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Tourism and hospitality industry in Nigeria and sustainable development

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Abstract

Any form of industrial development brings impacts upon the physical environment in which it takes place. In view of the fact that tourists have to visit the place of production in order to consume the output, it is inevitable that tourism activity is associated with environmental impacts. For that reason, traditionally some authors have pointed out that tourism can lead to environmental negative consequences. However if properly handled such negative outcome might be minimized or overcome especially as its affects the hospitality and tourism industries in Nigeria. This is why this paper using secondary data examined the role of hospital and tourism industries and their roles in sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Tourism, hospitality, sustainable development, impacts.

Introduction

Tourism and hospitality industries have seen a major growth in recent years in Nigeria before the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. This is because at present Nigeria has over 7000 tourist centres and with the concerted efforts of government, tourism is becoming an essential part of the country's economy. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2014 also envisaged a growth of 6 percent per annum for period of ten years for the Nigerian tourism industry. The fact is tourism today has become one of the engines of growth for Nigerian economy with a contribution of 3.20 per cent to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and providing 2.70 per cent of total employment in 2013 (WTTC, 2014). The industry contribution to GDP, according to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) is envisage to rise by 1.9 per cent in 2014 and rise by 6.1 per cent per annum from 2014 to 2024. Nigeria tourism sector is therefore growing and it is capable of generating employment and earning large amount of foreign exchange that rivaled agriculture and petroleum sectors. Also the tourism and hospitality industry has become a major player in the world economy, geographically it now has global reach and as such it generates a wide range of environmental, social and economic impacts. The continuous increase in travel & tourism, together with its ability to generate high levels of employment continues to prove the importance and value of the sector as a tool for economic development and job creation. In many ways the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are designed to provide some consensus and an all-embracing common sense of purpose to sustainable development across the globe. The SDGs, agreed by the General Assembly of the United Nations

in 2015 and adopted by the leaders of 193 member states, are a series of 17 goals and some 169 specific targets, which lay out the priorities for sustainable development for both developed and developing countries. In launching the SDGs the United Nations acknowledged the strategic political and major financial commitments required from all national governments but also effectively mandated the global business community to play a central role in achieving these goals.

Tourism and hospitality industry is one of the driving forces in the global economy and it has a wide range of environmental and social impacts. This because if industries follow sustainable tourism we would have a balanced and healthy economy by generating tourism-related jobs, revenues, and taxes while protecting and enhancing the destination's social, cultural, historical, natural, and built resources for the enjoyment and well-being of both residents and visitors.

In is in this regard that this paper tourism and hospitality industry in Nigeria and sustainable development tries to explain the role that Hospitality and tourism industry can play in sustainable development for a efficient and sustainable growth. The paper is divided into four section, the introduction, follow by conceptual review and theoretical review and the advantages or benefit of a sustainable hospitality and tourism industry .The role that government will play in the hospitality and tourism industry to have a sustainable development.

Conceptual review

Industry

According to Cambridge dictionary these are companies and activities involved in the process of producing goods for sale, especially in a factory or special area.

Hospitality and tourism industry

Hospitality is defined as the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers. Hospitality and tourism is a massive, collective industry consisting of tourism and other hospitality-related businesses. Tourism companies are technically considered hospitality businesses because they rely on strong customer service to generate revenue. They must provide a welcoming, enjoyable experience to their guests. Otherwise, those guests won't return in the future, and some guests may share their bad experience with friends or family members. All hospitality businesses, even those residing outside of the tourism sector, follow a

similar approach with their operations by emphasizing the importance of strong, positive customer service.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development refers to development and consumption in a sustainable way, such that our resources are not depleted and there is nothing left for future generations. Hence, the concept of sustainable development is premised on two key factors: the environment and the society (Danilov-Danil'yan & Igor 2009). This comes in light of the fact that we are connected with both the environment and societies as well.

Theoretical review

The hospitality and tourism industry is placed among the largest industries in the world. However, the degrading effects of tourism have become a big concern and need to be addressed quickly. With this in mind, the concept of sustainable tourism has emerged with the aim of reducing the negative effects of tourism activities, which has become almost universally accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate approach to tourism development (Sharpley, 2003). Sustainability covers all elements that constitute a complete tourism experience. According to the majority of scientists (Briguglio, Archer, Jafari, & Wall, 1996; Butler, 1991; Sharpley, 2000; Vellas & Becherel, 1999; WCED, 1987) 'sustainable tourism development' concerns an economic, social and environmental tourism development that aims at the continuous improvement of tourists' experiences. The tourism industry has the potential to contribute to sustainable development, particularly by job creating, including employment for women and marginalized groups (Cukier, 2002; Go'rg, 2000). The purpose of sustainable tourism is to make a balance between protecting the environment, maintaining cultural integrity, establishing social justice and promoting economic benefits, meeting the needs of the host population in terms of improved living standards both in the short and long term (Liu et al., 2013) in both developed and emerging nations (Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2004) while emphasizing both intergenerational equity and intra-generational equity and in a form that can maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time' (Butler, 1993, 1999). In community tourism, sustainable development is applied to improve the residents' quality of life by optimising local economic benefits, protecting the natural and built environment and providing a high-quality experience for visitors.

The advantages of a sustainable hospitality and Tourism industry

In terms of concrete benefits, there are many. Some include:

1. It benefits the local community

Offering not just employment to local residents but through non-profits, when you explore as a sustainable tourist by frequently locally owned and operated businesses your money goes directly back into the community. This means that your business as a tourist brings in profits that will help the local community stay profitable long after you have left.

2. It helps to conserve precious natural resources

Earth's many unique ecosystems are made the way they are for specific reasons, and they are not renewable. Any chance we have to avoid damaging it, we should take. You can take part in conservationist tourist activities by first avoiding support of any programs that hurt the land or animals; for instance, the majority of zoos and any landscaped parks or recreation areas that have torn down natural resources in order to find their space. There are tours and parks that enable the original land to be preserved and enjoyed, so you should look for those.

3. It gives tourists a more honest look into the local area

By supporting locally-run tour guides and businesses, what you learn from them will be the truth about their culture and environment, from people who live there. You won't be fed the traditional scripted tourist-friendly information, but rather will get a first-hand glimpse into life as a local and learn to love the community for what it is.

4. Sustainable Tourism isn't just about creating better places to visit

It's about creating better places to live. Traditional tourist-heavy areas rely on tourist money pouring into their hospitality and services to keep their local economy afloat. There are two possibilities as to how that scenario plays out.

The first option: Heavy tourist traffic — often called “over tourism” — will deplete the natural beauty and culture of the area, leaving a ghost of the original place for locals to live in.

The second option: The tourism industry helps to maintain the natural land and culture of the area, while also employing and empowering locals who get to live in their community year-round without having to change it all for tourists.

Sustainable tourism practices help ensure that the second scenario is the one we find ourselves in. Hostels are often run by locals, and don't take up as much real estate as hotel chains do. Air BnB — a system in which people rent out a part or all of their house or apartment for travelers

— is definitely run by locals, and is often a way for individuals to supplement their income through the influx of tourists. Both of these options are often cheaper than hotels as well. Always use good judgment when choosing a place to stay, but take these options into consideration rather than assume you should stay at another big brand chain.

It can help avoid the displacement and resettlement of local communities

This is unfortunately often a consequence of tourism coming to a location previously untouched by major businesses. For instance, in the past when a new beach town is “discovered” by tourists — typically from the First World — major hotel and food companies come in to benefit from the influx of potential customers. They don’t tend to care about the survival of local life that was there before. Sustainable tourism does, and it advocates for finding the best combination of exciting and profitable tourism and the continued existence of indigenous communities.

You can make efforts to be sustainable in this way by not supporting programs that exploit the local culture for entertainment or tourist photo ops.

Do some research to discover if the program or workshop you’re signing up for is being run by genuine residents or members of a certain culture or subculture, and not a larger outside corporation.

6. It prepares us for the future

The traditional tourism industry, with its very large eco-footprint — supporting heavy vehicle traffic, traveling and construction of large hotels — is not sustainable. Travel will become more expensive and rarer – especially the experience of going to unique lands and cultural areas. Every major tourist destination may start to conform and look the same, contorting themselves to offer the same services and experiences. But every community isn’t supposed to be the same, and not every experience should be either. Sustainable tourism ensures that one-of-a-kind communities retain that which makes them special. A simple way to be more environmentally conscious while traveling is to use bikes as well as our own feet as transportation. At the very least, use them for short distances when possible.

This helps cut down on the air pollution in the area, which is often magnified by the throngs of tourists.

7. It is our duty to follow the “campsite rule”

Leave the person or places you encounter in at least the same state, if not a better one, than it was in before you. Tourism is supposed to encourage and make feasible the experience of visiting the rest of the world and stepping into someone else’s shoes for a bit.

It isn't supposed to grind the small communities down to a pulp, in favor of large tourism hubs.

8. Supporting sustainable tourism is a responsible thing to do

You lose nothing by taking part in it, and you get a guarantee that the beautiful forest, mountain town or pristine beach you spent a few delightful days in will still be thriving far into your future. And when you return in the future it will be there waiting for you.

Role of government in ensuring sustainable development by hospitality and Tourism industry

Ruhanen (2013) argues that governments at all levels have assumed greater responsibility for, and involvement in, tourism destination planning and sustainable development. He further suggests that governments have tended to adopt a more interventionist approach to tourism relative to other service sectors. Initially this stemmed from an ardent interest in tourism's economic returns, and it was justified in terms of capitalizing on the taxes paid by businesses and visitors and of the employment opportunities created. Certainly the government involvements and direction in addressing or attempting

to meet the objectives of sustainable development in tourism destination context are widely supported(Weaver, 2006). This effort includes;

1. Minimizes negative economic, environmental, and social impacts
2. Generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry
3. Involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances
4. Makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity
5. Provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues
6. Provides access for people with disabilities
7. Create respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.

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