

**AN EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF A NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION: NIGERIA
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

By

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Kwara State.**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the performance of the activities of National Tourism Organisation in developing countries and of particular interest is the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) as a policy organ in tourism planning and development in Nigeria. This paper attempts an evaluation of its functions and impacts using SWOT Analysis by examining the growth rate of tourism in the country. The study reveals that the Nigeria main tourism policy thrust body is bedeviled with certain challenges and threat in facilitating the continued development of an economic and environmentally sustainable and spatially balanced tourism sector, through formulating, monitoring and reviewing a range of supporting policies and programmes within the framework of the National Development plan, MDGs, NEEDS, etc

Keywords: Tourism, Policy, Planning, Development, SWOT Analysis, NTDC, Nigeria

Introduction

Tourism has been playing an increasingly vital role in the socio-economic development and promotion for Nigeria as one of the fastest growing economy in the world today. As a result, tourism is being employed as a viable tool for achieving optimum employment generation, steady nations rural - urban integration, revenue for the government and cultural exchange for internal and external understanding.

Nigeria is not alone in its effort to diversify the mono-cultural economy status as a nation, the country is heavily dependent on petroleum export and to some extent, agriculture too has contributed to foreign exchange earnings. But because of the exhaustible nature of petroleum oil and the uncertainty

in agriculture resulting from the unpredictable climate condition and fluctuation in the international market of process of these commodities among other challenges, tourism therefore remains the only sustainable and viable source of investments and foreign exchange earners for the country.

The successive Nigeria governments have seen the potentials of travel and tourism as a viable tool to achieving the MDGs and vision 20: 2020. Nigeria with a population of about 140 million people (NPC, 2007) made up of about 350 ethnic groups, a vast land of about 1 million sq km, a beautiful coastland of about 835km, a rich diversity of cultural and ecological resources with this potentials, Nigeria appears destined to be a major destinations in Africa.

Africa was after East Asia and the Pacific, the part of the world in which tourism made the most progress in the last two decades (Les Editions, 2001). Nigeria is still not on the list of the major destinations in Africa which include south Africa, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco. Presently, the growth rate of 4% is recorded per annum, which implied that the tourist sector is a promising one. As a result, successive Nigeria has seen the needs, taken the leads to diversify her mono-cultural economy and has therefore, taken some policy measures to promote travel and tourism. However, attempt were made to evaluate some of the policy framework put in place by successive administrations and the current Nigeria Tourism Master Plan using SWOT Analysis with a view to making suggestions on how to fast track the policy measures in tourism for national development especially in tackling the current socio-economic challenges facing the country. This research w immensely benefit the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Nigeria destinations operators for the purpose of formulating effective tourism packages, hoping to address the expectation, needs and concerns of tourists and project Nigeria as the ultimate tourism destination in Africa thereby making the nation an attractive tourist destination that is sustainable. This paper attempts to examine all the strengths and weaknesses of the national tourist organisation and make known all the opportunities and threats that come from the internal and external environment.

It is widely accepted that tourism development for a destination is largely dependent upon tourism resources, both cultural and ecological, that the destination posses in terms of their quality and quantity. Similarly, promotion, marketability and provision of tourism infrastructure are essentials for any meaningful tourism development.

Today, Nigeria is experiencing rapid economic and population growth, which has resulted in a series of mixed effects on its economy, social, and natural environment. Despite the numerous efforts engaged in, towards the improvement of the Nigerians living conditions, it is recognized that the country has several pressing issues to resolve, particularly in areas such as income inequality, unemployment, insecurity and crime and other societal challenges.

The policy making as a hypothesis, has to be tested against reality and environment and its effectiveness evaluated and subjected to correction. Even under perfect conditions, all information passing upwards in a bureaucracy is subject to uncertainty (Williams, 1998, Lee, 1999).

Tourism remains therefore the only sustainable tool to achieving these goals. Hence, a viable policy option becomes the only way to meeting this target.

Trends in Tourism Development

The Nigeria successive governments under the influence of political, social and economies forces take some policies to form and develop the tourism activities. But not until recently, government has only been the sole promoters and financiers and managers of tourism in Nigeria. Private sector has not been fully involved due largely to lack of a well-defined policy in tourism. Though, the governments have utilized all the available geographical, cultural, historical and archaeological potential for this purpose, and they develop and create new potentials as well.

Policy making by the governments in the ground of tourism is under the influence of the internal and external factors. Internal factors are laws and customs of the society values, ideologies and pressure groups (Hall and Jenkins, 1999). External factors are globalization trend and transnational companies (Lee, 1999). Therefore, a tourism policy is a structure for government activities in relation to tourism. Tourism are created principally as a mechanism of managing the development of the tourism industry. Regulations are similarly needed for legal control over its activities. Hence, the evaluation of NTDC activities become necessary in order to understand the causes and consequences of policies decision and of the policy itself in ensuring that the right goals were achieved. It has recently become a very important issue especially for heavily visited destinations or countries in Africa, to develop policies for the area for managing and improving the impacts as well as disruptive impacts of tourism. Nonetheless, policies are not necessarily put into practice.

It is widely recognized that the achievement of effective tourism policies require many components such as qualified personnel, financial resources, local involvement and authorities in charge. Like in many developing countries, Nigeria tourism has a highly centralized control, thus, policies and regulations may be less strictly enforced in remote areas resulting from their long distance from centers of policy-making. It is evident that there is a gap in implementing policies and regulation especially in developing countries where there is poverty, bureaucracy and corruption when compare with the developed world.

Though the performance of implementation also depends heavily on the nature of the population policy and the organizational context and culture. This must be taken fully into account when implementing the policy in different areas. Tourism has therefore occupied an important place in the economic agenda of the government in tackling economic, social and political problems in the country.

Research Methodology

For this study, the evolution of the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) system and the national policy of Nigeria on tourism have been considered and an evaluation has been done since the establishment of the first National Tourism Policy (NTP) in 1990, the birth of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) in 1992, the founding of NIHOTOUR and the National Travel Bureau (NBT) a tour operating company of NTDC. The case study of this paper was the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation, the country main tourism organisation recognized by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

The research employed SWOT analysis to evaluate the tourism policy in Nigeria using the factors identified by Jekins 1999 as well as the use of percentage analysis. The research utilizes both the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data involves the use of questionnaires and participation appraisal technique particularly focus group at a National Festival (Osun Oshogbo, 2011)

where both local and foreign tourists were sampled. A total of 120 questionnaire were distributed for data collection, purposive incidental sampling techniques was employed to collect relevant data from targeted respondents who are tourism professionals and practitioners from both public and private sector at the annual Osun Osogbo Festival in August .Secondary sources involves the review from national and international data base, some books, journals, the national tourism policy and the UNWTO Master planning on tourism for Nigeria, and websites. The extensive review includes the policy level documents of Nigeria such as the Nigeria Tourism Policy Guidelines in 1962, 1993, 2004 and other sectoral policies and guidelines etc. Comprehensively review of the NTDC activities reports and consultation with concern stakeholders were the recent sources of the study's data and information.

The Ministry of Culture Tourism and National Orientation, the coordinating Ministry of Tourism sector, NTDC a leading federal government of Nigeria agency of the tourism sector and process and constituted authority that regulates and coordinate tourism activities were the major source of data and information. SWOT analysis was employed in order to identify the key internal and external factors that are important in achieving the assigned tasks of NTDC.

Tourism in Nigeria

Since Nigeria=s independence in 1960, certain factors have been identified and proved conducive to the development of travel and tourism in the country. Tourism offers an opportunity for development not only through its contributions to the economy but as a vehicle for bringing about further dialogue among nations and reinforcing the sense of national identity. These factors therefore are:

- The relatively rapid transformation of the economy as a result of increasing number of workers became engaged in non-agricultural jobs particularly in the manufacturing and service of the economy.
- A rise in the real and disposable personnel income of the citizens.
- Reduction in the number of working days in a week from six to five, thus allowing more leisure time for workers in government ministries and other establishments.
- Increased mobility through vehicle transport; a sizeable proportion of which is owned on a personal basis.
- Provision of recreational facilities and services in many states and centers in the country; and
- The establishment of tourism boards in many states.

The country has great geographical and climate diversity, from the Atlantic Ocean in the south through the Middle Belt region to the far North. Within a few hours, one can travel from the Sahel to Sudan to snowing mountains in the North - East and Jos Plateau as well as luxuriant forests in Calabar, Tinapa Resorts and Obudu Ranch to areas of exclusive cultivation in warm waters of the coast. A wide selection of natural scenic attractions and cultural resources exists in all parts of the country. In fact, due to Nigeria geographical location and situation, the country has good potentials in ecotourism and marine tourism in attractive shores. Tourism could be one of the main sources of development in Nigeria and can utilize for this purpose. Utilization of tourism potentials in Nigeria have been related to the policies and vision of the successive governments since independence in 1960.

Nigeria Tourist Association(NTC) coordinate within government various tourism development efforts and to provide better policy support and leadership on the part of government to the development of tourism in Nigeria.

Organised Tourism in Nigeria dates back to 1962 to project the country's tourism potential and encourage domestic and international tourism activities. Nigeria secure a full member of the International Union of Official Travel Organisation (IUOTO) now United Nations World Tourism Organisation(UNWTO) in 1964 and the promulgation of Decree 54 of 1976 establishing the Nigerian Tourism Board. The Decree was subsequently amended to meet the challenges of the times and in line with the tourism policy, gave birth to Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) Decree 81 of 1992. It has since then became the apex tourism agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria charged with the overall responsibility of promoting, marketing and coordinating tourism activities in Nigeria. The following specific objectives are set for the body:

- Creating the enabling environment for tourism activities to flourish through the promotion of good standards and efficient service delivery in the hospitality sector and to facilitate investment sector.
- Making tourism a major revenue earner by harnessing the country's rich cultural heritage and other tourism assets with an efficient, proactive and highly motivated workforce.
- Publicizing and promoting Nigeria's endowments through print and electronic media/internet, production of quality brochures, flyers, guide maps, documentaries and active participation at local and international fairs/exhibitions.
- Standardizing and sanitizing the industry through registration, inspection, classification and grouping of the hospitality and tourism enterprises to meet international standard and customers satisfaction.
- Ensuring the provision of reliable and up-to-date tourism statistical data, establishment of tourism Data Bank and implementation of tourism Satellite Account (TSA) to assess the impact of tourism in the nation economy.
- Liaising with other government agencies such as Immigration Service, Federal Office of Statistics, CBN, National Population Commission, to produce Annual Tourism Statistical Data and tourism Satellite Account.
- Identifying, assessing and documenting tourism sites and attractions for investment and promotion purposes.
- Establishing and enforcing code of conduct for travel, trade and business operators.
- Liaising with relevant government ministries and agencies to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure to tourism site.
- Providing technical and advisory services to public and private sector operators in the tourism industry.
- Ensuring the maintenance of standards within the industry.
- Ensuring the establishment of Tourism Development Fund (TDF) to provide financial assistance to practitioners and developers.
- Facilitating the promotion and marketing of the tourism products and services within and outside

the country.

- Promoting technical and professional tourism services.
- Facilitating and encouraging private sector and local communities participation in the development of the tourism industry.

NTDC is a statutory body under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Culture, Tourism and National with a 13 member governing board comprising representation from the relevant public and provide agencies, and a Director General as the Chief Executives and Accounting Officer. It operate a directorate system of administration with 5 operational departments namely: administration and supplies, finance and accounts, planning, research and statistics, hospitality and travel trade, marketing and promotion. Each department is headed by a Director and sub-divided into divisions and units, the package tour and travels division is directly under the Chief Executive=s officer with the following service units; Secretariat/Legal, Management Information System, Press and Publication Relations, Internal/Audit and Protocol.

Thus, the services rendered by the NTDC are largely in the area of regulation, coordination and promotion of tourism activities in the country. Some of the evidence of the services include:

- Registration, classification and grouping of hospitality and tourism enterprises (HTE'S) to ensure standard of facilities and efficient service delivery in line with correction standard.
- Coordination and promotion of major tourism/cultural events such as to levels of promote tourism to attract international tourists to events like Osun Osogbo cultural festival, Argungun International Fishing and Cultural Festival in Kebbi State, Durban Festivals in the North and Riv-Fest in Rivers State etc.
- Provision of technical and advisory services to state, local governments and the organised private sector on tourism development matters.
- Identification, documents and promotion of major tourist sites and attractions in each of 36 states and FCT with a view to creating awareness on the potentials and highest opportunities of the Nigeria tourism sectors for domestic and international tourism purposes.
- Provision of assistance in the rehabilitation, upgrading and development of important tourist sites in various parts of the country.

Recently, the door to Nigeria has been open to foreign tourists. Efforts were made by the management of NTDC in showcasing Nigeria tourist potentials through its participation in international tourist events including the 2010 World Cup held in South Africa and its participation in various international events as well as sponsorship of local tourist events.

The States and Federal Government have collaborated to promote and manage the tourist sector. Over the years, several forum, conferences and seminars have been held to promote the development of tourism. Such conferences were held in places such as Lagos in 1975, 1980, and 1983, Benin in 1988, and in Ilorin in 1989, to consider a Trade and Tourist Policy for Nigeria. By 1976, in view of the worldwide economic crises resulting from the petroleum crises, the World Bank, organised a seminar on the social, cultural and economic importance of tourism and subsequently encouraged, especially developing countries to invest in the tourism industry with the aim of increasing country=s foreign exchange earnings, increasing national income, encouraging and stimulating the development of the rural areas, attaining local and political understanding and integration while achieving general physical

development of the country.

Realizing the potentials of tourism as a major pillar of the economy of Nigeria, the government has plans to develop a wide range of diversified tourist attractions with a view to enhancing the country's overall attractiveness as a leading tourist destination in Africa. Thereby, leading to the establishment of NTDC with the assistance of UNWTO towards the achievement of these mandates and creating conducive atmosphere for the evolution of sustainable tourism development.

In addition to the country's rich bio-diversity, though an aspect not yet fully utilized, Nigeria is home to diverse social, cultural, religious and linguistic groups. The wide variation of rainfall patterns in Nigeria, coupled with the country's complex geography, produces a great variety of vegetation types across the two major ecological zones; the forests in the Southern parts and Savanah in the North.

SWOT analysis groups consist of majority of both internal factors (the strength and weakness of NTDC, internal to the organization while the external factors comprising opportunities and threat presented by the external environment to the organisation).

Internal analysis involves a comprehensive evaluation of the internal environments potential strengths and weaknesses (See Fig. 2) while the external analysis include an opportunity which is the chance to introduce a new service or product that can arise when changes occur in the external environment. However, many of these changes are perceived as threats.

Results and Discussion

SWOT ANALYSIS OF NTDC

INTERNAL FACTORS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
Organisation Structure Key Staff Access to natural resources Operational Efficiency Operational Capacity Brand awareness Financial resources Tourism product Market share Rate of growth Cost control	Customers Competitors Social change Economic environment Political and regulatory environment Access and internal transportation Promotion Visa regime Current marketing approach Tourism education and training

Source: Author=s Survey, 2011.

Data from the field studies and the results of the analysis conducted show that the SWOT analysis variables related to the leading tourist agency in Nigeria (NTDC) consist of two major factors, i.e internal and external which to some extent determines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and the threats confronting the tourist agency . It is clearly observed that the Nigeria Tourism Policy is not

fully effective in the discharge of its responsibility. The most important internal factors in terms of the strength in SWOT analysis which the tourism body has built on over the last few years is in the area of creating awareness, increase funding of the tourism sector and potential to rapidly develop and diversify our stagnating economy through promotion of tourism. The government through its relevant agencies has discovered the ecological nuclear and cultural heritage of the country for tourism development. In line with this standards and performance not parallel with the international quality. The number of attractions in the country arise still very few without clear cut effort to diversified tourist attractions with a view to enhancing the overall attractiveness as a leading tourist destination in Africa in line with policy statement. The country has a key programme to promote sustainable tourism through rural development integration, hotel classification, establishment of international standard hotels, tourism institutions, establishment of parks, theme parks, game reserves, game sanctuaries, botanical gardens, public-private partnership for overall tourist development.

To achieve policy goals, the relevant actors should assume that the necessary resources are available avoiding any adjustment and delays to the extent that they are able to do so.

The second aspect of the analysis involves the examination of the main policy thrust of NTDC and why is the organization far from achieving its set objectives since its inception when compare with its counterparts in other emerging nations like India, South Africa, Kenya, Egypt and Bahamas. Despite the technical support provided by the UNWTO in the area of drafting of the National Tourism Master plan. Yet, the growth of tourism in Nigeria has not been very encouraging. Major weaknesses to achieving the national tourism and making NTDC a viable NTO is manifested in terms of poor development of infrastructure and tourism superstructure, poor development of tourist sites and attractions, inactive of presidential council on Tourism, undue delay in the constitution of Governing Board of NDTC, among others.

Some of the identified opportunities based on the SWOT analysis include the establishment of NTDC itself, in 1993 to coordinate tourism and the promotion of tourist development efforts by through provision of better policy support and leadership in Nigeria. Specifically, NTDC is to promote Nigeria as Africa' leading destination ,and a world-class destination for leisure and business visitors. In addition ,government sees tourism as a means to diversifying the mono-cultural economic structure and reliance on petroleum oil and agriculture which is not sustainable and subject to the vagaries of climatic variation. It has potential to create employment, increase in foreign exchange earnings and the increase revenue base for he government. Hence, tourism could be one of the main sources of development and can utilize for this purpose. Utilization of tourism potentials in Nigeria have been related to be one of the policies of the government at the various levels.

Finally , he major threats that have been identified on the basis of SWOT Analysis include ;ineffectiveness of the tourism organization structure in the country, from the presidential council, through the ministerial council , the NTDC Board, state tourism Board and the Local Government tourism committee. Most tourist organizations in the country lacked qualified professionals in the management of tourist sites, destinations and the vast resources. There is evidence of poor funding of the tourism sector, inadequate operational capacity, poor infrastructural development and inability to compete with other well developed tourist nations in Africa such as South Africa, Egypt, Kenya among others Emerging economies in the world.

Conclusions and Policy Implications:

This study represents a step toward understanding of the tourism development in Nigeria in relation to the activities of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation. The paper confirms that tourism offers an opportunity for development not limiting its contribution to the economy but as a vehicle towards bringing about further international understanding and reinforcing the sense of national identity. Hence, the best way to achieve this is through vibrancy of the national tourist organisation, eliminating the weaknesses and threats constituting the restrictions towards viable tourism development in the country thereby reducing the productivity and efficiency connected to the parameters. The identified key strengths and opportunities including financing opportunities, ideal climate for tourist promotion and development and the country's powerful geographical position in relation to high standard and efficient natural and cultural resources as well as acknowledged tourist destinations.

Recommendations:

The following policy recommendations are suggested:

There should be enhanced collaboration and partnership between the public and private sector in order to ensure viable tourism sector. For instance, the Federation Tourism Association in Nigeria (FTAN) should partner with NTDC as the apex body so as to provide the required leadership, direction and control in travel and tourism. The association as the umbrella body for the private sector, promote their interest with a view to harnessing the abundant tourism potentials into the country.

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