

TRAVELS AND TOURISM PROMOTIONS: TOWARDS A NEW DIMENSION TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Travels and Tourism impacts to economic and National Development cannot be overstated. This role has long been recognized by the developed countries which have harnessed the intrinsic development potentials to evolve economic prosperity and infrastructural development. However, the developing countries and to be specific, Nigeria, in spite of being naturally endowed with menagerie of travels and tourism products is yet to tap into the development of this industry for the bouleversement of the economy and engender national development. This study examines the development of travel and tourism to bring about economic growth, infrastructural development, increased revenue and increased tourist arrival especially for the developing countries and specifically Nigeria. The methodology used for this study is documentary searches, which entails search of existing published and unpublished documents and databases of stakeholders in Nigerian travels and tourism sub-sector and external sources with affinity with the international organizations such as WTTC, UNWTO and etc. The study revealed that genuine national development is feasible for the country in the 21st century if there can be a corresponding development and promotion of the Nigerian travels and tourism industry.

KEYWORDS: Travel and Tourism, Industry, Globalization, Receipt, Arrival, Tourism Development, Infrastructure, National Development, Economic Growth

INTRODUCTION

The increasing importance of travels and tourism in the global order has brought to bear its intrinsic importance, enormity in the facilitation of development across sectarian sphere. This advantage has long been enjoyed by developed countries of the world who have harnessed the developmental attributes in the development of their tourism potential to the full maximization of economic development and growth.

Tourism is seen as development strategy; it is recognized as a veritable tool that can effectively turn the wheels of development in any economy. Its impact on the redistribution of income between sectors and companies within the economy as well as effective developmental strategy in poverty alleviation (Chandra 2006)

The World Tourism Organization (WTO), is convinced that tourism has huge potential for growth in many developing countries and Less Developed Countries (LDCs) where it is a significant economic sector and promising high

growth; and its several advantages when compared with other economic sectors. The distinguishing feature of travels and tourism sector compared with other sectors of the economy is that of its developmental attributes to jumpstart growth in other ailing sector of the economy. However, only few developing countries have braced up to these challenges of developing their travels and tourism products to facilitate development and growth of the economy.

The World Tourism conference held in Manila, Philippines in October 1980, held that "world tourism can contribute to the establishment of a new international economic order that will help to eliminate the widening economic gap between developed and developing countries and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social development and progress in particular of the developing countries"

The potential of travels and tourism to contribute to development is widely recognized in

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the industrialized countries, with travels and tourism playing an increasingly important role and receiving government support. Little wonder, the effect of this in these countries attracting tourist traffic has been great. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in the year 2000, France with a population of 57 million received 74.5 million visitors in the year 2000. Similarly, Spain with a population of 37 million received 48.5 million visitors during the same year. Even developed countries like Canada which derived over 13 percent of its gross domestic product from International visitors in the year 1999, rely heavily on income from tourism. Regrettably, Nigeria is yet to benefit from the prosperity potential inherent in travels and tourism to positively influence the development in other sector of its economy and bring about real increase in the nation's overall GDP. This paper examines travels and tourism promotions: lessons to national development in Nigeria.

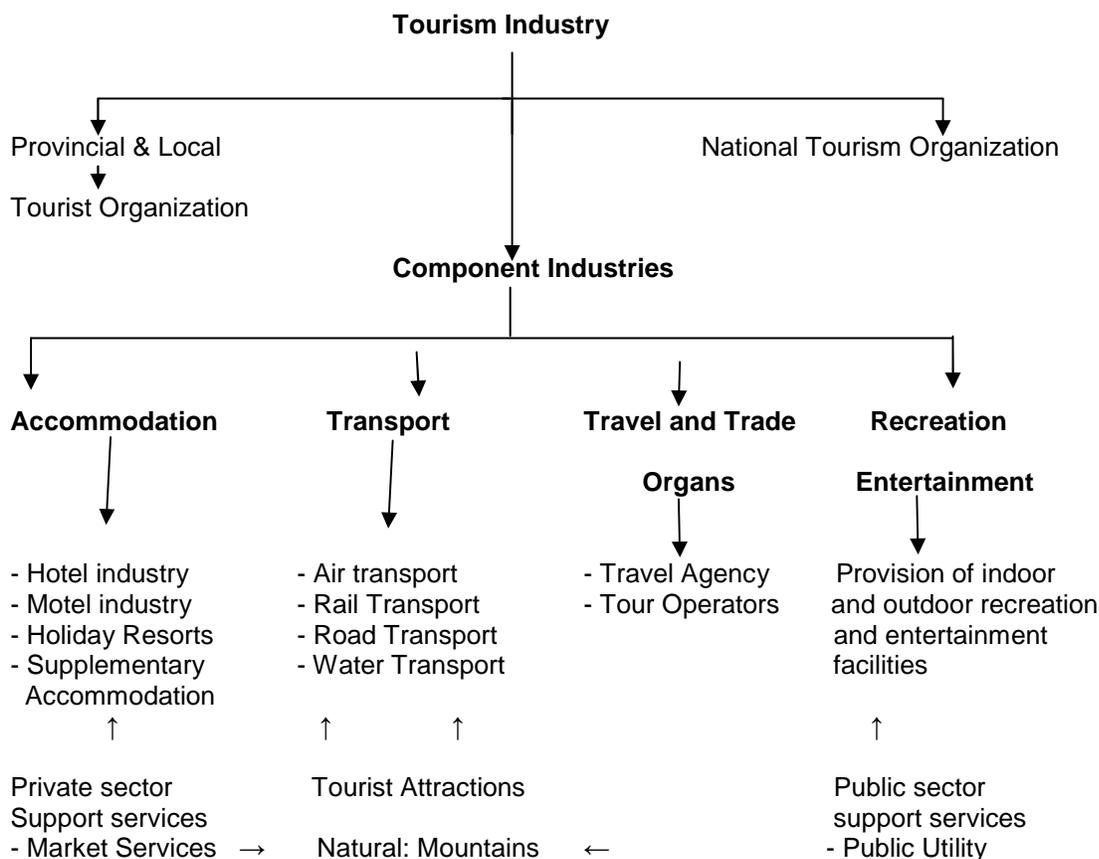
TRAVEL AND TOURISM: AN INDUSTRY

Tourism industry is the one that deals with the tourists as consumers, the money spent

by them, and the resources rendering the various goods and services which facilitate the composition of the tourism product. This industry has been named as a "Smokeless Industry" because unlike other industries it is invisible and non-polluting. The tourism industry is an intrinsic complex integration of many industries spread over many sectors. Tourism is an umbrella industry containing a set of inter-related business participants. For example, industries like Transport (Air, water, and overland), Accommodation (Hotels, Motels, and Supplementary Accommodations), and travel companies, (Tour Operators/travel Agents), Recreation and Entertainment Institutions, Handicrafts business, etc.

Interestingly, most of the component industries also get related to varied commercial and non-commercial activities over and above providing their services to the tourists. A simplistic structure of the tourism industry can be suggested by way of a framework as illustrated below:

Fig 1: COMPONENTS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY



- Finance & Insurance	lakes, forests	Services
- Banking Services	beach, etc	- Health, Safety
		- Immigration
		Facilities
- Training and Education	- Manmade:	Training & Education
	Monuments, fairs &	
	Festivals, Performing	
	Arts, Handicrafts, etc	

Source: Karma, K.K.; Chand, M., 2006. Basics of Tourism – Theory, Operation and Practice

Over the years, there has been growing awareness of Travels and Tourism as a human activity, an industry, and a catalyst for economic growth and development. Like any other industry the travels and tourism industry draws resources from the economy, add value and produces marketable products. The only difference here is that no tangible product produced like in the case of a manufacturing industry. The travels and tourism products are often intangible, joint or composite, thus further corroborate the complex association of travels and tourism industry with other industries. The travels and tourism industries impact various auxiliary (specific) and ancillary (general) industries as well.

The potential of the tourism industry to bring about development in less developed countries has severally been documented in text and literature (for example Britton and Clarke 1989; Brohman, 1996b; Harrison 1992c; Lea 1988; Mowforth & Munt, 1997; Singh, et al, 1989; Weaver, 1998a)(cited in Sharpley R., and Telfer D J, (2002) . However, the benefits of the identified potential are yet to reflect in the economic development of these countries-developing countries.

For instance, in Nigeria, the travels and tourism industry is still not fully developed to impact on other sectors of the economy for rapid economic transformation and infrastructural development. This calls for massive change of government orientation to attract both local and foreign investment into our travels and tourism sector to cope effectively with the global challenges of the 21st century.

TRAVELS, TOURISM AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Indeed, the impact of travels and tourism on development is undeniable. More so, as we know that development as witnessed in virtually all the developed nations has a travels and touristic connotation and interface. Owing to its rapid and continuing growth and associated

potential economic contribution, it is not surprising that tourism is widely regarded in practice and also in academic circles as an effective means of achieving development. That both in industrialized and less developed countries of the world travel and tourism have become important and integral development strategy (Jenkins, 1991:61, Cited in Sharpley R., and Telfer D J, 2002).

(Dieke, 1989) and (Roche, 1992: 566) opined that the development of tourism has long been seen as both a vehicle and a symbol of least of westernization, but also; were important for progress and modernization. This has particularly being the case of developing countries, however, the synergetic relationship which seems to exists between travels, tourism and development is yet to actualize in Nigeria. The continued neglect of development of our travels and tourism industry is seen today as the bane of our economic rebirth.

The development connotations in travels and tourism is widely embracive, it impacts is felt in all socio-economic dimensions. The importance of economic benefits at the local level, environmental and social sustainability was also widely accepted. It has been observed that travels and tourism presents excellent opportunities for developing entrepreneurship, for staff training and progression and for the development of transferable skills.

Travels and Tourism contributes immensely to development and the reduction of poverty in a number of ways. Economics benefits are generally the most important elements, but there can be social, environmental, and cultural benefits and costs as well. Travels and Tourism contributes to poverty reduction by providing employment and various livelihood opportunities. In Cyprus, for example, 25% of the workforces are employed directly and indirectly in travels and tourism. This additional income helps the poor by increasing the range of economic opportunities available to them. It also contributes to poverty

alleviation through direct taxation of tourism generated income. Taxes can be used to alleviate poverty through education, health and infrastructure development.

Unlike many other forms of International trade, travels and tourism does not suffer from the imposition of trade barriers, such as quotas or tariffs. Mostly, destination countries have free and equal access to the international travels and tourism market. This position has become strengthened by the inclusion of tourism in the General Agreement on Trade and Services, which became operational in January, 1995.

Travels and Tourism is not very different from other productive sectors but it has four potential advantages for pro-poor economic growth:

- i) It has higher linkage with other local businesses because customers come to the destination
- ii) It is relatively labour intensive and employs a large proportion of women workers
- iii) It has high potential in poor countries and areas with few other competitive exports
- iv) Tourism products can be built on natural resources and culture, which might sometimes be the only assets that people have.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM ARRIVAL AND RECEIPTS

A major improvement in the total number of International tourism arrival in the country from the 1990s upward to the present time were recorded as shown in Table 2. The number in the year 1990 shows 190,000, or 14% of the total for the particular year. A progression from this as shown in Table 2, for year 1995 reveals 656,000, or 34% of total for the period. A major reason for the figure in 1990 is perhaps the economic and political setback associated with the country socio-economic terrain for the period. The country had a political impasse that inhibits many prospective visitors from trips to Nigeria. The year 2000 shows a further increase and adding up to the total tourist arrival for the whole of the sub-region. The figure during this period was at 813,000 in number of arrivals, 33% of the total in

the sub-region; as well constitute the highest for the sub-region. The major reason for the increase for the period is due to increased international confidence in the new found Nigeria democracy. The hope of safety and security of life, reduction in crime and violence, improved bilateral relations with international community's which further increased the number of tourist arrival for this period.

Increasingly, the number of tourist arrival into the country as shown in Table 2 also reveals 924,000 or 30% and 962,000, or 27% consecutively for the year 2003 and 2004 respectively. Though, it is an increase relative to the total number recorded for the two-year period in the sub-region, yet a lot of tourism promotion and marketing of the various tourism products available in the country ought to be carried out extensively. This will attract a foreign direct investment that would further enhance rapid infrastructural development which is developing a basic ingredient for economic development of countries. (World Tourism Organization, 2000)

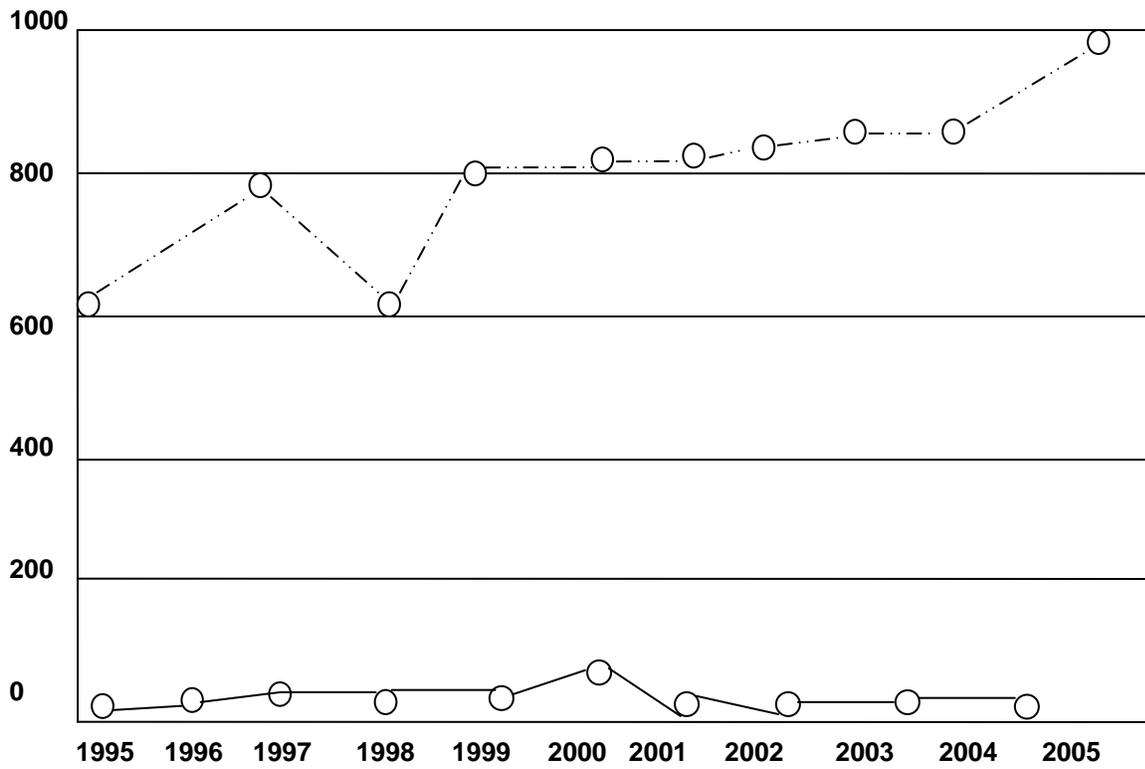
Figure 2, shows a graphical representation of International tourist arrival for a 10 year period with the lowest figure in 1995 and the highest figure in the year 2004. It is against a corresponding International tourism receipts measured in US dollars and the country having the highest receipt in year 2000, with 101 million dollars as receipt from International tourism. A notable factor that contributed to this was renewed confidence in the nation's political and economic terrain. Simultaneously, during this period massive promotion and marketing of the Nigeria image was extensively carried out by Nigeria tourism development corporation (NTDC). A decline in International tourism receipt follows after the period prior to the present.

In 1990, the country having much lower receipt compared to the one of year 2000 as shown in Table 1, the total receipt for this year was 101 million US dollars as a result of political renaissance, stability and economical improvement. Though, civil unrest, increase rising profile of ethnic militia, crime and violence and health risk could be responsible for the decline after the year 2000.

Fig 2:

○ International Tourist Arrivals(thousands)
 ○ International Tourism Receipts (US\$ millions)

International tourist arrivals (1,000): 2004 → 982
 International tourism receipts (US\$ millions): 2004 → 21



Source: United Nations World Tourism Organization World Report 2006.

TABLE 1: INTERNATIONAL TOURISM RECEIPTS BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION

	International Tourism Receipts (US & Million)						Market share in The region %			Change		Receipt Per Arrival	Receipts Per Capital US \$
	1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005	1990	2000	2005	04/03	05/04		
West Africa	605	537	1,005	1,423	1,623	1,917	9.5	9.6	8.9	14.1	8.1	470	7
Benin	55	85	77	106	--	--	0.9	0.7				605	15
Burkina Faso	11	--	19	--	--	--	0.2	0.2					
Cape Verde	6	10	41	87	98	123	0.1	0.4			24.1	625	237
Cote d'voire	51	89	49	69	76	--	0.8	0.5	0.6	13.5		385	4
Gambia	26	28	--	--	--	--	0.4			10.1			
Ghana	81	11	335	414	466	--	1.3	3.2		12.6		800	22
Guinea	30	1	12	31	30	--	0.5	0.1		-3.2		670	3
Guinea-Bissau	--	--	--	2	--	--							1
Mali	47	25	40	128	130	--	0.7	0.4		1.6		1,155	12
Mauritania	9	11	--	--	--	--	0.1						
Niger	17	7	23	28	--	--	0.3	0.2				505	2
Nigeria	25	17	101	49	21	--	0.4	1.0		-57.6		20	0
Senegal	167	168	144	209	--	--	2.6	1.4				420	19
Sierra Leone	19	57	11	60	58	83	0.3	0.1	0.4	-3.3	43.1	1,330	10
Togo	58	13	8	15	--	--	0.9	0.1				250	3

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 2006

Table 2: International Tourist Arrivals by Country of Destination

International Tourist Arrivals (1000)								Market Share in the			Change (%)		Average annual	
		1990	1995	2000	2003	2004	2005*	Region (%)			04/03	05/04	90-00	00-05
Series								1990	2000	2005				
West Africa		1,352	1,913	2,432	3,062	3,448	3,768	8.9	8.6	10.1	12.6	9.3	6.1	9.1
Benin	TF	110	138	96	175	174	--	0.7	0.3		-0.9		-1.4	
Burkina Faso	THS	74	124	126	163	222	--	0.5	0.4		36.2		5.5	
Cape Verde	TF	24	28	115	150	157	198	0.2	0.4	0.5	4.7	26.1	17.0	11.5
Cote d'Ivoire	TF	196	188	--	180	--	--	1.3						
Gambia	TF	100	45	77	89	90	111	0.7	0.3	0.3	1.1	23.2	-2.5	7.5
Ghana	TF	146	286	399	531	584	--	1.0	1.4		10.0		10.6	
Guinea	TF	--	--	33	44	45	45		0.1	0.1	1.5	0.8	.	6.4
Mali	TF	44	42	86	110	113	143	0.3	0.3	0.4	2.1	26.9	7.0	10.6
Mauritania	TF	--	--	30	--	--	--		0.1					
Niger	TF	21	35	50	55	--	--	0.1	0.2				9.1	
Nigeria	TF	190	656	813	924	962	--	1.2	2.9		4.1		15.6	
Senegal	THS/TF	246	280	389	495	667	769	1.6	1.4	2.1	34.7	15.3	4.7	14.6
Sierra Leone	TF	98	38	16	38	44	40	0.6	0.1	0.1	14.3	-8.2	-16.6	20.1
Togo	THS	103	53	60	61	83	81	0.7	0.2	0.2	36.5	-2.0	-5.3	6.2

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 2006

Comparison of arrivals and receipt in the Sub-region

Comparing the international tourism arrival and receipt in the West Africa region shows that Nigeria has the highest number of tourist arrival. This figure, however, not with corresponding expected receipt for the number. Comparatively with some countries in the sub-region such as Ghana, Senegal, Mali, which recorded a tourist arrivals not as large in numbers compared with Nigeria but with huge receipts higher when compared with the country's receipt for the corresponding period. The reason being that adequate infrastructure that would ensure long stay of visitors that would necessitate spending their foreign earnings which in other words would have contributed to the nation's receipt is lacking. Also, the lack of government policy tended towards developing tourism products and infrastructure is noticeable. The implication of this is reflected in the tourism receipt those countries received from tourism arrivals. The total International tourism receipt of Ghana alone as shown in Table 1, for the year 2004 is much higher than that received by Nigeria for the corresponding years as shown in the table 1.

THE ROLE OF TOURISM AND TRAVELS IN NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENT

In a developing economy like Nigeria, the role of travels and tourism cannot be over emphasized. Though, in the past, tourism is view as an elitist affair, espeially for the rich, who have the financial power to embark on trips to locations considered of interest to them. Similarly, the economic potential of travels and tourism to development is vague; therefore countries and individuals do not see any reason to develop their tourism potential.

Until recently, this perception towards travels and tourism is quickly eroding, as travels and tourism is now adopted as a veritable tool towards achieving multifaceted development. Foremost of this is foreign exchange earner intrinsic to travels and tourism development. Nigeria can benefit maximally from the receipts from international tourism which are a valuable source of earning for all countries, particularly the developing countries of which Nigeria is one.

Besides, the trade deficit often witnessed in our trade relations with our trading partners can be offset with receipts from tourism in the balance of payment accounts. The major economic benefit in promoting the travels and

tourism industry is in the form of earning foreign exchange. Income from these foreign-exchange earnings adds to the national income and, as an invisible import, may offset a loss of the visible trading account and be of critical importance in the overall financial reckoning.

The major challenge posed to past and present administrations in Nigeria is the issue of unemployment. It has become an enigma yet without tangible. Employment is an important economic effect of tourism. The problems of unemployment and under-employment as witnessed in the country can be solved with massive tourism development approach. Travels and Tourism can be looked upon in this light as a major industry which employs manpower on a large scale. The problems which the industrialized countries face in recruiting manpower for the tourist industry confirm that in any productive process consisting of services, human labour remains the basic need. If a comparison is to be drawn with the productive sector, none of the technological progress achieved has succeeded in rendering the human factor less indispensable than in the tourism sector. The travels and tourism industry is a highly labour-intensive service industry and hence is a valuable source of employment. It employs a large number of people and provides a wide range of jobs which extend from the unskilled to the highly specialized.

Also, the balanced regional development of Nigeria can in a way be guaranteed in the travels and tourism development view by promoting the different destinations across the country. The United nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism held in Rome in 1963 stated that tourism was important not only as a source of earning foreign exchange, but also as a factor determining the location of industry and in the development of under developed regions. In light of above, to bring about development to regions underdeveloped in the country through the developments of tourism products scattered throughout the country by uplifting the present conditions to International standards. Major examples are the Tinapa project and the Obudu Cattle ranch, which have placed Cross-River on the World tourist map. The two projects attract thousands of tourists, both domestic as well as International. It is believed that if serious effort can be extended to other tourist location in the country, noticeable development as witnessed in these areas identified will be replicated there too.

In addition, a significant benefit of travels

and tourism to Nigeria national development is economic development and improvement of infrastructure. The benefits from infrastructural investments, justified primarily for travels and tourism – airports, seaports, roads, and electricity, water supply and other public utilities – may be widely shared by other sectors of the economy. In addition to development of new infrastructure, the improvements in the existing infrastructure which are undertaken in order to attract tourists are also of great importance. These improvements may benefit the local and resident population in the country by providing them with amenities which they desire. Furthermore, the provision of infrastructure may provide the foundation or serve as an encouragement for greater economic diversification in Nigeria. Through this, a variety of secondary industries may be promoted which many not directly serve the needs of tourism.

Lastly, Nigeria can enhance its developmental potential through tax revenues from tourism. Tourism also results in tax revenue both at national and local levels. Taxes can provide the financial resources for the development of infrastructure, enhancing and maintenance of some types of attractions and other public facilities and services, tourism marketing and training required for developing tourism; as well as, to help finance general community improvements and services used by residents in Nigeria. In fact, WTO's 1998 report on tourism taxation emphasizes that taxation policies in a country must be carefully evaluated in an integrated manner to ensure that tourism-related taxes are giving the necessary substantial revenues. However, taxes should not be made unbearable for the country's international competitive position to be counterproductive and produce a loss of tourist traffic.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR TRAVELS AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

There is no doubt that Nigeria is richly endowed with great tourism potentials, although, development has been stunted by belated emphasis, incoherent policies, paucity of funds and piecemeal development strategies. Government involvement in this very important sector of the economy received statutory support in 1976 through decree 54, which established the Nigerian Tourism Board and charged it with responsibility of promoting tourism and providing tourists facilities for both local and international tourists. However, the policy could not achieve much to jumpstart national touristic relevance of

the country due to poor understanding of the fundamental principle involved in the concept of tourism. The perception of tourism as elitist affair and non alignment of tourism policy during this period to empower the people to make trips for touristic purpose was evident. Most of the tourism planning during this period benefited the rich ones thereby hindering the masses from going on tours even if they had the desire to do so, largely as a consequence of the amount of money involved.

Taking cognizance of the potential revenue the nation could generate from travel and tourism Nigerian the government in 1990 developed a policy whose main objectives included: to generate foreign exchange, encourage even development and promote tourism-based rural enterprises, generate employment and accelerate rural development and its capacity to foster international peace and harmony. Also, the government adopted various strategies to make Nigeria the preferred destination in the world. Strategies adopted included the following infrastructural development: concession of land, fiscal and other incentives, regulation of the industry, development of travels and tourism facilities. To achieve the aim of the policy, the government put in place institutional frameworks by creating relevant organs such as: the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism, State Ministries and Local Government Tourism Board. One of the major policy implementation is the merger of the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), Transport agencies restructuring and National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR) into; the National Institute for Culture and Tourism (NICAT) which the government believes will satisfy the demand for skilled and adequately trained work force for the tourism industry.

Besides the policy and objectives enunciated above, the following steps were also taken to boost tourism development:

- i) The approval of National Tourism Policy which specifies the month of November, December and January as Harmattan Holiday Season
- ii) The development of a ten year tourism development master plan
- iii) The establishment of tourism heritage satellite account which is important for maintaining tourism development. This was done through proper records, capturing emphatically what is realized from tourism

- iv) The heritage conservation master plan which aims at ensuring that sustainable measures are taken to protect, restore and safeguard the originality and integrity of heritage assets.
- v) The review of the 1998 cultural policy in partnership with the United Nations for Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that is to take into account, the role of the private sector and local communities in cultural protection and promotion.
- vi) Establishments of tourism circuits nationwide to effectively promote and attract participants and huge spectatorship of cultural events.

Recent government effort towards tourism development was the creation of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), which is the apex tourism agency responsible for promoting, marketing and disseminating information on the industry, locally and international, through publication of handbooks, brochures and general guidelines for the operation of the industry. It collaborates with the private sectors as well as other tiers of government in implementing policy directives and executing tourism projects. It helps to co-ordinates the activities of organized private sector tourism associations and practitioners.

Regrettably, all the actions taken by the government from the earliest intervention to resuscitate and put Nigeria as the preferred destination on the tourist world map is yet to bear significant results. Nigeria still was behind greatly in attracting tourist traffic. It is believed that urgent steps need to be taken by the government for critical overhaul of all its policies and re-chart a new course, if need be, to actively participate and share in the increasing lucrative world travels and tourism industry largess.

CONCLUSION

Although, significant progress has been recorded in the tourism industry globally but Nigeria's share of this global enterprise is much less. The country lags behind in tourism development compared with other developing countries. It is regrettably that various government efforts to jumpstart development in terms of policy formulation has not been matched with similar increases in the institutional, transport infrastructure development and organization capacities of the Nigeria tourism industry, and in the administrative machinery of Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation as

well as Federal Ministry of Tourism and National Orientation. For Nigeria to meet the tourism developmental challenges of the 21st century, there is need for massive travels and tourism promotion directed at national development of Nigeria.

Among the varied problems associated with slow travels and tourism development in Nigeria is the lack of policy implementation and monitoring, lack of sufficient and good quality middle and senior management personnel, lack of curriculum in travel and tourism management in our educational institutions, inadequate investments targeted on developing tourism products and transport Infrastructure etc. All these problems notwithstanding, it is hoped that when all the tourism sites of the country are properly developed to international standards, together with adequate infrastructure to cater for all sundry needs of potential tourists, coupled with massive international promotion of all this site, then increased tourist flow into the country will follow. This will help to foster national development needed to cope with the development challenges needed for the 21st century.

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