

CHAPTER 4 : TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA.

4.1 Nigeria's Economic Development.

Nigeria possesses abundant natural and human resources, including large reserves of oil and gas, fertile agricultural land, talented and well-educated entrepreneurs, a skilled labour force, and domestic market of 120 million people. Nevertheless, its economy has diminished since the late 1970s and its economic performance has fallen far short of its potential. This has primarily been due to the frequent changes of government and policies as well as poor economic policy implementation which resulted in slow output growth, a lower standard of living, greater income inequality and increased poverty. (Letter of Intent of the Government of Nigeria to the IMF's Managing Director, July 2000).

Although it is the sixth largest producer and exporter of oil in the world, Nigeria is one of the poorest and heavily indebted countries. Its total external debt stood at about \$30 billion in 1998 while the per capita GNP is \$310 (2000), (World Development Report, 2000). In addition, Nigeria's economy depends largely on earnings from oil and oil constitutes the biggest percentage of its exports. For example, the share of oil in the country's total exports was 97% in 1985, 95% in 1987, 97% in 1990, 97% in 1993 and 96.5 in 1994 (see Table VI).

Table VI. The share of oil in Nigeria's total exports.

Year	Total earnings from oil export (\$billions)	Percentage share of oil in Nigeria's export (%)
1985	12.2	97
1986	4.2	92
1987	7	95
1988	6.3	91
1989	7.5	95
1990	13.3	97
1991	11.8	96
1992	11.6	98
1993	9.7	97
1994	9.1	96.5

Source: The Economist, December 9, 1995: 44.

Table VII. Nigeria's total external debt and debt servicing.

Year	Total external debt in \$millions.	Debt service as % of exports
1980	8,934	4.2
1988	30,718	25.7
1992	30,959	28.9
1998	30,315	----

Source: World Development Reports (1983-2000)

4.2 Recognition for tourism.

Nigeria, as a nation and like other countries, has been working towards improving the living conditions of its people. Over the years it has tried to harness all its resources towards this goal by promoting non-oil exports. In his explanation of the 1994 budget, the Minister of Finance expressed the official concern by saying, “for instance, despite the expected emergence of over a hundred items on the non-oil export list, their combined contribution has remained low, stunted by low resource application to exploit the unusual price advantages.....”(Ministry of Finance Press Briefing on 1994 Budget: 2). The events of the mid 1980s when the country suffered economic misfortunes because of poor crude oil prices was more like a wake-up call. This may have in part led to a refocus on tourism and according to Ukpanah, “it is right to say that it was from 1989 that the Federal Government of Nigeria began to actually regard tourism as an industry to be developed given the administration’s appreciation of its cultural, social, recreational, economic, holistic, domestic and international relevance. This new impetus may best be understood if one appreciates the fact that from 1986, the Babangida Administration had begun a gradual overhaul of the Nigerian economy through a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), aimed at bringing about national self-reliance and sustained economic recovery, including the diversification of the productive base of the economy” (Ukpanah, 1991: 3). It took such a long time since independence to come to such reality because over the years political and administrative instability had plagued the country.

earlier abandoned agriculture, started searching for various means of sustenance and economic development.

Until the time of the advent of the military into politics, elected civilian politicians were the administrative heads of each of the four regions that constituted the country as well as the head of the state, including the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government. The regional autonomies vanished as the federal center assumed more power. Development of tourist attractions in the regions became subjected to the dictates and considerations of the federal government. In an effort to exercise control over the federation, especially to forestall the possibility of a strong state threatening the centre, the military divided the whole country into twelve states in May 1967. This action increased the power of the centre while weakening the ability of the regions to undertake tangible developments in their areas. The number of states has since increased over the years by military fiat. From the previous four regions, 12 states were created in 1967. The number increased to 19 in 1975, 21 in 1988, 30 in 1991 and finally 36 since 1995. Most of the states were economically not viable and even up to date; many of them cannot sustain themselves on their own. As pointed out by a journal of International Union of Local Authorities, "Initiatives towards reform of local government in Nigeria arose during a period when the country was politically unstable and the central government was run by the military. Problems of uneven distribution of power and resources between central and state governments were acute with pressure for creation of more states" (Phang, 1987: 33). This could be the reason why the State Tourism Boards were almost non-existent or inefficient as the states limited resources were allocated to those areas

considered of utmost importance. Since the states got most of their financial allocation from the federal purse, they expended them according to their priorities. In most of the states, the major concern would be those aspects of the economy that would have immediate and direct impact on the lives of the people. It was no wonder then that tourism was relegated to the background in place of such sectors as agriculture, education and health.

4.3.1 Administrative instability.

Administration of tourism in Nigeria suffered from constantly changing and often conflicting government regulations. This may have been an offshoot of the many and seemingly regular changes experienced at the headship of the tourism establishment. This trend has continued even with the present civilian government. In criticising the administration of culture and tourism in Nigeria, the Guardian newspaper wrote that, "in the recent cabinet reshuffle, another 'dark horse' has been appointed as culture and tourism minister. Ms Boma Bromilow Jack becomes the 21st person in the last 20 years since 1980 to oversee Nigeria's culture, making it an average of about one-year tenure for each minister. This does not augur well for development and growth of the ministry. (Nigerian Guardian, Feb. 26, 2001). The length of tenure of the ministers would not allow for proper formulation and implementation of any lasting programme. Under such circumstances, the ministers were preoccupied solely with consolidation of their position rather than implementing whatever good tourism ideas initiated earlier. The shortness of tenure is a macro version of political instability, which characterised Nigerian governments only a few years after independence. Other factors that were clogs on the

wheel of tourism administration in Nigeria included lack of funds, insecurity, lack of trained personnel and infrastructure. The private sector that could have invested in and promoted tourism did not receive the necessary incentives and encouragement from the government. Even when incentives were offered, their actual implementation leaves much to be desired as public sector inefficiency thwarted the interest of the private sector to invest.

The ever-vibrant Nigeria mass media are always critical of the neglect of tourism. In a brief review of the tourism industry in Nigeria in year 2000, the Nigerian Guardian newspaper wrote that, “besides the creation of a federal ministry of Culture and Tourism in 1999 by the present administration, it appeared that no concrete effort ever since particularly in year 2000, was made to improve the lot of the sector. If anything the hope that was rekindled as a result of the creation of the ministry was dimmed. That is, if the porous manner the sector was run in year 2000 is anything to judge by. Eighteen months on, the ministry is still to have a focus on the way tourism should be managed. Administratively, the ministry presently lacks the needed technocrats to man key positions within its structure. It is on record that the ministry is about the only ministry being run by an acting permanent secretary, just as other positions such as those of the directors for domestic and international tourism services” (The Guardian Newspaper, Dec. 31, 2000). Such criticisms should serve as a lesson to the relevant authorities if Nigeria is to succeed in developing and administering its tourism sector.

In continuation of the review, the newspaper was critical of the dichotomy that existed between the administration of culture and tourism. They are under the same ministry and should complement each other but that was not the case in the example it cited. According to the paper, “so far the synergy between culture and tourism is still very far-fetched. Both are being run as parallel products as no concrete effort or programme is in place to market and promote cultural products through the prism of tourism as promised by the minister. Practitioners of the two sectors still see themselves as in opposing camps and so would do anything to frustrate one another. Even the minister’s perception of the field that he is in charge does not seem to help matters. For instance, the National Troupe was at both Caracas (Venezuela) and Hanover (Germany) in the course of the year to perform and no one thought it fit and proper to go along with anyone from the tourism sector who is supposed to market the National Troupe. The question therefore, is how else does Graham-Douglas intend to ‘refine and package our culture for the development of our tourism industry’” (Ibid).

4.4 Tourist attractions.

The size of the country, its large population, diverse ethnic groups, multi-religious, rich cultural and historical past forms the foundation for Nigeria’s tourist attractions. The country claims to have the richest collection of arts especially sculptures in Africa. These sculptures are found in many museums in parts of the country. The museums contain arts that are peculiar with the geographical locations. There is a national museum in Lagos, which has three main galleries for ancient and contemporary arts in Nigeria. The National Arts Theatre located in Lagos is the home for the Museum

of Black and African Cultures. The theatre itself was built to serve as the center of activities during the second Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture held in Lagos in 1977(FESTAC 77).

4.4.1 Nigerian Arts.

Some of the most widely known Nigerian arts can be found at the Benin Museum. Other Museums are located at Kaduna, Oron, Owo, Girayi, Jebba, Lokoja, Ife, Jos, Kano, Igbo Ukwu, Kanta and Sevti. Some of the museums contain collections of the ancient terracotta heads while others depict the activities of the Europeans in Nigeria before independence.

4.4.2 Natural Formations.

Nigeria is endowed with many natural attractions. At the periphery of the new federal capital Abuja is located the popular Zuma rock with a semblance of a human face. In the different States, there are other rich, man made and natural attractions. There are caves, lakes, warm springs, stone formations, zoos, water falls, historical buildings, old city walls, remnants of slave chains and locations of freed slaves, the wreckage of Mungo Park's boat, confluence point of rivers Niger and Benue, palaces of traditional rulers, the beaches, and many more. Mungo Park was the British explorer who was said to have discovered the river Niger.

4.4.3 Game Reserves.

There are many game reserves, the most popular of which is the Yankari in Bauchi state. It also has an additional advantage of a warm spring. Others are the Gashaka, Karimbila and Falgore game reserves. Some locations with high altitude offer very conducive temperate weather conditions such as the Jos, Biu and Mambilla plateaus. The Obudu Cattle ranch also enjoys high altitude and are all favoured by foreign tourists.

4.4.4 Culture and tradition.

On the other hand, Nigeria with more than 200 ethnic groups has much to offer in terms of culture. The country has so many dances, crafts, festivals and traditional related activities. Some of them are the Ekpo and Ekpe in Akwa Ibom state, Nmanwu Festival in Enugu state, the Eyo festival in Lagos, boat regatta in some riverine states, Argungu fishing festival in Sokoto state and Durbar in some Northern States to mention but a few.

In as much as there are many tourist attractions, they have to be well developed and administered, preserved, publicised and patronised. The Government of Nigeria itself acknowledges the inadequacies of the tourist attractions when it observed that, "in a country like India, Kenya and Tunisia, tourism occupies a prime spot as a veritable source of income to the governments. But in Nigeria, the great potentials and benefits of the sector have not been adequately exploited and utilised. Most of the monuments are lying in waste and some perpetually yearn for patronage (Nigeria in 90s, 1990: 44)

4.5 Development of potential tourist attractions.

As stated earlier, Nigeria is endowed with unique cultures, environments and some physical infrastructure, which can be exploited for the promotion and development of tourism. Many of these have room for further developments to bring them to international standards so that they can attract more tourists. Some of them will require an adequate increase in their utility capacity to accommodate additional patronage from both domestic and international tourists. These are as follows:

(a) Developing good domestic and international airlinks for the future.

There are important airports in the major cities of Nigeria. Nigeria Airways, several domestic airlines and major European and African airlines combine to link Nigeria to the rest of the world through the international airports in Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Abuja and Maiduguri. Some of Nigeria's private airline companies are coping well and flying international routes. The air distance between Nigeria and Europe and America is about six hours and ten hours respectively. It is good to reach out to these two continents since they appear to be major source of international tourism. Potential tourists will only be expected from places with larger concentration of individuals and families with higher disposable income. America is one country that has very high income and is not too far from Africa by air. This potential seems yet unutilised as Popovic stated that, "the vast and fast growing American travel market has hardly been tapped seriously yet by African counties. Among the American nationals who came to African countries many were residents of other countries in or outside Africa and did not come from North America. The number of American residents who came to Africa was very limited. Of

3,700,000 US residents who travelled overseas in 1968 only 19,000 persons travelled to Africa, which is about one half of one percent. With the progress in air transportation and the growing interest of the American public for overseas travel, a considerably larger portion of the travelling public could be attracted to Africa” (Popovic et al, 1972: 21). As a way of exploiting such opportunities, after the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa, Nigeria opened a direct flight to South Africa and this is another good link to the outside world.

(b) Hotels and Restaurants.

There are several good hotels in Nigeria, including international franchise chain hotels such as Sheraton, Hilton and Meridian. Excellent restaurants offering a wide range of choice in meals, drinks and entertainment are also in abundance in the major cities. The various hot dishes of ethnic cuisines are well patronised. Cost of hotel accommodation will become more reasonable when more hotels are built including budget ones for tourists.

(c) Beaches.

Nigeria is bounded in the south by the Atlantic Ocean, which for about 800 kilometers washes the nations sandy coastline. The various beaches are unique tourist sites lined with coconut and palm groves. One of such beaches is the Badagry beach, which is the most popular.

(d) History and Arts.

As a nation of diverse people and culture, the various ethnic characteristics provide opportunity for cultural tourism of compelling attractions. Throughout Nigeria, there are cultural and historical sites that have been preserved. In many communities annual traditional festivals are held. Many areas of the country are good in crafts, carvings and sculpture.

(d) Festivals, dances and foods.

There are such festivals as the Nmanwu (masquerades) festival in Enugu State in the eastern part of Nigeria. The Nmanwu festival is held annually at the state stadium. All towns in the state present selected masquerades, which display and entertain the public. Some presentations from neighbouring states are invited in each occasion. There are various festivals of this nature in most parts of the country and they are helping in domestic tourism. In the same manner, some Nigerian foods have become very popular across their ethnic origins while some are beginning to be appreciated even beyond Nigerian boundaries. For example, isi-ewu (goat head), pepper-soup (a mixture of animal or fish parts, pepper and other local ingredients served hot), both from the Igboland in East; suya (roasted meat from ram and cow) from the Hausa/Fulani in the North; amala (made from yam flour) from the Yoruba in the West are all well known throughout the country. There are many more delicious dishes from other ethnic groups in Nigeria that are of the same class too. Akara, another Nigerian food made from beans is already popular beyond the shores of the country.

Efforts should be made to promote those tourist attractions that are unique to the African system of life and Nigeria in particular. Nigeria's cultural life should be projected to give it the edge. This is because the targeted tourists are likely to be more interested in things and events that are novel to them. As Popovic puts it, "Neither the United States nor Canada are lacking in fine beaches, high mountains and beautiful lakes, and their tourists may show only a limited interest for such attraction in Africa. But American tourists are genuinely interested in people, their way of life, both modern and traditional, old customs, folk dances and songs, old architecture, large cities, shopping, handicraft and with good promotion, a considerable large number of American tourists may become equally interested in wildlife" (Popovic et al, 1972: 24).

4.6 The regulatory authorities.

In Nigeria tourism is administered by various institutions and bodies, which have been established by both the federal and state governments. Some of these bodies are as follows:

(i) The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Tourism.

The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Tourism assumes full responsibility for policy initiation and monitoring; maintaining link with the State governments on funding and monitoring on nation-wide tourism infrastructure; and relating with international tourism agencies.

(ii) National Council on Commerce and Tourism (NCCT).

The Federal Minister of Commerce and Tourism chairs the (NCCT) and it ensures that there is coordination of national planning and development of tourism in the federation.

The NCCT is also an annual forum for discussing and perfecting modalities for tourism management.

(iii) The Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC).

The NTDC is the Tourism body responsible for promoting, marketing and disseminating information on the industry locally, and Internationally, through publication of handbooks, brochures and general guidelines for the operation of the industry. It collaborates with the private sector as well as the other tiers of the government in implementing policy directives and executing tourism projects. It coordinates the activities of organised private sector, tourism associations and practitioners.

(iv) State Ministries of Commerce and Tourism.

These State ministries implement policies and directives from the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Tourism and initiate projects for tourism development in their respective States.

(v) State Tourism Boards.

States Tourism Boards are to identify, preserve, protect and develop tourism assets and resources within their states.

(vi) Local Government Tourism Committees.

These Local Government Committees locate and identify potential tourist attractions in their areas, serve as information centers and provide tour guides, preserve and maintain monuments and museums in their areas of jurisdiction.

On the side of infrastructure development, Nigeria is also not faring well. Most of its twenty airports are in poor condition and were imposed with different sanctions during

the military regimes because of not meeting up with international standards. It is only in the recent democratic era that deliberate efforts are being made to rectify those faults.

The current state of Nigeria's railways and roads almost reveal the same picture. Nearly 170 out of the 200 locomotives of the country's system are no longer functioning. This is because of poor management and inadequate funding from the Federal government (Vanguard, 8 February 2001). In addition, Nigeria ranks among the countries with the lowest number of telephone lines per 1000 people in the world. In 1997, for example, the country had only four lines per 1000 people compared with 96 in Mexico, 543 in Singapore, 195 in Malaysia and 80 in Thailand (see table VIII).

Of late, however, the newly elected civilian government headed by Olusegun Obasanjo has embarked on an ambitious programme to rekindle the country's economy and also improve human rights record to attract both international and domestic investors. His efforts have so far made some solid gains and have been praised by the international community, including the Bretten Woods financial institutions--the World Bank and IMF. The government has restored macroeconomic stability, reduced corruption and initiated structural change. (Letter of Intent of the Government of Nigeria to the IMF's Managing Director, 20th July, 2000).

Table VIII. Telephone, personal computers and Internet usage in selected developing countries.

Country	No. of telephone lines per 1000 people (1997)	No. of personal computer per 1000 people (1997)	Internet hosts per 10,000 people (1997)
Mexico	96	37.3	11.64
Singapore	543	399.5	210.02
Malaysia	195	46.1	21.36
Thailand	80	19.8	3.35
Kenya	8	2.3	0.23
Nigeria	4	5.1	0.03

Source : World Development Report, 2000/2001.

4.7 Tourism potentials, gains and losses.

Despite its large potential for tourism development, Nigeria is one of the smallest recipients of foreign tourists in Africa. In 1989, for example, excluding Egypt, six countries accounted for 70% of the continent's tourists. In North Africa: Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria (55%); in East Africa: Kenya and Zimbabwe (8%); and in South: the Republic of South Africa (7%) (Harrison, 1992)(see Table X). In addition, the proximity of Nigeria to both Europe and the Americas has not helped matters. This may be due to the country's political instability and the negative reporting orchestrated by the international media.

With the recent decline in Foreign Development Investment (FDI) to Africa and uncertain revenue from its main export, oil, the Nigerian government has embarked on numerous programmes to diversify its economy and has given tourism priority in its agenda. (The West African Bulletin, October, 1998). FDI to Africa declined from \$3 billion in 1995 to \$2.2 billion in 1996. Revenue from crude oil, Nigeria's largest foreign exchange earner, has also been fluctuating and low global oil demand is often accompanied by simultaneous shocks to the Nigerian economy.

Nigeria currently has about 110 tourist sites, about 250 hotels out of which 100 qualify as good ones where tourists can stay in any of the 36 states of the federation and Abuja, the federal capital, and about 30 registered tour operators in Lagos, the biggest commercial centre in the country (Chigbo, 1998 : 41). It is estimated that every year Nigeria loses about N10 billion due to the neglect of the tourism industry by the government (Nigeria's Naira exchanges at N100 to \$1). However, the recent change in attitude towards investing in the industry has provided an impetus for the participation of foreign and domestic investors. In addition, some international organisations have shown interest in the sector. In 1993, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) released about 7 million dollars out of the 40 million dollars it approved to promote external trade and tourism in Nigeria. Also the International Finance Corporation (IFC), an affiliate of the World Bank group, signed agreement with the Tourist Company of Nigeria (TCN) to boost tourism in the country. The amount is the biggest IFC has given to any private concern in Nigeria in recent times (Chigbo, 1998)

If proper planning is done, basic infrastructural facilities provided, security, peace and stability established, there is no doubt that tourism will help to provide jobs to the unemployed Nigerians, diversify the economy, bring in foreign exchange and technology. It will also help to promote rural development, environmental protection as well as increase trade and investment. Unfortunately Nigeria's tourist arrivals is so insignificant that it does not feature among the top 25 developing countries (see Table XI).

Table IX. Tourist Arrivals in Nigeria 1982-1986.

Year	ECOWA S Region	British	American s	French	Others	Total
1982	384,996	46,142	22,314	20,435	201,799	675,686
1983	174,850	49,544	20,892	20,868	496,956	763,119
1984	116,276	26,421	23,756	18,504	342,246	527,203
1985	463,634	17,616	15,465	13,423	173,384	783,972
1986	489,821	27,371	12,788	12,298	105,455	647,763

Source : Lawson (1999)

Table X. World tourism and less developed countries: International arrivals, 1989.

Region	% of all arrivals to LDCs
Americas	31.3
Africa	17.7
West Asia	12.6
South and Southeast Asia	35.8
Oceania	1.6
Europe	1.0
Total	100.00

Source : Harrison (1992).

Table XI. Tourist Arrivals to Developing Countries.

Rank	Country	% share of arrivals to LDCs
1	China	15.1
2	Mexico	13.1
3	Hong Kong	7.1
4	Malaysia	5.2
5	Turkey	4.7
6	Singapore	4.6
7	Thailand	4.6
8	Morocco	3.2
9	Macau	3.1
10	Tunisia	2.9
11	Argentina	2.8
12	Indonesia	2.7
13	South Korea	2.6
14	Puerto Rico	2.3
15	Egypt	1.8
16	Uruguay	1.6
17	Taiwan	1.5
18	Cyprus	1.5
19	India	1.4
20	Dominican Republic	1.3
21	Brazil	1.3
22	Bahamas	1.2
23	Bahrain	1.2
24	Chile	1.1
25	Philippines	1.0

Source: WTO, 1995.

4.8 Government Policy towards Tourism Development in Nigeria.

Promotion of tourism has been made important with the evolution of tourism policy. The Federal Government of Nigeria went forward as contained in (Tourism, Know Nigeria Series:3), in "its determined efforts to develop and promote tourism into an economically,

socially and politically viable industry, the Federal Government of Nigeria has set the following as objectives of the policy on tourism:

- (i) To increase inflow of foreign exchange through the promotion of international tourism.
- (ii) Encourage even development of tourism based enterprises;
- (iii) To accelerate rural/urban integration;
- (iv) To foster socio-cultural unity among the various groups in the country through the promotion of domestic tourism;
- (v) To promote and encourage active private sector participation;
- (vi) To preserve our cultural heritage and historical monuments.

To accomplish the entire policy objectives, implementation shall be through the following broad guidelines:

- (i) Encourage domestic and foreign private sector investment in tourism development by putting together a package of incentives capable of attracting such investments.
- (ii) Identify and designate centres of attraction for tourism purposes by the three tiers of government which will participate in collaboration with the private sector, in the physical planning and promotion of such centres.
- (iii) Promotion of favourable environment for foreigners to visit Nigeria.
- (iv) Establishment of effective organs for the planning, development, promotion and marketing of tourism in and outside Nigeria including well-defined roles for the three tiers of government”

The main thrust of the policy is to make Nigeria a prominent tourism destination in Africa among others. The government has also put in place various incentives to encourage domestic and foreign investor's participation in tourism promotion and development. These are as follows:

- (a) The tourism sector was accorded preferred sector status in 1991. This makes the sector qualify for incentive available to similar sectors of the economy such as tax holidays; longer years of moratorium and import duty exemption on tourism related equipment.
- (b) Establishment of a specialised training institute, national institute for hotels and tourism studies at Bagauda, Kano, where middle level manpower training is provided.
- (c) State Governments are willing and prepared to facilitate acquisition of land through assurance of Certificate of Occupancy(C of O) for tourism development purposes.
- (d) Some States have specific areas as tourism development zones, thereby making acquisition of land easier.

4.8 Obstacles to Tourism Development.

Despite the fact that the Federal Government of Nigeria as far back as 1976 promulgated decree. No. 54, which established the Nigerian Tourist Association, not much has been achieved in terms of contributions by this sector to the country's economic development (Chigbo, 1998). This was because of various factors, some of which are mentioned below.

Nigeria has for long experienced political instability and uncertainty. Most of its post independence government assumed power through coup d'etats and violent means. Under such governments, the levels of mismanagement and human rights abuse were too high and this scared away both local and foreign investors. However, with the new civilian government of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in power, it is hoped that the country's politics will be stabilised and a conducive environment established to allow investments in its tourism sector.

Although Nigeria is one of the world's most populous countries and with huge natural resources, it is ranked among the poorest and highly indebted countries. In addition to its poor status, Nigeria appears mismanaged. Such situations have not helped to improve the people's purchasing power (effective demand) so as to spend on leisure activities and domestic tourism and has discouraged foreign investors from participating in the country's tourism development.

Since the government obtained the International Monetary Funds (IMF) loan in 1986, it applied Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) which in addition to other effects, affected the value of the Naira, the local currency. The instability of the value of the Naira, which on the surface may seem advantageous to foreigners, caused inflation and dampened interests in investments with slower rate of return and engendered prohibitive interest rates. It meant that while foreigners who could fare relatively better were not forthcoming because of various negative news in the international press, the nationals were on

the other hand, not able to afford the luxury of internal tourism because of their low and depreciated income.

4.8.2 Inadequate infrastructure.

The existence of poor and badly maintained physical infrastructure has aggravated the already discouraging economic situation for investment. The national carrier is in tatters and security at many airports in the country is not well maintained. For example, according to a report which was published by the commission of inquiry which investigated the Lagos airport fire, it was revealed that the nations 20 airports lacked enough security to regulate the movements of people within the airports and that at Abuja's Nnamdi Azikiwe international airports, security departments lacked man power. The report further noted that the life span of the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport's runway had expired and needed to be reconstructed. Additionally, deficiencies in the railway, transport sector, power sector and road transport sectors have not allowed the national economy to attract both local and foreign investors (The Guardian, 3 July, 2000; Vanguard, 8 February 2001).

4.8.3 National airline and passenger carriage.

In consonant with the views expressed above, as at 2001 the national carrier, Nigeria Airways, was already suffering from reduced aircraft and other administrative problems. The demise of the airline occurred gradually over the years as a result of mismanagement. Without an effective and efficient national carrier, an aggressive tourism policy will be compromised. In one of the government's publications, it observed

that, “airline services declined substantially during the year under review. The Nigeria Airways recorded a 56.4% fall in the number of passenger carried on the domestic route and 51.5% on the international route. The private airlines, which recorded modest gains in the 1995 over their 1994 operation, had an aggregate decline of 2.9% in operational performance in 1996. The drop in service provided was traceable to the depletion of the fleet of aircraft’s as a result of accidents, poor maintenance and inadequate capitalisation (Annual Report of the Federal Ministry of Finance 1997: 8).

4.8.4 Lack of proper work ethics.

Another area of concern for the tourism sector is the issue of lack of professionalism and proper work ethics. Nigerian electricity supply has been epileptic at best. The National Electricity Power Authority has not been able to maintain steady supply of electricity and it seems to be better known because of non-performance. One of the most recent outstanding experiences of blackout affected the highest authority in the land. Indeed, as was reported in the media, “. . . last weeks unfortunate outage at Nnamdi Azikiwe international airport, Abuja, just as the president’s jet was cleared to land after a long-haul trip from Iran. Somebody somewhere at the airport shirked his responsibility and the President of the giant of Africa landed in darkness” (The Nigerian Guardian: Jan. 20, 2001). In as much as Nigeria wants tourism to contribute its quota in the development of the nation, such expectation is not feasible under a lackadaisical and inefficient public service. It is a problem that needs to be resolved if the benefits from tourism are not to be compromised. The newspaper went further to state that “for those familiar with the relationship between the tourism industry, aviation business and government high profile

security network, this slip has had far-reaching consequences on the nation's image and rattled the President's security web. Yet for a country that has made a swan-song of the need for foreign investment in the economy, this largely domestic matter may well have closed numerous windows being considered for the in-flow of the much-needed capital" (Ibid).

The impression and attitude of officials at the entry points to Nigeria was not always good enough for foreign visitors. Most of them pursued their own selfish interests to the detriment of Nigeria's image and tourism. There were many agencies at the international airport and all of them wanted to exercise influence and authority such as immigration, customs, port health, drug law enforcement, airline security, and police and subsequently passengers are inconvenienced. In recognition of this fact, the Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) is planning to install automated scanning equipment such that, "passenger baggage should be opened only once when all the agencies that carried out screening were present. This enhances passenger facilitation in line with international standards and would help in ending the incident of extortion of money from unsuspecting passengers". (Nigerian Guardian, Feb. 27, 2001). A few other measures are being considered to improve the situation at the airports which in reality seems overdue for sanitisation. For example, "to stamp out touting and rowdy scenes at the airports, it was decided that existing multiple immigration checks would be eliminated to safeguard foreigners from extortion from corrupt officials . . ." (Ibid).

Corruption has been a major problem in Nigeria and could be among the factors affecting efficient administration in the country. It is no wonder that the president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, has aimed at it since the inception of his regime in May 1999, as one of the cardinal problems to solve.

4.8.5 International image.

Nigeria's tourism development has greatly been affected by the negative reporting made by international media about the country. As a result of Nigeria's past political dictatorship and human rights abuse, the international media organisations have often portrayed the country as unsustainable for economic prosperity and thus providing a disincentive for trade and investment even in the tourism sector. The Nigeria military governments have been accused of human rights violations from the Babangida regime till the last military government. It was however not until the hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa, an internationally known author and activist and one of the Ogoni 9, (the nine people killed by hanging in 1995, after being convicted of murder while protesting for oil resource control), during the era of Abacha, that the country attracted the full weight and the fury of the international community. Nigeria was subsequently expelled from the Commonwealth soon after the event in 1995 even as a Nigerian, Emeka Anyaoku, was the organisation's Secretary-General. All these added to the bad image that Nigeria had in the international community until the democratic regime took over in May 1999. The image has improved but a lot still needs to be done.

4.8.6 Public sector inefficiency.

The sluggishness exhibited in the implementation of Nigeria's privatisation programme is one of the biggest obstacles to tourism development in the country. Despite its mismanagement and corrupt record, the Nigerian government has continued to own and manage many hotels and other tourist infrastructure. The government has shares and big influence in hotels like Ikoyi hotel, Lagos hotel, Kano Central hotel, and Hilton hotel, Hill Station hotel, Sokoto hotel, Lake Chad hotel and many others (the Guardian, 12 October 2000). In the same manner, the federal government as the major financier of most tourist infrastructure and sites deploy government officials to work in these places. Similarly, there appears to be a lack of motivation from public sector towards encouraging the growth of tourism. In Nigeria it may be fair to expect that if most of the tourist sites and infrastructure have majority private sector equity holding, there will be more motivation and efforts to apply continuous improvement. With the new civilian government of Chief Obasanjo in power, it is hoped that such important policy matters like privatisation and liberalisation will be tackled expeditiously and transparently to create an attractive environment for private investment.

4.9 CONCLUSION.

The need for diversification was a good justification for Nigeria to look unto tourism as an additional means of earning foreign exchange and sustaining the economy. The military incursion into Nigerian politics had its adverse effects and was manifested mostly in administrative instability. The various tourist attractions and potentials would need to be advertised and exposed to both international and local tourists. This will make

it possible for this important sector to contribute its quota to the economy of the nation. This will be enhanced if the nation's international image improves as the country now has a democratic government.