

# TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A REVOLUTIONALISED SECTOR AS A PANACEA FOR DWINDLING HOSPITALITY BUSINESS IN NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

Nigerian has abundant tourism components that could make her the leading provider in African. There are numerous attractions ranging from places of natural beauty to cultural and historical heritage. These papers identify the socio economic impact of tourism along the coastline of Lagos. Despite the fact that tourism is important in the development of Lagos, there are still problems encountered at the coastal line of Lagos like over-congestion during the holidays, pollution, solid waste disposal in the water by the residents which causes environmental problem, flooding etc. has constituted a major setback to the development of hospitality thriving business in Lagos State. The empirical part of this research work is the use of qualitative research method which include questionnaire, interviews and other observations. 384 well-structured and validated questionnaires were distributed to the respondents out of which 375 were retrieved. The data collected from the respondents were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The result from the study reveals that a revolutionized tourism industry is a remedy for a thriving hospitality business in Lagos State ( $p < 0.001$ ). The study recommends that government should pay adequate attention to coastal tourism as this will generate more revenue to the state through a thriving hospitality business.

**KEYWORDS:** Tourism, Hospitality, Panacea, Business, Revolutionise, Job opportunity

## Introduction

Tourism development is an element of economic growth that involves enlarging the ownership base such as people benefiting from the tourism industry through job procurement, skills development business and wealth creation and ensuring the geographical spread of tourism business all over the given destination. A very good and easy example of tourism development is the right to host a soccer event such as the "world cup". Tourism definitely takes place in such a country because many people coming from across the world to witness the event gives the host country advantage to open tourism businesses such as hotels, restaurants, car rentals, parks and all other businesses for the purpose of the visitors. For instance, the "BRAZIL 2014 world cup" hosted by Brazil was a revolutionized tourism sector which produced thriving hospitality business because people that came from all over the world to witness the event thereby generating revenue from tourism and hospitality business in the host country.

In 2006, the Nigerian Government instituted a new set of reforms in the tourism industry with the aid of the United Nations Development. This led to the creation of the "Nigeria Tourism Master Plan". The report identified amongst other things that the number of international visitors to Nigeria had been static over the last 15 years because of factors like stodgy entry visa processes, lack of information on Nigeria amongst tour operators in the west, bad road networks, and the dilapidated state of many of Nigeria's historic sites. Shamefully. Six years after the master plan had been drawn, the commentary on tourism industry will probably be worse. Though there has been a major influx of global hotel brands into Nigeria in the five

years, especially Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria, the average cost of these rooms puts it out of reach of the average holiday maker from Europe and America especially in these hard times. The tourism master plan advocated for partnership programs between the internationally operated hotels in Nigeria and tour operators in the west to use spare capacity in these hotels at favourable rates. Five years after, the tourism and hospitality industry still represents a meagre 0.5% of Nigeria's GDP.

As a matter of fact, tourism is developing at a faster rate globally and more countries are getting awareness about the need to develop tourism for socio-economic advantages. According to the United Nation World Tourism Organization (2006), tourism has grown in terms of destinations as there has been a widespread increase in the geographical expansion of tourism throughout the globe which has made it possible for many developing countries to develop tourism at their own pace for socio-economic advancement. However, it is a general phenomenon that tourism has a vital impact on the society, topography, environment and socio-economic aspect of any country. In the social terms, the immediate benefit of tourism industry is the ability to bring people out of the unemployment circle. In other words, it creates job opportunity and also caters for both skilled and unskilled employment and it is known to be a labour-intensive industry which provides job per unit of investment compared to any other industry. The industry gives room to partnership and entrepreneurship within the tourism business concept thereby creating an innovation and bringing about economic activity (Morrison, Rimmington and Williams, 1999).

Despite the fact that tourism is important today in the nation, the problem associated with Coastal tourism is quite enormous. In that case such problems are perceptible at the coastal line of Lagos. Being the industrial capital of Nigeria, Lagos has attracted millions of people to the area for business, leisure and other purposes. This resulted to the coastline being over congested during the holidays. The

infrastructural facilities such as good road network and parking space are not enough to meet the demand of the Coastal region. The problem of pollution is one of the vital issues in contention. The Solid waste disposal in the water by the residents and visitors has posed potential environmental problem in the area and made the coastal region unattractive. Government is not paying adequate attention to coastal tourism and this contribute a major setback to the development of tourism along the coastal line of Lagos.

The idea of developing tourism in a particular area is encouraged by steady improvement in the creation of social amenities and basic infrastructures in the area in question. These creations, coupled with attraction in the destination bring about the development of tourism in the area. The idea of using infrastructure to develop tourism in a destination happened to be something of a gradual process. The physical improvement in the destinations' infrastructure would help to improve socio-economic relations among the local people. Community was revealed to be the major factor to modern tourism (Godfrey and Clarke, 2000).

In other words, communities were the basic element in the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport facilities and service. As the interaction goes on, and the level of inflow of tourists continue to be on the increase, coupled with the fact that infrastructure is in place, the local people would start to bring up ideas of setting up hospitality businesses such as hotels, restaurants and the likes. Then, the destination becomes popular giving room to more tourism businesses which in turn encourages tourists to the area. As the process of tourism development continues, as a matter of fact, government and cooperate bodies would start to pick interest in the areas thereby investing a huge amount of money to maintain, sustain and retain the destination as a major tourist region (Godfrey and Clarke, 2009). This among others would lead to the creation of civic centre, parks, street improvement, good road networks and other facilities that will enable the area to be totally tagged as a tourist

destination region. The increase in all these facilities provides opportunities for even a small city to develop as a tourist destination. The following sub-headings explain tourism planning and tourism marketing as some of the major evidence towards enhancing tourism development.

Tourism in a revolutionized sector as panacea for thriving hospitality business development cannot be discussed without taking into consideration the planning of tourism. Tourism planning has recently been acknowledged from three different levels, namely the national, local and personal attractions. The central government coordinates and manages the tourist regions in the whole country, possibly through policy development, national standard and institutions. Also, it involves the developing and planning of individual tourist attractions, services and facilities to serve the tourists' need. At the local level, it equally involved the planning and management of tourist destination area and these factors are equally important to that of the national level (Godfrey and Clarke, 2009). Apart from that, the local government also involve themselves in the organization and development of visitors' attractions and services in and around destination regions. These regions are the basic element of tourism. They are the major point for the supply of tourism services such as accommodation, catering, tourist information, transportation and all other tourist services. These services are the reasons why national and local government focused attention on them in order to establish a maintainable tourism destination.

Five years after the tourism and hospitality industry still represents a meager 0.5% of Nigeria GDP.

The destination regions must have many values ranging from cultural, historical and even environmental in which it is necessary to be maintained in order to attract tourists. The majority of tourists are concerned about the destination in which they will spend their holiday. So, the natural environment of the host regions, their buildings and tourist institutions, their people, culture and history

and other forms of tourist elements are what the tourists wanted to experience in the destination. (George, Mair and Reid, 2009)

The growth in tourism industry can also be attributed to the increase in tourism marketing. Tourism marketing is the method of applying the correct marketing concepts and ideology to planning a strategy to attract tourists to particular destinations which may come in form of resort, city, region or country. Marketing is a process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that will satisfy individual and organizational goals. Referring to the definition in the concept of tourism marketing, it revolves around planning for tourism from the demand and supply concept in order to satisfy both the host communities (suppliers of tourism) and the visitors (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). Marketing is a process of identifying customer's satisfaction, design appropriate product and design a market to convey it to the final consumer (Pierre, 2000). It can also be a way of executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create an exchange that satisfied individual and organizational goals. Referring the definition in the concept of tourism marketing, it revolves around planning for tourism from the demand and supply concept in order to satisfy both the visitors and the communities (Kotler, 2006). The application of marketing in tourism industry is an equal focus on the "four Ps" (Product, Place, Price and Promotion). Product: the destination or region as a product can only be consumed by travelling to that region. Equivalently, the product is also the place and each tourist can consume or buy the product/place at different prices (Kotler. 2006). As a matter of fact, when marketing a city, price is the least of focus. This is because it discourages some tourists whose intention is to have fun without paying anything. Promotion is an awareness created by media and other advertising agents for the events. The promotion of socio-economic expansion by tourism was driven by the fact that, as an export industry, it encourages new spending within the local or

host communities. This spending creates job opportunities, socio-cultural interaction, pride and appreciation, understanding and respect, and even tolerance for each other's culture and norms (Kotler, 2006). In addition to the socio-economic benefits, tourism development tends to appreciate local cultures, promote solidarity from cultural exchange give rooms for comprehensible feelings of both the host communities and the tourists (Kotler, 2006).

However, based on the increase in tourism awareness all over the world, it has been a general notice that social and economic tourism play a vital role in the sustainability of the global tourism. While social tourism explains how satisfied a tourist is at any destination, economic tourism modifies the financial affordability of the situation. Therefore, social and economic tourism are directly the pillars of sustaining tourism in the world.

Tourism is a social vice that is established by the participating individuals either as travelers, hosts or employees. There is a growing effort of local communities to promote and improve social tourism. Destination regions are trying to attract the interest of visitors with their cultural heritage, natural beauty, norms and values and their contribution toward protecting biodiversity. Social tourism is a tourism initiatives comprise of programmes and projects aim at ensuring the right to holiday and access to tourism to all population groups, including poor children, low-income earners and individuals with limited capacities (Minnaert, Maitland & Miller, 2010). From that point of view, social tourism is for everyone in as much as there is an intention to travel. Social tourism is an interface for social and cultural exchange (Barkin, 2009). It facilitates the interaction between communities and tourists both on domestic and international level. Tourists want to interact with other cultures, want to learn more about their values, learn about traditions and even confront themselves with a new way of life and society. It has been revealed from research that travel is a means of discovering those things unknown or forgotten within oneself. Social tourism is

indeed an experience driven industry and local culture is a unique experience.

Moreover, local personality and hospitality bring about what tourists regard as built attractions whereby the more one learns about a particular destination, the more fulfilling the travel experience will be. Social tourism is an element for raising a social awareness, in the sense of creating awareness on local issues and needs thereby booming regional identity both nationally and globally. The globe is creating an investment trend towards interpreting natural and cultural resources. The attraction to natural and heritage values helps to generate revenue and provide opportunities to effect management in the sensitive and vital destinations. However, socio-cultural values of the destination that create attraction are not the only drive for attractions, but provide one of many experiences. In that case, social tourism is a factor for tourism development in any given destination region (Barkin, 2009).

Issues that must be addressed by Nigeria in meeting the challenges of climate change and to promote sustainable tourism development include the following:

- Lack of adequate political will to legislate and regulate human activities related to climate change, the environment and the tourism industry at large.
- Lack of adequate funding to address desertification and de-forestation in affected areas.
- Lack of rain causing drought and death of wildlife that in turn is resulting in the encroachment of herdsmen into game reserves and national parks.
- Flooding that is eroding road networks, and negatively affecting wild life and human socio-economic activities as experienced in Kano, Jigawa, Taraba, Nasarawa and Sokoto States.
- Mining activities and the emission of radioactive gases at the Jos, Plateau, Jagindi, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Eggon/Keana Nassarwa, Nkalagu, Enugu and Zamfara States.
- The dumping of toxic waste in Nigeria's sea ports and industrial cities including Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, Onitsha, Kaduna and

other capital towns. These have resulted in mysterious ailments proving difficult to cure.

- Business travel and movements by air and land emit high levels of carbons through aircrafts and automobiles.
- Tourist flows to Nigeria for ecotourism, safari and related activities is negligible compared to business travel.
- Nigeria's industrial cities such as Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Aba, Onitsha, Port Harcourt and the cosmopolitan cities of Sokoto, Maiduguri, Lafia that utilize automobiles to the fullest constitute much of the air/smoke pollution.
- Insecurity through the activities of restive youth such as the Niger Delta Militants in the South-South and the Boko Haram Sect in the northern parts of Nigeria threatens the inflow of tourists.

Nigeria is blessed with rich and abundant natural resources that are mostly untapped. These can be seen from the rich coastal mangrove and rainforest to the savannah regions. There are also opportunities that abound in government efforts in the promotion of tourism at both domestic and international levels. Some of both the public and private sectors initiatives are as follows:

- The environmental and tourism policies of Nigeria give priority to ensuring environmental sustainability of the tourism resources.
- The establishment of the Climate Change Unit under the Federal Ministry of Environment at the federal level that oversees and regulates all industrial and rural development.
- Federal Ministry of Tourism and Culture that promotes the utilization of environmental resources for ecotourism.
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry implementing reforestation and agricultural management programs, as well as park forestry reserve activities.
- Ecology funds being made available to States in billions of Naira on a yearly basis to combat erosion, desert encroachment, gullies, petroleum oil spills, etc.

- The World Wildlife Conservation Federation with their activities in the forest reserves and national parks.
- National Conservation Societies are in all States of the Federation coordinating environmental activities.

This study undertook to show that a revolution of the tourism industry would drastically lead to the growth of the hospitality business. Among the Specific Objectives are pursued were to promote tourism development in Nigeria and to assess the remedies of a change in the tourism sector in the hospitality industry, explore in details, the trends which impact both the hospitality industry as well as the tourism industry that makes up a wider travel experience and to carve out socio-economic roles for tourism providers and assess the socio-economic contribution of tourism development on the host community and to recommend a way forward towards the enhancement of coastal tourism in Nigeria.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study explored conceptual, descriptive and review method of research paradigms in order to explore the objectives in the context of tourism as a panacea for a thriving hospitality industry. The research design was a sample survey, and the data were collected through observations, interviews and well-structured questionnaire. The questions were arranged round the objective with a focus on the research questions. Practitioners in the industry (384) were purposively selected from Lagos environment and interviewed employing the questionnaire designed for the purpose. The paper also draws largely on the use of post research findings and many academic literatures such as (George, Mair and Rod, 2009), etc. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed with SPSS 20 using frequency distributions alone.

### **Results**

The findings from the respondents about the revolution of the tourism industry being a remedy for a thriving hospitality business were analysed as follows. The gender analysis

indicated that majority of the respondent (78%) were females. The highest proportions of respondents (0.67) were between the age group of 21 and 30 years. This age range represents the individuals that are between the beginning of their career and mid stage of their career and so are financially stable. The

occupational analysis indicates that the highest proportions of the respondents (53.3%) are civil servants and have good knowledge of the tourism industry. This may be because this category of individuals were elites and appreciate the significance of tourism.

**Table 1: Frequency distribution of responses from practitioners**

| Issue   | Agree /Strongly Agree (%) | Indifferent (%) | Disagree/ Strongly Disagree (%) |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| The availability of tourism enterprise creating job opportunities for the host communities          | 311 (83)                  | 15 (4)          | 49 (13)                         |
| The presence of more hospitality business is a product of a revolutionized tourism sector           | 334 (89)                  | 10 (2.7)        | 31 (8.3)                        |
| Hospitality and tourism industry are directly interdependent  | 263 (70)                  | 24 (6.5)        | 88 (23.5)                       |
| A change in the tourism sector would have a positive or negative effect on the hospitality industry | 319 (85)                  | 11 (3)          | 45 (12)                         |

A total of three hundred and eighty four questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and only 375 were retrieved. 311(83%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed on the availability of tourism enterprise creating job opportunities for the host communities, 15 (4%) were indifferent while 49(13%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Also, 334 (89%) of the respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that the presence of more hospitality business is a product of a revolutionized tourism sector while 31(8.3%) disagreed or disagreed with the view and 10 (2.7%) were indifferent. Furthermore, 263(70%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that hospitality and tourism industry are directly interdependent while 88(23.5%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the proposition and 24 (6.5%) expressed no opinion. Lastly, 319 (85%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a change in the tourism sector would have a positive or negative effect on the hospitality industry, 11(3%) were indifferent, and

45(12%) totally disagreed or strongly agreed with that. Hence, majority of the respondents are positively disposed to the question asked and believed that the presence of more hospitality business is a product of a revolution of the tourism sector ( $p < 0.001$ ).

### Discussion

The research examined how a revolution of the tourism industry would be a remedy for a thriving hospitality business.

The research also showed that the recent tourism development in Nigeria has drastically reduced social unrest i.e. the establishment of tourism businesses such as hotels and restaurants which in turn employed the majority of the youth in the area helped in curbing the social evils (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000; Minnaert, Maitland& Miller, 2010).

The interviews were very intensive and non-biased and all the respondents have a broad knowledge about the interview themes and concepts. The reliability was further

reinforced by accurate personal observation combined with the raw information gathered from the interviews. Furthermore, most of the respondents were tourism experts who have spent some years in active tourism, hospitality and environmental research which directly indicate that information gathered from them are highly reliable, credible and dependable. Majority of the respondents have positive responses relating to the questions asked and believe that the presence of more hospitality business is a product of a revolution of the tourism sector (see table above).

According to the Tourism Master plan, while the incidence of domestic leisure travel may be low, the sheer size of Nigeria's population means that there is a significant contribution to the demand of tourism services from domestic travel activity. The revenue value of this impact is unknown but the sheer number

of Nigerians who travel to Ghana alone for Easter and Christmas holidays is a pointer to the lost income from domestic tourism agreeing with Kotler (2006). Holiday destinations like Cross River and states with slave routes need to do more to attract domestic holiday makers by increasing scale

which will serve to lower cost in the long run and increasing investments in recreational infrastructure. Government spending on travel has also helped to promote the hospitality sector.

There are prospects for a thriving hospitality business and a revolutionized tourism industry. However, the Nigerian tourism industry has to be well developed for it to be a panacea for a thriving hospitality business:

- The way to increase tourism traffic in Nigeria is to promote and deepen domestic tourism.
- Another way to cause a revolution of the tourism industry is to encourage members of the Nigerian diaspora back home for their holidays. This would cause a boom in the hospitality business.
- Tourism resources in Nigeria should be properly managed and sustained in order to meet the standard of the western world, and for that reason attract resident tourists as well as foreigners. Once they are attracted, they will require some of the services provided by the hospitality industry which would result in a thriving hospitality business.

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