organisations, it also serves

the country's interests.

\* **The National Council for Culture and Tourism (NCCT)**; is a non-profit organisation that promotes culture and tourism and in charge of managing tourism preparation and development at the national level. It is the country's highest tourism policy discussion forum, with representatives from both the public and private sectors in attendance. The forum is headed by the Minister of Culture and Tourism.

\* **National Tourism Corporation** —The policy also called for the NTB to be transformed into a more aggressive and commercially oriented National Tourism Corporation. The company is in charge of industry promotion, publicity, and knowledge dissemination. It will lay out the industry's activity through the publication of handbooks and general instructions, and it will work with the private sector and other levels of government to supplement policy directives and tourist initiatives.

\* **Tourism Ministries of States** — State tourism ministries, on the other hand, are responsible for implementing FMCT policies/directives, initiating initiatives, controlling land allocation, and developing tourism in their respective states, as well as regulating the operation of hotels, restaurants, and other institutions in accordance with federal government policies.

\* **Tourism Committees of Local Councils** —LGTCs were also developed as part of the policy. They are in charge of spotting possible tourist attractions in their respective regions. They are responsible for serving as information centres as well as preserving and maintaining landmarks and museums within their jurisdiction. NTDC's establishment — NTB was renamed NTDC by Decree 81 of 1992, in accordance with the policy provisions.

### **Capabilities includes to-**

\* encourage Nigerians and visitors from other countries to spend their vacations in the country;

\* to promote the construction of hotels and auxiliary facilities in Nigeria, as well as the provision and upgrade of tourism amenities and facilities

\* It also has the authority to provide advisory and information services; encourage and conduct tourism research; and register, identify, and rate all hospitality and tourism businesses in such members as may be presented.

\* NTDC also has the authority to: - carry out any undertaking deemed important for the promotion and growth of the tourism industry; - assist in the development of museums/historic sites, parks, game reserves, beaches natural beauty spots, holiday resorts, souvenir industries, and so on; - advise appropriate authorities on how to improve tourist facilities; and - publicize tourism. And do all things incidental to the aforementioned functions that, in its view, are calculated to make the corporation's duties under the enabling decree easier to carry out.

## **Issues and challenges of tourism development in Nigeria**

Nigeria is endowed with a wealth of natural and cultural resources that can support long-term tourism growth. The country's ecological diversity and cultural diversity alone are enough to make it one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. Despite its abundant tourism potential, Nigeria remains a mono-economy, its people remain wary of one another, and Nigerians remain enslaved by ignorance, want, poverty, and disease. This should not be the case. Unfortunately, tourism, which is said to have a favoured sector position in the economy, receives only lip service. As a result, tourism is extremely popular.

- \* It is so underfunded that it is unable to have the desired impact;
- \* The most important of all tourism criteria, infrastructure, is missing in the majority of attraction centres;
- \* In the tourism industry, manpower is in short supply, which is the most important resource for any business. It does not have enough qualified personnel to carry out its professional activities.
- \* There are no policy implementation mechanisms aimed at achieving the policy goals of tourism growth.
- \* Another issue is marketing and promotion, as the industry has yet to develop successful promotional and marketing strategies aimed at raising awareness and rekindling interest in the tourism industry.

## **Conclusion/Recommendation**

Tourism provides a potential for growth not restricting its contribution to the economy but as a vehicle towards bringing about more international understanding and strengthening the sense of national identity. A re-evaluation of Nigerian tourism policy in the aforementioned areas would resolve main obstacles to achieving the goals. National tourism development is desperately needed. The only way to do so is to take a bold or offensive approach towards putting the established areas of the Nigerian tourism policy into action. However, the requirement for collaboration or Since the government cannot do it alone, collaboration between private and public tourism agencies is essential. However, it is critical for the government to make tourism a priority in its administration by providing consistent funding to address all issues affecting the implementation of the tourism policy in Nigeria, including insecurity, poor infrastructure, marketing and promotion, and other socio-cultural factors, in order for tourism to become a vehicle for development and catalyst economic growth. To achieve the implementation of Nigeria's Tourism Policy, there should be proper monitoring and evaluation of tourism projects and programmes.

Effective policies would aid in the protection and regulation of the tourism industry, goods, and services in the community, as well as the growth of sustainable tourism in

Nigeria.

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World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

World tourism organization (WTO)

